

# TVSportsMarkets

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

## Inside this issue

|  |    |
|--|----|
| <b>TENNIS:</b> US Open done across Europe with Eurosport and Amazon deals                      | 3  |
| <b>FOOTBALL:</b> Conmebol in settlement talks to reclaim Copa América rights from Datisa       | 7  |
| <b>FOOTBALL:</b> Strong results in Eastern Europe vindicate Uefa sales strategy                | 10 |
| <b>FOOTBALL:</b> Fifa and MP & Silva try to resolve Italian dilemma as Sweden's TV4 celebrates | 14 |
| <b>FOOTBALL:</b> French federation almost trebles value of women's and youth rights            | 17 |
| <b>CRICKET:</b> BeIN adds to Cricket Australia deal with ECB rights across Mena                | 20 |
| <b>FOOTBALL:</b> South African, Nigerian and Kenyan league rights all on the market            | 23 |
| <b>WRESTLING:</b> New Japan Pro Wrestling secures exposure in India with DSport deal           | 26 |
| <b>FOOTBALL:</b> Uefa suffers small decrease in Turkey as beIN buys Champions League           | 28 |
| <b>FOOTBALL:</b> Serie A fills void in Malaysia with one-season Sportsfix sale                 | 30 |
| <b>BASKETBALL:</b> CBA closes in on \$60m-per-season target with host of domestic deals        | 31 |
| <b>CRICKET:</b> Sport 24 tests out international cricket strategy with Ashes acquisition       | 32 |
| <b>VOLLEYBALL:</b> IRena struggling to break even on Chinese Volleyball League tie-up          | 33 |
| <b>BOXING:</b> Sauerland maintains value in Germany by adding content for Sport1               | 34 |
| <b>FOOTBALL:</b> Astro close to Uefa national team rights deal in Malaysia                     | 35 |
| Deals round-up   | 36 |
| Industry news in brief   | 39 |

## Editorial



**Robin Jellis**

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



**Callum McCarthy**

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



**David Cook**

Reporter  
+44 20 7265 4109  
+44 7402 085693  
david.cook@tvsportsmarkets.com  
@dmacook



**David Svenson**

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



**Frank Dunne**

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



**Richard Welbirg**

Production Editor  
+44 20 7265 4233  
+44 7738 421882  
richard.welbirg@sportbusiness.com  
@richardwelbirg

## Account Management



**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



**Patrick Odling**

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



**Max Frew**

Account Executive  
+44 20 7265 4178  
+44 7493 7793374  
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, trading address: 7th Floor, 133 Whitechapel High Street, London, E1 7QA

TV Sports Markets, registered address: 4th Floor, Park House, 116 Park Street, London, W1K 6AF

© TV Sports Markets Ltd 2017

## TENNIS

# US Open the beneficiary with Amazon adding to tennis content

By Robin Jellis

- US Open rights across Europe to be worth about \$33.5m per year from 2018 to 2022
- Eurosport to maintain current fee of \$26.5m per year, but will lose UK and Ireland rights
- Amazon will acquire UK and Ireland rights in a deal worth about \$7m per year

**The value of US Open media rights across Europe will increase by about 26 per cent in the next cycle following deals struck with Eurosport and Amazon last month.**

The US Tennis Association, the tournament organiser, will earn about \$33.5m (€28.5m) per year from its rights across Europe from 2018 to 2022.

Sports broadcaster Eurosport will pay about \$26.5m per year for exclusive US Open rights across Europe, excluding the UK and Ireland.

Tech company Amazon will pay about \$7m per year for exclusive US Open rights in the UK and Ireland.

Rights across Europe in the current cycle, from 2013 to 2017, are worth about \$26.5m per year in a single pan-European deal with Eurosport.

The USTA is advised on the sale of its global media rights – excluding Canada, Latin America and the US – by the IMG agency. This advisory deal is for nine years, from 2017 to 2025. The USTA signs off all deals (*TV Sports Markets* 19:5).

## Eurosport renews key continental deal

*TV Sports Markets* understands Eurosport agreed to renew its rights across Europe, excluding the UK and Ireland, more than a year ago.

Eurosport did not announce the deal while there remained a chance it could acquire US Open rights in the UK. These were unsold for a long period as the USTA and IMG sought what local broadcasters regarded to be too high a fee.

Eurosport was prepared to pay a relatively small increase to retain its current set of rights, but instead agreed to maintain its current fee and relinquish rights in the UK and Ireland.

The broadcaster was keen to maintain its hold on US Open rights in Europe so it can continue to position itself as the home of grand slam tennis across the region. It holds exclusive rights to the Australian Open and the French Open in most of Europe, and holds exclusive Wimbledon rights in a number of European territories (*TV Sports Markets* 17:19; 19:17; 20:15).

The US Open is particularly important in the negotiation of Eurosport's carriage deals and driving take-up of its OTT service, Eurosport Player.

Eurosport is also able to recoup some of its outlay via sublicensing deals. For the 2017 US Open, the broadcaster had sublicensing deals in place with: public-service broadcaster ORF in Austria; telco O2 in the Czech Republic; commercial broadcaster RTL in Luxembourg; and public-service broadcaster SRG in Switzerland.

Eurosport's European renewal comes after it lost its grip on US Open rights across Asia in May 2016, when Fox Networks Group acquired them in a five-year deal, from 2017 to 2021, worth \$6.5m per year.

Eurosport held rights across Asia in a four-year deal, from 2013 to 2016, worth about \$1.5m per year. The USTA had additional non-exclusive deals with pay-television operators StarHub and TrueVisions in Singapore and Thailand respectively (*TV Sports Markets* 20:9).

## UK valuation leads to carve out

The USTA and IMG are thought to have sought between \$7m and \$8m per year for US Open rights in the UK and Ireland.

Their benchmark came from the value of the sublicensing deal Eurosport struck with UK pay-television broadcaster Sky, from 2013 to 2015, which was worth about £5m (€5.6m/\$6.6m) per year. However, this deal did not accurately reflect the value of the US Open as it was linked to a wider carriage agreement between Eurosport and Sky.

Eurosport, Sky and pay-television broadcaster BT Sport are independently thought to have valued US Open rights in the UK and Ireland at between \$2m and \$3m per year.

Sky's interest in tennis rights appears to be waning. The broadcaster refused to meet Eurosport's asking price to sublicense rights in the UK and Ireland to the 2016 and 2017 editions of the US Open.

It was outbid in August by Amazon for ATP World Tour rights in a new cycle.

And in July, when Sky switched from numbered to thematic channels, it did not launch a specific tennis channel.

The broadcaster's declining interest is partly linked to the fact tennis will in the coming years lose its 'golden generation' of top male players including Roger Federer, Novak Djokovic, Rafael Nadal and Andy Murray.

This summer, IMG is said to have tendered rights in the UK to the US Open together with ATP World Tour rights – IMG also advises the ATP on the sale of global media rights to its events.

Both Sky and BT are thought to have bid for US Open and ATP World Tour rights, but not aggressively. Both regarded the ATP World Tour as more valuable as it provides season-long content. The US Open, in isolation, would not help either broadcaster add subscribers.

The new Amazon deal is a good financial outcome for the USTA and IMG, which had been struggling to secure much of an increase in the value of US Open rights across Europe.

## Amazon continues push for content

The US Open deal represents Amazon's second significant rights acquisition in the UK and Ireland following its earlier deal for ATP World Tour rights. That deal, from 2019 to 2023, will be worth just over £10m per year (*TV Sports Markets* 21:15).

Under the deal, Amazon will have rights to all nine ATP World Tour Masters 1000 events per year, as well as coverage of ATP World Tour 500 and 250 events. The deal will also include the ATP Finals and the Next Gen ATP Finals. Amazon's coverage will not be fully exclusive as Tennis TV, the ATP's direct-to-consumer streaming service, can show all ATP content.

As well as its live coverage, Amazon Prime subscribers will have on-demand access to completed matches, highlights, review shows and press conferences. All ATP content will be available as part of the basic Amazon Prime service which currently costs £7.99 per month, or £79 per year.

UK media experts remain intrigued by the company's sports strategy. Many are keen to find out whether its deals for US Open and ATP World Tour rights represent a test for Amazon, or whether they form the basis of a concerted sports strategy. Amazon declined to comment when contacted by *TV Sports Markets* for this article.

One local rights expert said: "It is dipping its toe in the water to see how sport works on Amazon Prime."

The source added: "I can't see them bidding for [English] Premier League rights when they come on the market. You have to think they wouldn't be buying tennis rights if they planned to bid for the Premier League. Buying US Open rights feels quite opportunistic. It's a cheap deal given the size of their pockets though."

What is clear is that Amazon is carving out a niche for tennis content. As well as its deals for US Open and ATP World Tour rights, it has a deal with Eurosport to offer the broadcaster's channels on Amazon Prime. Eurosport has rights to the three other tennis grand slams in the UK and Ireland: it has exclusive Australian Open rights, and non-exclusive French Open and Wimbledon rights.

## BBC maintains non-exclusive rights

Although most ATP coverage will switch from Sky to Amazon in 2019, public-service broadcaster the BBC extended its deal for non-exclusive rights to the ATP Finals last month.

The BBC's two-year deal, which will cover 2019 and 2020, is expected to be worth just over £100,000 per year. This is the same value as its current two-year deal, covering 2017 and 2018 (*TV Sports Markets* 20:21). The BBC is keen on these rights as the event is hosted at London's O2 Arena. In May, the O2 was confirmed as the host for the 2019 and 2020 editions.

The ATP wanted to retain free-to-air coverage of the event: the BBC provides wide exposure for its sponsors and helps with ticket sales. The deal covers free-to-air rights to show eight matches per year, including a semi-final and the final. The BBC has the right to stream these matches across its online platforms.

The BBC holds rights to several tennis properties. It has a seven-year deal with the Lawn Tennis Association for Queen's Club Championships rights, from 2018 to 2024, worth about £200,000 per year (*TV Sports Markets* 21:3). In July, the broadcaster extended its deal for International Eastbourne rights, also from 2018 to 2024. That deal is thought to be worth about £50,000 per year.

These events provide additional tennis content around its flagship deal for Wimbledon rights. Last November, the BBC extended its Wimbledon deal until the end of 2024. ◆

## FOOTBALL

# Datisa not done yet as Conmebol seeks settlement for Copa rights

By Callum McCarthy

- Conmebol seeking to settle with Datisa to reclaim Copa América rights
- Once it has reclaimed them, Conmebol is expected to tender the rights early next year
- Datisa paid \$80m for global Copa media and marketing rights for 2019, and \$85m for 2023

**Conmebol is in the process of settling with Datisa for a nine-figure dollar sum to reclaim rights to the 2019 and 2024 Copa América tournaments.**

Datisa – the three-way venture between the Full Play, Torneos and Traffic Sports agencies – paid \$80m (€68.1m) for global media and marketing rights to the 2019 Copa América and \$85m for the 2023 edition, which has since been pushed back to 2024 (*TV Sports Markets* 19:20).

These payments were part of Datisa’s deal for global media and marketing rights to the 2015, 2016, 2019 and 2023 Copa América tournaments, worth a total of \$387.5m (*TV Sports Markets* 19:14).

Datisa paid Conmebol \$75m for the 2015 edition, and for the 2016 Copa América Centenario it paid Concacaf \$35m and Conmebol \$112.5m. Concacaf is the governing body of football in the Caribbean, North America and Central America, and was involved in the 2016 deal due to the involvement of six Concacaf member nations.

A statement issued by Conmebol on November 9 said: “The South American Football Confederation sent notice to Datisa SA of its decision to rescind the acquisition contract of the 2019 and 2023 Copa América editions, signed in 2013, due to acts of corruption that shook international football in May 2015 and of which Conmebol [sic] was the victim.”

Alejandro Dominguez, Conmebol president, said: “Conmebol has been demanding from Datisa, without conditions and at zero cost, the return of sponsorship and dissemination rights that they acquired through acts of corruption.”

Sources close to Datisa say they are unaware of any such demand being served, and that formal settlement negotiations for Conmebol to reclaim unsold rights to the 2019 and 2024 editions began two months ago.

It is also understood that Conmebol has no power to terminate the deal without a settlement.

One source said: “One thing is for sure: if they tender the rights without reaching a settlement with Datisa, they would be served with an injunction the next day.”

The deal between Conmebol and Datisa is at the centre of *United States v. Juan Ángel Napout et al.*, a case in progress at the US District Court in Brooklyn, New York, in which Datisa is alleged to have paid bribes of about \$100m to various Conmebol officials. The case is thought to have no impact on the validity of the Datisa deal.

Conmebol was similarly forced to settle with Datisa in 2015 over the reclamation of unsold rights to the 2016 Copa América Centenario (*TV Sports Markets* 19:23). These rights were sold on to the IMG agency and Soccer United Marketing, the commercial arm of Major League Soccer, for a minimum guarantee of about \$20m.

A settlement for unsold 2019 and 2024 rights is expected to be reached by the end of this year, and it is understood Conmebol will tender the rights as a package in early 2018. The governing body is understood to have informed potential bidders of its intentions in September.

Conmebol did not respond to requests for comment before *TV Sports Markets* went to press.

## What's left?

Conmebol will reclaim rights to the 2024 tournament in many more territories than 2019, for which several major media-rights deals were completed by Datisa before its principals were indicted by the US Department of Justice in 2015.

It is thought highly unlikely existing deals for 2019 will be scrapped as a result of the settlement, but multiple sources suggested some of these deals could come under scrutiny as a result of the *United States v. Juan Ángel Napout et al.* case.

It is thought the eventual buyer of the rights could attempt to break any contracts for 2019 found to be the product of bribery or corruption. However, experts say this process would be expensive, laborious, and ultimately not worth pursuing.

Of the deals for 2019, only media group Globo's deal in Brazil was agreed directly with Conmebol.

A Globo spokesperson told *TV Sports Markets* this week: “Globo has a valid contract in place with Conmebol for rights to broadcast the 2019 Copa América in Brazil. We signed the contract directly with Conmebol, which later assigned the rights and obligations to Datisa, but remained jointly liable for fulfilling obligations towards Globo. We did not sign a contract with Datisa.”

Rights to the 2019 tournament have been sold in every major territory for the property apart from the US, where English- and Spanish-language rights are unsold. Datisa sold Spanish-language Centenario rights to Spanish-language broadcaster Univision Deportes for \$70m in 2014, while IMG sold English-language rights to pay-television broadcaster Fox Sports for \$15m.



**Copa América 2019 rights deals**

| Territory                    | Rights-holder                             |
|------------------------------|---|
| Argentina                    | TyC Sports                                |
| Asia (excluding Japan)       | MP & Silva                                |
| Brazil                       | Globo                                     |
| Central America              | Novavision                                |
| Chile                        | Canal 13                                  |
| Colombia                     | Caracol                                   |
| France                       | BeIN Sports                               |
| Italy                        | Pitch International                       |
| Latin America (pay-TV)       | DirectTV                                  |
| Mexico                       | Televisa                                  |
| Middle East and North Africa | BeIN Sports                               |
| Peru                         | Compañía Latinoamericana de Radiodifusión |
| Spain                        | Pitch International                       |
| Venezuela                    | Galaxy Entertainment Venezuela            |

Source: TV Sports Markets Rights Tracker

The value of 2019 rights in the US will largely depend on whether Conmebol can convince the US and Mexico national teams to participate in the tournament, as they did in 2016. The two nations' continued participation would have a huge impact on the future value of the Copa América.

At least one media-rights deal is thought to have been completed for 2024, with pay-television broadcaster beIN Sports for rights in the Middle East and North Africa.

Sources at major agencies expect Conmebol to create another tournament to be played in 2020. Conmebol wants

future Copa América tournaments to be played in even years, but does not want a five-year gap between tournaments in 2019 and 2024.

## Prospective buyers

As with the September sale of its regional club competitions – the Copa Libertadores and Copa Sudamericana – it is thought Conmebol is keen to sell Copa América media and marketing rights on a global basis.

Conmebol now prohibits companies with an existing commercial rights agreement with Conmebol, or one of its member associations, from bidding for its properties. The IMG agency and digital media company Perform will be unable to bid due to their joint \$1.4bn deal for rights to the Copa Libertadores and Copa Sudamericana (*TV Sports Markets* 21:17).

This policy is set to clear a path for agencies MP & Silva, Lagardère Sports, Synergy Sports, Infront Sports & Media and Mediapro, all of which are understood to be interested in the rights.

Experts believe Synergy and Infront will bid together, as they did for rights to the Copa Libertadores and Copa Sudamericana, and will be aggressive. The two agencies were the closest bidders to IMG and Perform for rights to the two club competitions.

Mediapro is expected to be permitted to bid for Copa América rights despite its partnership with Turner-owned commercial broadcaster Chilevisión. Mediapro is responsible for distributing the global marketing rights and international media rights of the Chilean national team under a sublicensing deal with Chilevisión agreed last month, but Chilevisión is the sole signatory of the deal with the Asociación Nacional de Fútbol Profesional (*TV Sports Markets* 21:20). ◆

## FOOTBALL

# Eastern European results justify Uefa selling market-by-market

By David Svenson

- Sportklub to pay about €35m for exclusive Uefa national team rights across the Balkans
- Modern Times Group breaks public-service broadcaster hold in Latvia to get all rights
- Telesport to pay about €48m for all Uefa national team rights in Russia across the cycle

**Uefa has earned a significant increase in the value of its national team rights across Eastern Europe, justifying its decision to sell market-by-market in the region.**

European football's governing body has completed deals covering the 2018-19 to 2021-22 cycle in: the Balkans (Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia); the Baltics (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania); the Czech Republic; Hungary; and Slovakia.

In the previous cycle, these markets were covered by an agreement with the European Broadcasting Union. For Euro 2016, the public-service broadcasters in each market held exclusive rights as part of a 26-territory deal with the EBU worth about €80m (\$94m) (*TV Sports Markets* 21:3).

First- and second-party European Qualifier rights, from 2014-15 to 2017-18, were held by the same broadcasters in another multi-territory EBU deal, also worth about €80m (*TV Sports Markets* 21:16).

## Selected Eastern European Uefa national team rights, 2018-19 to 2021-22

| Market         | Euro 2020          | First- and second-party rights to European Qualifier and Nations League matches | Third-party rights to European Qualifier and Nations League matches |
|----------------|--------------------|---|---|
| Balkans        | Sportklub          | Sportklub   | Sportklub   |
| Estonia        | ERR                | ERR   | Modern Times Group  |
| Latvia         | Modern Times Group | Modern Times Group  | Modern Times Group  |
| Lithuania      | LNK                | LRT   | Modern Times Group  |
| Czech Republic | Česká Televize     | Česká Televize  | AMC Networks  |
| Hungary        | MTVA               | MTVA  | AMC Networks  |
| Slovakia       | RTVS               | RTVS  | AMC Networks  |

Source: TV Sports Markets Rights Tracker

Uefa's national team rights are sold by the CAA Eleven agency.

Rights in the new cycle were split into three packages. Package A was for all matches at Euro 2020. Package B was for first- and second-party European Qualifier and Nations League rights. Package C was for third-party European Qualifier and Nations League rights.

The Nations League is a new addition in the new cycle, essentially replacing national-team friendlies with a competitive tournament. Four nations from the competition will qualify for the Euro 2020 tournament, making it more attractive to broadcasters.

Uefa has also finalised a deal for all its national team rights in Russia with the Telesport agency.

## Exclusive rights in the Balkans

Pay-television broadcaster Sportklub has acquired all rights from each of the three packages in separate deals in each of the Balkan countries. The deal will be worth a total of about €35m.

In each country, it faced strong competition from public-service and commercial broadcasters to do so. Rights across the region were tendered by CAA Eleven on August 23, 2016, with bids due on September 27, 2016.

For Euro 2016, public-service broadcasters in each territory held exclusive rights as part of the EBU deal. These were: BHRT in Bosnia; HRT in Croatia; MRT in Macedonia; RTCG in Montenegro; RTS in Serbia; and RTV Slovenija (*TV Sports Markets* 20:3).

First- and second-party European Qualifiers from 2014-15 to 2017-18 were held by the same broadcasters, again as part of the wider EBU deal. Third-party European Qualifier rights in each territory were held by Sportklub over the cycle.

In the new cycle, Sportklub has no obligation to sublicense its rights to free-to-air broadcasters, but may choose to do so. It is currently capable of meeting Uefa's distribution requirements on its own channels across the region. Local experts say they would be surprised if no sublicensing deals are agreed.

## Baltic increases

In Estonia, Uefa earned a big increase on the value of its deal with public-service broadcaster ERR for rights to Euro 2020 and first- and second-party European Qualifier and Nations League matches. ERR will pay a total of €1.2m.

Rights to Euro 2016 and first- and second-party European Qualifier matches in the 2014-15 to 2017-18 cycle were worth a total of about €400,000. Although a direct comparison cannot be made due to the addition of the Nations League in the new cycle, the increase is substantial.

In Lithuania, the national team rights will be split between three broadcasters.

Commercial broadcaster LNK won Euro 2020 rights, while public-service broadcaster LRT acquired rights to first- and second-party European Qualifier and Nations League matches.

LRT pays a total of about €300,000 in the current 2014-2018 cycle for Euro 2016 and first- and second-party European Qualifiers. It is understood the value of these corresponding rights in the new cycle will be substantially higher.

ERR in Estonia and both LNK and LRT in Lithuania were forced to pay relatively high fees due to strong interest in the rights from multi-territory commercial and pay-television broadcaster Modern Times Group. MTG showed a strong interest in acquiring all rights across the Baltics.

MTG acquired third-party European Qualifier and Nations League rights in Estonia and Lithuania, and was awarded all rights in Latvia, outbidding public-service broadcaster LTV.

LTV paid about €300,000 for rights to Euro 2016 and first- and second-party European Qualifier matches in the current 2014-2018 cycle.

Across all three markets, MTG has committed to pay about €400,000 across the cycle for all third-party European Qualifier and Nations League rights. European Qualifier third-party rights in the Baltics are currently held by sports broadcaster Setanta, from 2014-15 to 2017-18, in a wider deal covering 12 territories (*TV Sports Markets* 18:15).

MTG will show Euro 2020 and matches of the Latvian national team in the country on its free-to-air channel TV3 due to Uefa's exposure requirements.

Third-party European Qualifier and Nations League rights across the three territories are likely to be exploited on pay-television channel Viasat Sport Baltic and OTT service Viaplay.

Since acquiring the rights, MTG has sold off its free-to-air television, pay-television, digital and radio businesses in the Baltic region to US private equity investment firm Providence Equity Partners. The deal valued the company €115m.

## National broadcasters stay strong

Rights to Euro 2020 and first- and second-party European Qualifier and Nations League matches were sold to public-service broadcasters in: the Czech Republic (Česká Televize); Hungary (MTVA); and Slovakia (RTVS).

RTVS will pay a total of €3.46m across the cycle. It will pay €1.86m for Euro 2020 and €1.6m for 40 Slovakia matches in the European Qualifiers and Nations League from 2018-19 to 2021-22.

In the current 2014-2018 cycle, RTVS contributed €700,000 to the EBU deal for Slovakia European Qualifier matches.

RTVS also held rights to Euro 2016 via the EBU. RTVS paid the EBU a combined total of about €3.8m for rights in the country to Euro 2016 and the 2018 and 2022 Fifa World Cups.

MTVA will pay just under €8m in total for rights to first- and second-party European Qualifier and Nations League matches in Hungary. MTVA will also hold rights to Euro 2020 for an additional fee.

Third-party European Qualifier and Nations League rights were acquired by media group AMC Networks in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia. AMC will pay a total of about €2.5m over the cycle for these rights in three separate deals.

## Deal done in Russia

Telesport will pay close to €48m for all Uefa national team rights in Russia from 2018-19 to 2021-22.

Uefa earned just under €30m for rights to Euro 2016 and first- and second-party European Qualifiers in 2014-15 and 2015-16 (*TV Sports Markets* 20:1). As host nation of the 2018 World Cup, Russia is exempt from playing qualifiers in 2016-17 to 2017-18 and is only playing friendly matches. Third-party European Qualifier matches were not sold in the country across the cycle.

In 2016-17 and 2017-18, Russia friendly matches that coincide with European Qualifier match-days are sold by Uefa. Rights to all other Russia friendly matches are sold by the Russian Football Union.

In order to meet Uefa's distribution requirements, Telesport has committed to ensuring coverage of all Russia matches on national broadcasters Match TV, VGTRK or Channel One. *TV Sports Markets* understands these rights may also be exploited on OTT services. ◆

## FOOTBALL

# Fifa and MP & Silva struggle in Italy as TV4 anticipates jackpot

By Frank Dunne

**Rai, Mediaset and Sky were all expected to bid this week for a cut-price 2018 Fifa World Cup. The rights in Italy have plummeted in value since the national team failed to qualify for the tournament, losing a play-off to Sweden.**

The best-case scenario, experts say, is for Fifa, football's global governing body, to earn about €90m (\$106m) to €100m. The worst-case scenario is €50m to €60m.

Fifa earned €175m for rights in Italy to the 2014 World Cup (*TV Sports Markets* 21:11). The sales process is being jointly handled by Fifa and the MP & Silva agency, Fifa's sales representative in the country for the 2018 and 2022 tournaments.

The agency agreed a deal based on providing Fifa with a minimum guarantee of €185m for 2018 and €195m for 2022. The contract made no mention of Italy's participation, but the valuations were predicated on the team qualifying. Italy had not failed to qualify for a World Cup since 1958.

Rather than being the conclusion of a protracted sales process, this week's auction – with a deadline of Wednesday afternoon – was expected to be the prelude to two sets of parallel negotiations: one in which Fifa and MP & Silva enter exclusive talks with the highest bidder to finalise terms; and one between Fifa and MP & Silva about how to deal with the inevitable shortfall between the winning bid and the level of the agency's guarantee.

Fifa and the agency are understood to have met early last week. Sources say the discussions were amicable and there is a good working relationship between the two. But it remains unclear exactly what will happen next.

The governing body believes it has a binding contract under which the agency is liable for any shortfall. The agency left the meeting convinced Fifa accepts it was implicit the guarantee was based on Italy qualifying and that market conditions have since changed.

The agency is a sales representative – it did not buy the rights – and the product it is selling now is different to the product it was selling one month ago. No compromise minimum guarantee figure was agreed.

Fifa appears to have five options:

- accept whatever the auction throws up as being the market rate, but not pay MP & Silva any commission
- split the shortfall by requiring the agency to make up only a proportion of the deficit
- allow the case to go to arbitration
- secure an improved minimum guarantee for 2022 from the agency to partially offset the 2018 losses
- enforce the original terms in full, if necessary in court.

It is difficult to see an outcome in which either Fifa or MP & Silva – or both – does not suffer a substantial loss due to Italy's failure to qualify.

Under the structure of the original deal, the agency needed to earn €162m to break even on 2018, not the full €185m. If it brought in €162m, it would have to make up the shortfall, paying Fifa the €23m difference. But it would then be paid 12.5-per-cent commission on the full €185m, or about €23m.

In a first round of bidding last month, predicated on Italy qualifying, Fifa received bids from: media group Mediaset for free-to-air and pay-television rights; public-service broadcaster Rai for free-to-air rights; and pay-television operator Sky for pay-television rights. None of the bids, or combinations of bids, came close to €162m (*TV Sports Markets* 21:19).

Some rights experts say the strategic mistake on the agency's part was not completing the sales process long before Italy's qualification became an issue. The original deal with Fifa was agreed in October 2013.

## Bidding blind, hitting the jackpot

The situation in Italy underlines the risks involved in bidding for rights to major events such as the World Cup and the Olympic Games many years before they take place.

Broadcasters have historically tended to have to bid 'blind', not knowing in which time zone an event would take place and, in the case of the World Cup, whether or not the domestic national team would be involved.

The winners in this case are Swedish commercial broadcaster TV4 and public-service broadcaster SVT, who acquired 2018 and 2022 World Cup rights in April 2012 (*TV Sports Markets* 16:7).

The two bid as part of a consortium of Scandinavian broadcasters which paid €66m for rights to the two tournaments. The other broadcasters in the consortium are: public-service broadcaster DR and commercial broadcaster TV2 in Denmark; and public-service broadcaster NRK and commercial and pay-television broadcaster TV2 in Norway.

Rights in Sweden are thought to have accounted for just over one third of the total – about €26m – split 50:50 between the two broadcasters. That would leave each paying about €6.5m per World Cup. For TV4 in particular, Sweden’s involvement will provide a big financial bonus.

One local broadcast executive said 2018 World Cup coverage could generate between SEK100m (€10m/\$11.7m) and SEK150m in advertising revenues for TV4. “Positive rating effects will spread across related programming around the World Cup tournament dates, which in turn may bring in another SEK30m to SEK50m,” he said.

Another local media executive pointed out that Russia was both a perfect time zone for Swedish television audiences and close enough for Swedish fans to travel, which would feed into a better television spectacle and further improve ratings. Television audiences for Sweden matches are expected to be about 3m; audiences for matches not involving Sweden are expected to be between 500,000 and 1m.

“This is the jackpot for both broadcasters, but especially TV4. They can sell out their commercial inventory for a month that generally is not the strongest,” he said.

SVT and TV4 will agree on the sharing of matches after the World Cup draw today (December 1). Usually, when Sweden is involved, one broadcaster takes more Sweden matches during the group stage and the other more in the knock-out rounds, if the team progresses. ◆



## FOOTBALL

# French federation almost trebles value of female and youth rights

By Robin Jellis

- Women's national team matches rise in value from €1.2m per season to €3.8m per season
- Division 1 Féminine rights to command €600,000 per season, up from €200,000 per season
- Canal Plus to pay €1m per season for youth team rights, up from €600,000 per season

**France's football federation earned an increase of about 170 per cent in the value of its domestic women's and youth football media rights last month.**

The Fédération Française de Football sold three packages of rights worth a total of about €5.4m (\$6.3m) per season over five seasons, from 2018-19 to 2022-23. The corresponding set of rights is worth a total of about €2m per season over four seasons from 2014-15 to 2017-18.

Rights in a new cycle were split into three packages. The first was for all women's national team matches. The second was for the women's top tier, Division 1 Féminine. The third was for men's youth football, from U16s to U21s.

Package one was awarded to commercial broadcaster M6 in a deal which will be worth about €3.8m per season. Pay-television broadcaster Canal Plus acquired package two for about €600,000 per season, and package three for about €1m per season.

Canal Plus currently holds equivalent rights to packages one and three in a deal worth a total of about €1.8m per season (*TV Sports Markets* 18:3). The fee is thought to be split about €1.2m per season for the women's national team and €600,000 per season for men's youth football. The broadcaster exploits the content on its Canal 8 and Canal Star channels (formerly D8 and D17).

D1 rights are currently held by French public-service broadcaster France Télévisions and sports broadcaster Eurosport as part of their joint deal for Coupe de France rights, worth about €16.5m per season over four seasons, from 2014-15 to 2017-18. The two broadcasters allocate a total of about €200,000 per season towards D1, split equally.

## FFF sales process

The FFF tendered rights to the three packages on October 10, with first-round bids due on November 8. Second-round bids were due on November 10. The FFF awarded its rights to M6 and Canal Plus on November 14. There were two rounds of bidding for each of the three packages.

The federation sold its rights for five seasons in the new cycle rather than the current four seasons to align its rights cycle with major women's national team tournaments.

#### French football federation deals for women's and youth team media rights

| Rights                | Broadcaster, 2014-15 to 2017-18 | Per-season fee (€m) | Broadcaster, 2018-19 to 2022-23 | Per-season fee (€m) |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| Women's national team | Canal Plus                      | 1.2                 | M6                              | 3.8                 |
| Division 1 Féminine   | Eurosport/France Télévisions    | 0.2                 | Canal Plus                      | 0.6                 |
| Male youth football   | Canal Plus                      | 0.6                 | Canal Plus                      | 1                   |
|                       | TOTAL                           | 2                   | TOTAL                           | 5.4                 |

Source: TV Sports Markets Rights Tracker

## Women's national team

Rights to the women's national team are the most valuable of those tendered by the FFF. M6 faced competition from Canal Plus and pay-television broadcaster SFR Sport. Local experts believe there are two main reasons M6 was prepared to increase the fee so much.

First, because the women's national team guarantees high television audiences. Second, following the loss of Uefa Europa League rights in May to SFR, M6 was seeking additional content and had funds available (*TV Sports Markets* 21:8).

M6 is expected to show between 10 and 12 matches of the women's national team per season. It is likely to show most matches on W9, the broadcaster's digital-terrestrial channel.

The deal will cover all qualifier and friendly matches. The FFF owns the rights to home matches and will acquire rights to away matches. These matches have been included in the M6 deal.

As part of the agreement, M6 will be the 'official broadcaster of the women's national team'. TF1 currently has a similar designation for the men's national team (*TV Sports Markets* 18:1).

The deal was finalised between the presidents of the two organisations: Nicolas de Tavernost of M6 and Noël Le Graët of the FFF.

## Division 1 Féminine

When the FFF sold domestic Coupe de France rights in a new cycle in August, it carved out D1 rights in order to capitalise on the growing interest in women's sport (*TV Sports Markets* 21:15).

Canal Plus beat rival bids from Eurosport and pay-television broadcaster beIN Sports for D1 rights in the new cycle. Both Canal Plus and beIN proposed to show all league matches live.

Canal Plus will show all 132 D1 matches per season live. The broadcaster will show one match live per match-week on its Canal Plus Sport channel. The five other matches each match-week will be available via a multiplex on Canal Plus Sport, but viewers can watch entire matches on its Foot Plus channel.

This will represent a significant improvement from the current cycle. Presently, Eurosport shows live coverage of about 20 D1 matches per season on its Eurosport 2 channel, while France Télévisions shows four live D1 matches per season on its France 4 channel.

## Youth football rights

Canal Plus beat offers from beIN and SFR to acquire the FFF's male youth rights.

The broadcaster will show 10 matches of the U21 team per season. This will include both home and away matches. As for the women's national team, the FFF owns rights to home matches and will separately acquire rights to away matches from the respective federations.

Canal Plus' deal will cover rights to a total of about 40 male youth team matches per season, across various age groups. These matches will be shown on Canal Plus Sport.

## Other increases for women's football

The FFF is not the only rights-holder to benefit from the growing interest in, and value of, women's football in France.

In May 2016, European football's governing body Uefa increased the value of its women's European Championship rights in France by 525 per cent. France Télévisions will pay about €5m for Euro 2017, a huge increase on the €800,000 paid by M6 for Euro 2013 (*TV Sports Markets* 20:11).

In January 2016, football's global governing body Fifa secured an almost 12-fold increase in the value of the women's World Cup, which will be hosted in the country. Commercial broadcaster TF1 bought rights to the 2019 World Cup for about €10m, an enormous uplift on the €850,000 paid by M6 for the 2015 tournament (*TV Sports Markets* 20:2).

Last month, TF1 sublicensed coverage of all 2019 World Cup matches to Canal Plus. Canal Plus will show all 52 matches from the tournament: 27 exclusively and 25 non-exclusively. TF1 has retained non-exclusive rights to 25 marquee matches, including those of the French team. Local experts put the value of the sublicensing deal at between €2m and €3m. ◆

## CRICKET

# BeIN adds to Cricket Australia deal with ECB rights across Mena

By Robin Jellis

- BeIN Sports buys ECB rights in Mena for just under \$3m per year, from 2018 to 2023
- ECB rights in Mena currently held by OSN, from 2013 to 2017, for about \$1.5m per year
- New deal follows beIN's acquisition of Cricket Australia rights; more cricket rights to come

**The England & Wales Cricket Board (ECB) roughly doubled the value of its media rights in the Middle East and North Africa last month after carving them out from a future Asian deal.**

English cricket's governing body agreed a six-year deal, from 2018 to 2023, with pay-television broadcaster beIN Sports in Mena. The deal will be worth just under \$3m (€2.6m) per year.

ECB rights in the region are currently held by Middle-Eastern pay-television broadcaster OSN in a five-year deal, from 2013 to 2017, worth about \$1.5m per year.

OSN acquired these rights in a sublicensing deal with pan-regional pay-television broadcaster ESPN Star Sports (ESS), the predecessor of pay-television broadcasters Star India and Fox Sports Asia.

Star holds ECB rights across all of Asia and Mena over the same five years in a deal worth a total of \$110m. The broadcaster turned down an option to extend the deal to cover 2018 and 2019, which would have cost a total of \$130m (*TV Sports Markets* 20:10).

The ECB was keen to sell its rights itself in Mena in the new cycle to have a direct relationship with a broadcaster.

BeIN's deal with the ECB – and its confirmation it will launch a cricket channel in the region – is another indication it is trying to encourage current OSN subscribers to switch to beIN.

The first came in early November when beIN acquired Cricket Australia rights across Mena in a six-season deal, from 2017-18 to 2022-23, worth about \$3.5m per season (*TV Sports Markets* 21:20).

This was the first time a major cricket body had carved out rights in Mena for a separate sale. Historically, major cricket rights-holders have sold their rights on a global basis, or a pan-regional basis covering Asia and Mena.

## More cricket on the horizon for beIN

Cricket is very popular with expatriates from the Indian subcontinent, of which there are about 8m in Mena. BeIN believes it needs strong Indian cricket content in order to attract new subscribers.

BeIN is understood to be actively seeking more cricket content in Mena to bolster its yet-to-launch channel, with two big Indian cricket properties available.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India will launch a tender for its global media rights – from 2018-19 onward – in the coming weeks. Cricket experts expect the rights to be awarded on a global basis once again in a new cycle.

Global BCCI rights are currently held by Star in a six-season deal, from 2012-13 to 2017-18, worth a total of \$751m (*TV Sports Markets* 16:7). OSN sublicensed BCCI rights in Mena from Star across the same six seasons.

Indian Premier League rights are also on the market in Mena. In September, Star agreed a five-year global rights deal, from 2018 to 2022, worth a total of \$2.55bn (*TV Sports Markets* 21:16).

Star is currently trying to sublicense IPL rights around the world. During the auction there were four individual bids for IPL rights in Mena: beIN bid \$60.9m; OSN bid \$33m; OTT service YuppTV bid \$15.6m; and Star bid \$10.2m.

## ECB deal and content included

The ECB did not tender its rights across Mena, instead speaking directly to interested broadcasters. The body was advised on the sale of its rights by the Pitch International agency.

BeIN is not thought to have faced any competition for either ECB or Cricket Australia rights. OSN is thought to be prioritising BCCI and IPL rights. It also holds International Cricket Council rights in Mena until 2022-23.

Under the ECB deal, beIN will hold rights to all England men's and women's home international matches, as well as men's and women's domestic competitions.

The international cricket schedule has not been finalised beyond June 2019, meaning beIN does not know how many times the Indian national team will tour England over the course of the contract. However, India will tour England between June and August in 2018, and will play five Test matches, five One Day Internationals and one T20 International.

Holding rights to both the Australian and English cricket boards provides beIN with year-round cricket content from two of the most prestigious national teams.

BeIN will use the 4K feed produced by the ECB's current live domestic broadcast partner, pay-television broadcaster Sky.

## Struggle in India

The ECB was prepared to sell its rights for six years in Mena in order to guarantee coverage and revenue. The body is currently struggling to sell its rights in a new cycle in the Indian subcontinent.

The value of these rights is expected to fall considerably from the average of about \$22m per year currently paid by Star. This is partially because any new deal in the Indian subcontinent will exclude rights in Mena, but mainly because broadcaster interest in India for bilateral cricket is declining. Interest in cricket in the region is centred upon major cricket events and T20 competitions.

In October, Cricket Australia agreed a new deal in the Indian subcontinent with pay-television broadcaster Sony Pictures Networks India which effectively halved its revenue from the previous cycle (*TV Sports Markets* 21:19).

One cricket expert said: “We are seeing the resetting of the value of bilateral cricket in the region.” The source added that the value of other cricket board rights in the Indian subcontinent will decrease when they next come to market.

As a result, the ECB will have a shortfall in 2018 and 2019, before its lucrative new domestic deals kick in. In June, the ECB sold its domestic rights to Sky and public-service broadcaster the BBC for five years, from 2020 to 2024, for a combined £220m (€248m/\$291m) per year (*TV Sports Markets* 21:12).

As well as its recent deal with beIN, it is thought likely the ECB will agree direct deals for its rights in North America and the Caribbean in the coming months. Its current four-year deal in the region, with digital media company Perform, is worth a total of about \$9m from 2014 to 2017. ◆

## FOOTBALL

# New deals incoming for PSL and NPFL, but Kenya situation unclear

By Callum McCarthy

**Rights to three of sub-Saharan Africa's most popular domestic leagues are on the market, though their fortunes are likely to differ wildly.**

South Africa's Premier Soccer League – by far the richest domestic league in Africa – tendered its rights earlier this month, with a bid deadline of November 16. Rights are available on all platforms for five seasons, from 2019-20 to 2023-24.

Bids for Nigerian Professional Football League rights have been invited by the League Management Committee – the league's organiser and commercial arm – for all platforms for two years: 2018 and 2019. The LMC did not tender the rights, but issued a document informing broadcasters of the rights available and inviting them to begin private negotiations.

The situation in Kenya is more complicated. The Kenyan Premier League released a tender on November 27 for rights over three years, from 2018 to 2020. Bids are due on December 8.

The validity of this tender is likely to be disputed. *TV Sports Markets* has seen documents suggesting KPL rights have already been sold to Kenyan commercial broadcaster Bamba TV in a five-year deal, from 2018 to 2022, struck with the Football Kenya Federation.

## PSL tender

The Premier Soccer League's current two-season global rights deal with pay-television broadcaster SuperSport, covering 2017-18 and 2018-19, is worth about ZAR675m (€41m/\$48m) per season. This was an extension of an existing five-season global rights deal, from 2012-13 to 2016-17, worth about ZAR377m per season (*TV Sports Markets* 21:8).

This represented an increase of about 79 per cent in South African rand. But the dollar-terms increase was only about 15.5 per cent due to the currency's depreciation between 2011 and 2014.

Local reports suggest SuperSport is facing serious competition from telco Vodacom for the rights. The telco's presence is thought likely to prompt SuperSport to maintain its strong investment in the league.

The PSL is one of SuperSport's key football properties. The broadcaster's original acquisition of the rights back in 2007 is widely credited with expanding its subscriber base from predominantly older, white South Africans to include younger mixed-race and black South Africans.

League chairman Irvin Khoza said the PSL had also received applications for the tender from telco Telkom, public-service broadcaster SABC, and Kwesé.

The value of PSL rights to SuperSport's sub-Saharan rival Kwesé Sports is limited as the latter does not have a channel licence in South Africa.

SABC lacks the finances to compete with SuperSport for exclusive rights, but has sublicensed rights to some matches on an exclusive basis from SuperSport for the past two seasons as the pay-television broadcaster looks to control its expenditure. SABC produces all matches it shows.

## NPFL rights

Rights to the NPFL are available for two years, 2018 and 2019, but the league is open to bids for longer or shorter terms depending on the financial offer received. Offers would have to be substantial to secure a long-term deal.

The rights are available after SuperSport cancelled its four-year deal for all Nigerian Football Association rights, from 2016 to 2019, worth \$7.5m per year (*TV Sports Markets* 21:8). SuperSport terminated the deal in May after alleging breach of contract, and negotiated a much lower fee for 2017 only.

The league is hoping for a fee of between \$3m and \$4m per year, which local experts believe is a realistic market value for the rights.

As the 2018 season begins in just six weeks' time on January 14, the league will not require the winning broadcaster to take on the responsibility of production. Matches will be produced by the league, which is enlisting the help of government-owned broadcasting syndicate Nigerian Television Authority and the Mediapro agency.

Mediapro's involvement has been facilitated by an advisory partnership between Spain's LaLiga and the NPFL. Mediapro is LaLiga's commercial rights sales advisor and produces all LaLiga matches.

Any broadcast partner will be able to partner with the NTA and Mediapro to assist with production, should it choose to do so.

## Uncertainty in Kenya

The KPL has advertised its intention to tender its media rights for three years, from 2018 to 2020, including rights to the two domestic cups. But any agreement would almost certainly be challenged in the courts.



A deal between the Football Kenya Federation and Bamba TV has already been completed. The deal was facilitated by ex-MP & Silva executive Andrea Francesco Silva, who acquired the rights from the FKF before selling them on to Bamba.

It is thought both the FKF and the KPL have a mandate to sell the rights from 2018 onward, but are supposed to sell the rights jointly. Documentation of Bamba's deal suggests it was approved by both the FKF and the KPL, though the KPL later sent notice to Bamba and Silva that the offer was retroactively rejected.

Bamba's five-year deal, from 2018 to 2022, is worth KES154m (€1.3m/\$1.5m) in 2018, with an escalator of 10 per cent each season. The rights will be worth KES225.5m in 2022.

Rights were available from 2018 after SuperSport terminated its six-year deal for KPL rights, from 2016 to 2021, in March (*TV Sports Markets* 21:5). The FKF and the KPL jointly sold rights for the remainder of the 2017 season to Bamba in July, in a deal worth KES36.7m.

SuperSport's deal was worth ZAR19m per year (an average of KES153m per year), and SuperSport also took on production costs of ZAR90,000 per match.

The expected dispute between Bamba and the KPL over the award of the rights from 2018 onward is likely to go to the Supreme Court of Kenya next year. ♦

## WRESTLING

# New Japan Pro Wrestling secures first media-rights deal in India

By David Cook

**The New Japan Pro Wrestling promotion secured broadcast coverage in India for the first time via a deal with pay-television broadcaster DSport.**

DSport will pay about \$30,000 (€25,500) per year for the rights for just over three years, from November 2017 until the end of 2020.

The broadcaster will show English-language coverage of events which have been edited down into episodes by pay-television broadcaster AXS TV, NJPW's broadcast partner in the US.

The rights were sold to DSport by Japanese commercial broadcaster TV Asahi, which is responsible for distributing the promotion's international rights. TV Asahi began talks over a deal with DSport in May. The agreement was finalised in October.

TV Asahi is a minority shareholder in the promotion and has held global rights since the promotion was founded in 1972. Pay-television broadcaster Samurai TV shares domestic rights with TV Asahi. Samurai TV shows all events not broadcast by TV Asahi.

DSport will show about 50 events per year. NJPW events are broadcast live in Japan before TV Asahi sends the footage to AXS TV, which edits and dubs the footage and sends this to all international broadcast partners. It takes six weeks to distribute the edited events.

## DSport's thirst for combat

DSport bought the rights as they will add to its portfolio of professional wrestling and mixed martial arts. DSport also holds rights to the Ring of Honor professional wrestling promotion and the Cage Warriors mixed martial arts promotion. DSport launched in February and targeted all three properties upon launching. Professional wrestling is hugely popular in India.

The broadcaster estimates it will show a total of about 300 hours of wrestling and MMA per year. It sees India as the third-biggest market for combat sports after the US and Japan, and believes combat sports is the second-biggest sporting genre in India after cricket.

TV Asahi approached pay-television broadcaster Zee Entertainment about the rights before Zee sold its Ten Sports channels to media group Sony Pictures Networks India in September. Sony was not interested in the rights.

Sony holds rights to the World Wrestling Entertainment and Impact Wrestling promotions. The difference in rights fees for these properties and NJPW is large: Sony pays \$28m per year for WWE rights and \$3.6m per year for Impact Wrestling rights (*TV Sports Markets* 18:18; 19:6).

## NJPW events and coverage

DSport will not have exclusive NJPW rights in India as all events are shown globally on New Japan Pro Wrestling World, the promotion's OTT streaming platform: a joint venture between TV Asahi and NJPW. A subscription to the service costs \$9 per month. Revenue from the service is split 60:40 between TV Asahi and NJPW.

NJPW's biggest annual events, Wrestle Kingdom and G1 Climax, held in January and the summer respectively, are exclusively shown on NJPW World outside Japan.

TV Asahi is aggressively attempting to grow international coverage of NJPW. While this is its first deal in India, it is targeting growth in Europe. ◆

## FOOTBALL

# Champions League value down slightly in Turkey as beIN swoops

By Callum McCarthy

- BeIN to pay about €30m per season for Champions League rights in Turkey, 2018-2021
- Deal follows Saran's Europa League acquisition, worth about €22m per season
- Overall, Uefa club competitions to fall in value in Turkey by 9% from €57m per season

**BeIN Media Group has acquired Uefa Champions League rights in Turkey for a slightly reduced fee, meaning it will show both of the governing body's club competitions from 2018-19 onward.**

BeIN will pay about €30m (\$35.2m) per season in a three-season deal, from 2018-19 to 2020-21, beating competition from the Saran Media group and telco Türk Telekom. This is almost 12 per cent less than the current value allocated to the property by Uefa.

Türk Telekom's current three-season deal for rights to the Champions League and Europa League, from 2015-16 to 2017-18, is worth €57m per season. Uefa allocated €34m per season to the Champions League and €23m per season to the Europa League (*TV Sports Markets* 21:20).

BeIN's Champions League deal follows Saran's three-season deal for Europa League rights, from 2018-19 to 2020-21, worth about €22m per season. Saran will sublicense some Europa League matches to beIN – expected to be those involving Turkish teams.

The total decrease in value across the two properties, from the current cycle to the new cycle, is about nine per cent – from €57m per season to about €52m per season.

The Turkish economy has struggled badly over the past three years, and the Turkish lira has severely depreciated against the dollar since the beginning of 2015.

BeIN will exploit Champions League rights on its free-to-air and pay-television channels in the country.

Its pay-television channels are exclusively carried by pay-television operator Digiturk, which beIN acquired in August 2016. Its free-to-air channel, beIN Sports Haber, reaches 90 per cent of Turkish households. It is not available on the IPTV or mobile services operated by Türk Telekom or telco Turkcell.

It is thought beIN will exploit at least two Champions League matches per match-week on beIN Sports Haber, while all Uefa club competition matches involving Turkish teams will be available free-to-air.

The deal leaves Türk Telekom, and its Tivibu IPTV and mobile TV services, without any premium live football from 2018-19. The telco's deal for Italy's Serie A was for one season only, 2017-18, and it is thought beIN will move to acquire these rights from the IMG agency from 2018-19 onward.

Tivibu has roughly 600,000 subscribers across both platforms and this is expected to decrease once its current deal expires. The telco is also thought to be in danger of losing subscribers to its mobile phone, broadband and landline offerings, as these services are often acquired as a quad-play package along with Tivibu.

BeIN will now hold rights to the four most popular football properties in Turkey from 2018-19: the Turkish Süper Lig; the Champions League; the Europa League; and the English Premier League. ◆

## FOOTBALL

# Serie A fills void in Malaysia with one-season Sportsfix agreement

By David Cook

**MP & Silva's deal with OTT platform Sportsfix this month will ensure Serie A coverage in Malaysia for the first time in almost two years.**

Sportsfix will pay the MP & Silva agency about \$250,000 (€212,500) to stream three matches per match-week. The deal will run for the rest of the 2017-18 season only. The deal began on November 18.

It is the first time Italy's top division has had a media-rights agreement in Malaysia since the 2014-15 season, when the rights were held by pay-television operator Astro. The broadcaster held the rights in a three-season deal, from 2012-13 to 2014-15, worth between \$1m and \$2m per season. Serie A rights went unsold in the 2015-16 to 2017-18 cycle until now, as Astro made no attempt to renew its deal.

Pay-television broadcaster Eleven Sports showed some Serie A matches in the country in early 2016. It streamed Serie A matches ahead of a planned linear-channel launch, but pulled out of the launch in Malaysia after it was unable to secure a carriage deal with Astro.

Eleven holds Serie A rights in Singapore in a three-season deal, from 2015-16 to 2017-18, worth about €4m per season (*TV Sports Markets* 19:19).

MP & Silva pays €185.7m per season for Serie A international rights in a three-season deal, from 2015-16 to 2017-18, but has lost its grip on the rights for the next cycle. The IMG agency will pay €340m per season for Serie A international rights from 2018-19 to 2020-21 (*TV Sports Markets* 21:18).

Astro has had no interest in buying Serie A rights since the end of the 2014-15 season, and is not planning on attempting to buy the rights when they are back on the market.

Sportsfix is owned by SF Media Holdings, a subsidiary of the Total Sports Asia agency, and launched in Malaysia in July. Future launches are planned in Indonesia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam (*TV Sports Markets* 21:14).

Buying Serie A rights ties in with Sportsfix's strategy of buying cheap football leagues. Sportsfix also holds rights in Malaysia to the Indonesian Liga 1, Thai League 1 and South Korea's K League Classic. In the 2017 season, it held Chinese Super League rights for less than \$50,000.

Serie A matches will be included in a basic Sportsfix subscription and will not be priced separately. A weekly subscription costs between \$1 and \$1.50. A monthly subscription costs between \$2.50 and \$3. ◆

## BASKETBALL

# CBA nears media-rights target for year one of in-house sales

By David Cook

**The Chinese Basketball Association is close to reaching its media-rights income target of \$60m (€51m) per season for the current cycle.**

Streaming platforms Tencent and Zhibo will each pay about \$25m per season in three-season deals from 2017-18 to 2019-20 (*TV Sports Markets* 21:17). Each will be able to show all games non-exclusively.

State broadcaster CCTV agreed a 10-season deal in October, from 2017-18 to 2026-27, for linear and digital rights to three games per week. CCTV is thought to be paying close to \$10m per season for these rights. Free-to-air sports channel CCTV-5 will not show games on Thursdays. This day has been reserved by the CBA as “New Media Day”, for digital partners only.

Video-sharing website Bilibili also has CBA media rights, but will show the games of the Shanghai Sharks team only. Bilibili is the title sponsor of the team.

Zhibo, owned by sports management and marketing company Seca, will stream games for free to fans who sign up for a Zhibo.tv account.

In the 2016-17 season, CCTV held linear rights to seven games per week. Digital rights were held by LeSports, PPTV and Tencent in the 2015-16 season, and additionally by Alisports, Baofeng, Sohu and YY Sports in the 2016-17 season.

Regional broadcasters have the right to show games of their respective local teams.

The deals with Tencent and Zhibo have taken the CBA past its total income from media and marketing rights in the previous cycle, when the Infront Sports & Media agency paid about \$48m per season for five seasons, from 2012-13 to 2016-17 (*TV Sports Markets* 21:6). An exclusive negotiation period between Infront and the CBA ended in March without the agency renewing its deal.

In the current cycle, the CBA has decided to sell its rights directly to broadcasters. The league has continued Infront’s tactic of selling the rights to multiple digital partners as it feels an exclusive deal could harm the expansion of its brand.

The current season started on October 29. It is unlikely that any other digital broadcasters will agree deals for this season. ♦

## CRICKET

# Sport 24 snares Ashes rights as it tests out cricket content

By Robin Jellis

**Cricket Australia expanded its relationship with in-flight/in-ship broadcaster Sport 24 last week, to include coverage of this year's Ashes Test series.**

The deal covers: each of the five Test matches in this year's Ashes; five One Day Internationals between Australia and England; three T20 Internationals from the tri-series between Australia, England and New Zealand; and the Big Bash League domestic T20 competition.

Sport 24 will pay Cricket Australia about \$200,000 (€170,354) for this content in 2017-18. The deal excludes internal flights, but covers all other flights and all cruise ship journeys.

The broadcaster – owned by the IMG agency – previously had a deal with Cricket Australia covering just the BBL. That deal ran for two seasons, covering 2014-15 and 2015-16, and was worth about \$75,000 per season. It was extended to cover 2016-17 and 2017-18 at a small increase.

Rights for internal flights are held by Australian airline Qantas. That agreement covers 75 domestic and international matches played in Australia.

Sport 24's agreement with Cricket Australia represents the first time it has acquired international cricket rights. It has previously been put off by difficulties scheduling cricket. But the broadcaster is keen to test out the performance of this year's Ashes series ahead of potentially acquiring other cricket content.

The deal was struck in the summer after direct talks between Sport 24 and Cricket Australia – there was no tender. As an existing partner, Sport 24 had a right of first refusal.

Sport 24's rivals in the sector include Global Eagle Entertainment and the Pitch International agency. Pitch holds Spanish LaLiga and Formula One rights, but is not exploiting them as it is yet to launch an in-flight or in-ship channel.

Sport 24 is the leading in-flight/in-ship broadcaster, available across 12 airlines and nine cruise lines. This year, Sport 24 has renewed rights to: Germany's Bundesliga; the NFL; and Fifa national team tournaments (*TV Sports Markets* 21:5; 21:13). ◆



## VOLLEYBALL

# iRena not close to breaking even on Chinese Volleyball League deal

By David Cook

**Event and venue management company iRena is making a substantial loss on its deal for all Chinese Volleyball League media and marketing rights.**

iRena bought the rights for \$15m (€13.6m) per season for five seasons, from 2016-17 to 2020-21 (*TV Sports Markets* 20:14). It has an option to extend the deal.

CVL rights were previously held by CCTV Sports & Entertainment, the marketing arm of Chinese state broadcaster CCTV, for what was thought to be a nominal fee plus production.

For the current 2017-18 season, *TV Sports Markets* understands iRena is earning about \$4.5m from media rights and about \$1.5m from a single sponsorship deal with sportswear manufacturer Peak Sports. Its shortfall is about \$9m for the season.

iRena earned a similar amount in the first season of the deal.

It has sublicensed digital rights to four streaming platforms: Baofeng, PPTV, Sina and Tencent. None are thought to be paying more than \$1m per season and all deals are just for 2017-18. News service Jinri Toutiao has digital highlights rights.

iRena buys airtime on CCTV to ensure linear coverage. It is happy to pay a fee to generate exposure for the league on free-to-air.

The size of iRena's original offer to the league surprised industry sources at the time. One source now claims iRena is attempting to renegotiate its deal with the CVL.

The price it paid was always likely to make profitability a challenge, and iRena has not been helped by the fact volleyball is struggling to generate interest in China. This is despite the recent success of China's women's national team, which won a gold medal at the 2016 Rio Olympics.

iRena had not responded to requests for comment before *TV Sports Markets* went to press. ◆

## BOXING

# Same money, more content for Sport1 in new Sauerland deal

By Callum McCarthy

**The Sauerland Promotion's deal with Sport1 in Germany is of similar value to its previous deal with commercial broadcaster ProSiebenSat.1, *TV Sports Markets* understands.**

Sports broadcaster Sport1 will pay about €20m (\$23.5m) over three years, from 2018 to 2020, an average of just under \$6.7m per year. The deal, agreed last month, will cover 12 Germany-based events promoted by Sauerland, and eight international events involving fighters on the Sauerland roster.

The value of events in Germany has remained steady at about €800,000 per event, with production costs of about €100,000 per event to be covered by Sport1.

The international events are thought to be of little value, but are included in the deal as Sauerland wants exposure for its fighters when competing abroad.

Sauerland's previous deal with Sat.1, which was set to run for a maximum of three years from 2017 to 2019, is to be terminated at the end of this year. The deal was only to be extended beyond the first and second years if Sat.1 and Sauerland met certain targets (*TV Sports Markets* 20:21).

Sat.1's deal, which was worth €6.4m per year, included 12 Germany-based events only. Eight of these appeared on free-to-air television with the remaining four reserved for Sat.1's Ran Fighting OTT service.

In the new deal, all 20 events will be shown free-to-air on Sport1. This is understood to have been Sauerland's main consideration when deciding to switch broadcasters.

Many of Sauerland's established domestic stars, such as Jürgen Brähmer and Arthur Abraham, are close to retirement, and the promotion wants free-to-air exposure for younger, less-established fighters on its roster.

German boxing is widely considered to be at a low ebb, though the sport is still thought to be the third most popular in the country. According to local reports, ratings on Sat.1 for Sauerland events declined from 2016 to 2017.

The new three-year deal is aimed at giving Sauerland and Sport1 the opportunity to develop new stars, and rebuild the sport's popularity. ♦

## FOOTBALL

# Astro close to renewing Uefa national team rights in Malaysia

By David Cook

**Pay-television broadcaster Astro is close to renewing its deal for Uefa national team rights in Malaysia, *TV Sports Markets* understands.**

Astro is expected to pay about \$25m (€21m) for all rights to: Euro 2020; European Qualifiers from 2018-19 to 2021-22; and the Nations League competition in 2018-19 and 2020-21.

Uefa, European football's governing body, tendered these rights on October 10, with bids due on November 7. A second round of bidding has completed and Astro is likely to seal a deal in the coming weeks.

The value of the rights is expected to be similar to the \$25m Astro pays in the current cycle, despite the addition of the Nations League. Astro paid about \$15m for rights to Euro 2016, and about \$10m for all European Qualifiers from 2014-15 to 2017-18. Astro also held rights to Euro 2012.

Uefa's national team rights are sold by the CAA Eleven agency.

The IMG agency recently acquired the same set of rights in Indonesia, in a deal worth just under \$30m (*TV Sports Markets* 21:20). ◆

# DEALS ROUND-UP

## NOVEMBER 16 TO 29

### FOOTBALL

- ◆ French pay-television broadcaster Canal Plus struck a deal to sublicense rights to the 2019 Fifa women's World Cup from commercial broadcaster TF1 ([page 17](#)).
- ◆ Filipino media company ABS-CBN signed a sublicensing deal with Thai media company Triple CH to show free-to-air coverage of the English Premier League, Spain's LaLiga and the Uefa Champions League.
- ◆ ESPN's Digital Network agreed a partnership with Singaporean pay-television broadcaster Singtel to show clips of the English Premier League.
- ◆ Pay-television broadcaster Fox Sports acquired exclusive rights in Italy to the 2017 Fifa Club World Cup, which will run from December 6-16.
- ◆ StarTimes, which broadcasts in sub-Saharan Africa, extended its exclusive deal for the Fifa Club World Cup to cover the 2017 and 2018 tournaments.
- ◆ Digital media company Perform acquired exclusive digital rights in the UK to the next two editions of the Fifa Club World Cup. Perform will stream the tournaments for free.
- ◆ Ukrainian video-on-demand service Megogo acquired rights to the German Bundesliga, French Ligue 1 and Italian Serie A. Megogo will air all nine matches each Bundesliga match-week, along with five matches per match-week from Ligue 1.

### OTHER SPORTS

- ◆ **Basketball:** International sports broadcaster Eleven Sports agreed a deal for coverage in Taiwan of the Formosa Dreamers in the ASEAN Basketball League. Eleven will broadcast live coverage of all games involving Taiwan during the 2017-18 season.
- ◆ **Basketball:** DAZN, the OTT service operated by digital media company Perform, will show International Basketball Federation (Fiba) content in Canada over five years, from 2017 to 2021. DAZN can show every Canada game from Fiba's leading national team competitions.
- ◆ **Basketball:** Fiba agreed a rights deal with free-to-air broadcaster Māori Television in New Zealand. The five-year agreement, from 2017 to 2021, covers exclusive rights to broadcast New Zealand games in Fiba national team competitions.
- ◆ **Basketball:** UAE-based broadcaster Sharjah Sports agreed a rights deal with the Liga ACB, Spain's top division. The deal grants Sharjah Sports rights to the league and the Copa del Rey cup competition in 23 countries across the Middle East and North Africa. The agreement covers the 2017-18 season.
- ◆ **Boxing:** Eleven Sports partnered with combat sports distributor Fighting Spirit to deliver live and exclusive coverage in Italy and Belgium of the December 15 WBO heavyweight title eliminator between Christian Hammer and Alexander Povetkin.

# DEALS ROUND-UP

NOVEMBER 16 TO 29

- ◆ **Cricket:** In-flight and in-ship channel Sport 24 acquired rights to the Ashes series between England and Australia ([page 32](#)).
- ◆ **Cricket:** The England & Wales Cricket Board signed a six-year rights deal with Qatar-based beIN Media Group covering the Middle East and North Africa ([page 20](#)).
- ◆ **Darts:** The Professional Darts Corporation signed a three-year extension to its partnership with UK commercial broadcaster ITV. The deal, from 2018 to 2020, grants the ITV4 channel rights to The Masters, UK Open, European Championship, World Series of Darts Finals and Players Championship Finals.
- ◆ **Formula E:** UK pay-television broadcaster BT Sport extended its rights deal with the electric car-racing series. BT will offer subscribers in the UK and Ireland an extended highlights programme from every round of the 2017-18 championship alongside Formula E's official magazine show, *Street Racers*.
- ◆ **Formula E:** New Zealand public-service broadcaster TVNZ agreed a one-season extension to its rights deal with Formula E. TVNZ will provide coverage of the 2017-18 Formula E season via its TVNZ 1 and TVNZ Duke channels, and the TVNZ OnDemand service.
- ◆ **Formula E:** Irish commercial broadcaster TV3 acquired rights to the series in a deal covering every round of the 2017-18 season.
- ◆ **Handball:** German sports broadcaster Sport1 acquired rights to the 2017 women's World Championship, which will be hosted in Germany.
- Sport1 acquired platform-neutral rights for Germany, Austria and Switzerland. It will show live free-to-air coverage of each of Germany's games, as well as the semi-finals and final. *TV Sports Markets* understands public-service broadcasters ARD and ZDF will show the semi-finals and final of the Championships, if Germany reaches that stage, under a sublicensing agreement with Sport1.
- ◆ **Motorsport:** The Motorsport.tv media platform reached an agreement to showcase archive footage from the 24 Hours of Le Mans endurance event. The deal grants Motorsport.tv access to the entire history of Le Mans 24 films.
- ◆ **Rugby Union:** Swedish pay-television broadcaster C More agreed a deal to show live coverage of Premiership Rugby, England's top division. C More will broadcast at least one game per weekend during the 2017-18 season.
- ◆ **Sailing:** UK production company Sunset+Vine was appointed as the host broadcaster and distribution partner for the 2018 World Championships in Aarhus, Denmark.
- ◆ **Skiing:** Italian state broadcaster Rai acquired rights to the Ski Classics series of long-distance events. Rai will broadcast coverage of all Italian events in the 2017-18 calendar.
- ◆ **Skiing:** The Discovery Nordics division of media company Discovery Networks International acquired rights in Sweden to the Ski Classics. The agreement covers the 2017-18 season, with Discovery exploiting the rights via its commercial broadcaster Kanal 5.

# DEALS ROUND-UP

## NOVEMBER 16 TO 29

◆ **Squash:** England Squash struck a deal with UK public-service broadcaster the BBC for live coverage of England's match against a rest-of-the-world team on November 24.

◆ **Tennis:** The ATP confirmed a rights deal with Amazon in the UK and Ireland ([page 3](#)).

◆ **US College Sport:** Multi-platform American sports network Stadium agreed a deal with social media platform Facebook to stream live coverage of basketball games. The one-year deal will cover the 2017-18 academic year and include a total of 46 games from conferences such as the Atlantic 10, Conference USA, Mountain West and West Coast.

### MEDIA RIGHTS NEGOTIATIONS

◆ Tech company Amazon acquired exclusive rights in the UK and Ireland for the US Open grand slam tournament ([page 3](#)).

◆ The European Handball Federation received seven offers for the media and marketing rights to a raft of its competitions for the period from 2020 to 2030. The rights include the Champions League, EHF Cup and Challenge Cup club competitions, as well as the EHF Euro national team tournament, youth events and beach handball competitions.

◆ The Premier Soccer League, the organising body of the top two divisions of South African football, extended the tender process for its next set of media rights ([page 23](#)).

◆ US telco Verizon is set to seal an extended and amended streaming rights deal with the NFL, according to the Bloomberg news agency.

Verizon will reportedly lose its exclusive rights to stream NFL games on mobile devices in the US.

◆ The CAA Eleven agency launched tenders in Turkey for rights to Uefa national-team properties. The tenders include rights to: Euro 2020; European Qualifiers from 2018-19 to 2021-22; and the Nations League in 2018-19 and 2020-21. Bids are due on December 11.

◆ New Zealand public-service broadcaster TVNZ and telco Spark were linked with a possible joint bid for the domestic rights to games organised by New Zealand Rugby, the governing body of rugby union in the country.

◆ BeIN Media Group and the Saran Media agency agreed deals for rights in Turkey to the Uefa Champions League and Europa League competitions ([page 28](#)).

◆ Lega Serie A, the organising body of the top division of Italian club football, postponed approval of a sales process for its next set of domestic broadcast rights, according to the Reuters news agency. Reuters, citing sources familiar with the talks, said the league is now set to devise a plan for a tender in the week commencing December 18. It has been forced to draw up a new tender after Italian media group Mediaset refused to participate in the last auction and the only bidders tabled offers that did not meet expectations.

## INDUSTRY NEWS IN BRIEF

NOVEMBER 16 TO 29

- ◆ Mexican media company Televisa and Brazilian media group Globo were part of a \$15m (€12.9m) bribery scheme for media rights to the 2026 and 2030 editions of the Fifa World Cup, according to Alejandro Burzaco, former chief executive of the Torneos agency. Burzaco told a court in New York that Torneos, Televisa and Globo directed the bribe to the late Julio Grondona, a long-serving senior Fifa executive and then president of the Argentinian Football Association. The media companies have denied all wrongdoing and are not charged in the case.
- ◆ Agency Full Play, which has been accused of bribing football executives, held talks with an entity associated with Paris Saint-Germain president Nasser al-Khelaifi over a possible sale, according to testimony in the trial of three ex-football officials from Latin America. Santiago Pena, a former financial executive at the agency, claimed al-Khelaifi had been in talks with the owners of Full Play, Hugo and Mariano Jinkis, who have both been indicted on corruption charges by the US Department of Justice.
- ◆ US media company NBCUniversal unveiled coverage plans for the 2018 winter Olympic Games, confirming it will end the policy of delayed broadcasts in favour of live primetime coverage. NBCU will present more than 2,400 hours of coverage of Pyeongchang 2018.
- ◆ US media company Time partnered with tech company Amazon for a new OTT streaming service under the banner of its flagship magazine, *Sports Illustrated*. Sports Illustrated TV launched on November 16 through the Amazon Channels service in the US. The service does not carry live games or highlights, but includes 130 hours of on-demand programming, including original documentary series, weekly studio shows and acquired sports movies, documentaries and television shows.
- ◆ Meredith agreed a deal to acquire fellow US media company Time, which has recently branched out into the OTT sports streaming market. Meredith will acquire all outstanding Time shares for a total transaction value of approximately \$2.8bn (€2.42bn).
- ◆ US telcos Comcast and Verizon were linked with talks to acquire key assets of media group 21st Century Fox.
- ◆ The US Department of Justice will challenge the proposed takeover of US media company Time Warner by telco AT&T. The deal was expected to be closed by the end of 2017. The DoJ filed the complaint against AT&T, DirecTV and Time Warner in the Federal District Court for the District of Columbia. AT&T chief executive Randall Stephenson said the challenge “defies logic” and is “unprecedented”.
- ◆ Shareholders backed US media company Discovery Communications’ planned takeover of cable network operator Scripps Networks Interactive.
- ◆ US pay-television provider Dish Network agreed a new multi-year carriage deal with US media company CBS. The agreement covers the CBS Sports Network, as well as CBS-owned and operated local stations and various other channels.

## INDUSTRY NEWS IN BRIEF

NOVEMBER 16 TO 29

- ◆ French telco SFR is planning a major overhaul of its sports strategy to better capitalise on its premium rights. French newspaper *Les Échos*, citing an internal source, said SFR is rethinking its television strategy, which at present has been focused on a bundled multi-play fixed offering, with a view towards placing more emphasis on OTT offerings.
- ◆ Chairmen of English Premier League football clubs backed plans to increase the number of matches available for live broadcast each season from 168 to between 190 and 210. The change will be introduced from the start of the 2019-20 season.
- ◆ The English Football League implemented an early introduction of live streaming to its EFL Trophy competition ahead of wider use of such coverage from the 2019-20 season. The EFL, which operates the three divisions below the top-tier Premier League, agreed a five-season extension to its rights deal with Sky in September. This agreement opens up new streaming opportunities to the UK pay-television broadcaster and the league's member clubs. These options have now been brought forward, with matches from the second round of this season's EFL Trophy to be streamed to fans in the UK and overseas via the EFL's live streaming platform, iFollow.
- ◆ Swedish media group Bonnier and multi-territory commercial and pay-television broadcaster Modern Times Group signed a carriage deal that will see the former's C More pay-television channels carried by the latter's pay-television operator, Viasat, for the first time.
- ◆ The Ligue Féminine de Basket, the top division of club basketball in France, announced it would live stream most of its games for free, starting from the weekend of November 25-26. Games not chosen for coverage by the league's broadcast partner, pay-television broadcaster SFR Sport, will be provided via the LFB TV platform.
- ◆ Highlight Communications confirmed it intends to lodge a takeover bid for its parent firm, German media company Constantin Medien.
- ◆ Swiss telco Swisscom secured full control of media and cinema company Cinetrade, a major player in the Swiss sports rights market, through its pay-television broadcaster Teleclub. Swisscom previously held a 75-per-cent stake in Cinetrade.
- ◆ International sports broadcaster Eleven Sports launched a new channel in Poland. Eleven Sports 4 will be available exclusively to subscribers of Polish pay-television operator NC Plus for its first three months, at no extra cost. After three months, the channel will be made available to non-NC Plus subscribers.
- ◆ Eleven Sports partnered with Orange Polska, the Polish arm of telco Orange, to roll out a 4K service in the country.
- ◆ Polish media group TVN expanded and revamped its OTT platform with the launch of Player+, its new video-on-demand and live channel offering.
- ◆ The Ginx Esports TV channel signed a carriage



## INDUSTRY NEWS IN BRIEF

NOVEMBER 16 TO 29

deal in Greece with pay-television operator Cosmote TV.

- ◆ Hungarian media services provider Antenna Hungária launched MINDIGO Sport, its first standalone streaming service.
- ◆ BeIN Media Group announced plans to introduce a dedicated beIN Sports cricket channel in the Mena region in 2018 ([page 20](#)).
- ◆ Golf's European Tour appointed Indian telco Tata Communications as its official global connectivity supplier. Tata will distribute video feeds from 47 European Tour tournaments in 30 countries across five continents to 40 broadcasters.
- ◆ US media company CBS completed a deal to acquire Australian commercial broadcaster Ten, which entered voluntary administration in June. The deal covers Ten's linear channel as well as digital-terrestrial channels One and Eleven – in which CBS already had a 33-per-cent stake – and the Tenplay digital platform.
- ◆ The Chilean football association (ANFP) received four bids for Canal del Fútbol, the pay-television broadcaster through which it exploits rights to the top two tiers of domestic club football. The four interested parties are reported to be US media group Turner, media conglomerates Fox and Liberty Global, and private equity firm Citi Venture Capital.
- ◆ European Union negotiators reached a deal to end geo-blocking practices in the EU, but the agreement is set to exclude streaming services. The European Parliament, Council and

Commission reached a political agreement to end geo-blocking for consumers wishing to buy products or services online within the EU.

- ◆ Sportsfix, an OTT service in Southeast Asia, partnered with Football Tribe to deliver more localised sports content for fans across the region. Sportsfix will work with Football Tribe to deliver fans with match previews and analysis to supplement its live and video-on-demand content.
- ◆ The International Mixed Martial Arts Federation launched a process to secure broadcast and sponsorship partners for the 2018-19 period.
- ◆ The International Paralympic Committee and World Para Alpine Skiing revealed that all World Para Alpine Skiing World Cup events during the 2017-18 season will be live streamed for the first time.

### INDUSTRY MOVES

- ◆ The Formula One motor-racing championship hired sports media industry veteran David Hill to advise on an overhaul of how the series is presented on television. Hill, formerly a senior executive at US media company 21st Century Fox, will look at F1's on-screen package, with changes reportedly to include the introduction of virtual advertisements from brands local to where races are held.
- ◆ David Murray, former head of sports rights at UK public-service broadcaster the BBC, joined UK law firm Shoosmiths as a consultant.