



# SportBusiness MEDIA

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## Conmebol wins big in new Libertadores and Sudamericana deals



Viaplay makes first big UK splash with Uefa national team deal



Emtek deal helps Fifa recover from another difficult Indonesian sale



SuperSport eyes long-term stability with new T20 league investment



ProSiebenSat.1 pays decent increase to extend DTM deal in Germany

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## FOOTBALL

# Conmebol wins big in new Libertadores and Sudamericana deals

By Callum McCarthy

- Conmebol to earn \$380m per year for club competition rights across LatAm
- Disney, Paramount, Globo, SBT, DirecTV and OneFootball all acquire packages
- Disney paying over half of total amount to secure key Libertadores packages

**The media rights value of the Copa Libertadores and Copa Sudamericana across Latin America will exceed \$1.5bn (€1.4bn) over the 2023 to 2026 cycle, bringing Conmebol a healthy cycle-on-cycle increase for its club competitions.**

The new deals struck with media groups Disney, Paramount and Globo; Brazilian commercial broadcaster SBT; pay-television operator DirecTV and media platform OneFootball have produced a like-for-like increase of about 66 per cent on the guaranteed income provided by [the equivalent deals in the current four-year cycle](#). The total value of the deals is understood to be \$1.52bn, or \$380m per year.

Media rights deals across the region for the Copa Libertadores and Copa Sudamericana, South America's top-tier club football competitions, are currently worth a guaranteed total of \$228.5m per year from 2019 to 2022. This amount is topped up by subscription revenue driven by [pay-television broadcaster Conmebol TV](#), which was created in 2020 to fill the void left by media group Globo and streaming platform DAZN after they [cancelled their respective deals for rights to the Libertadores and Sudamericana](#).

Prior to Globo and DAZN's cancellations, the guaranteed media rights income from Copa Libertadores and Copa Sudamericana deals in Latin America was \$308.5m per year. The new deals represent an increase of about 23 per cent on the original guaranteed total, which experts believe is a far more accurate barometer by which to measure the competition's media rights revenue growth.

In both the current cycle and the forthcoming one, all commercial rights deals for rights to the two club competitions are struck by the FC Diez Media agency, a special purpose vehicle now wholly-owned by agency IMG. Conmebol, South American football's governing body, continues to be signatory to all deals.

For the upcoming 2023-26 cycle, [FC Diez Media is working purely on a commission basis](#) and will receive about six per cent of all media rights revenue and about 10 per cent of all other revenue driven by commercial rights sales. It is expected to earn a minimum of about \$91m in commission on the latest media rights deals in Latin America.

In the current cycle from 2019-22, the agency pays a minimum guarantee of \$350m per year, earning eight per cent commission on media rights sales and 12 per cent of all other revenue generated by commercial rights sales.

## The deals

FC Diez Media tendered rights to the Copa Libertadores and Copa Sudamericana across a total of 16 packages and two distinct territories: Territory A (Brazil) and Territory B (Spanish-speaking Latin America). The tender was launched on March 18 this year with a first-round bid deadline of April 20.

The tender went to a second round which was called shortly after first-round bids were received. A final decision on the winners of each package was made on May 13. SportBusiness Media understands deals are yet to be signed and finalised but that all successful offers are legally binding and are almost certain to lead to completed agreements. All deals will run from 2023 to 2026.

Media group Disney, which operates the ESPN pay-television channels and the Star+ subscription streaming service, was by far the most aggressive bidder during the process. It is understood to have agreed deals worth a total between \$100m and \$110m per year for the primary packages of pay-television rights to each club competition in Brazil (see sections below). In addition, it acquired exclusive Copa Libertadores rights in Spanish-speaking Latin America in a deal thought to be worth close to \$100m per year.

Paramount, formerly known as ViacomCBS, is understood to have agreed a deal worth between \$55m and \$65m per year for the secondary package of Copa Libertadores rights in Brazil. It agreed a separate deal for free-to-air Copa Libertadores rights in Spanish-speaking Latin America understood to be worth close to \$45m per year.

DirecTV acquired exclusive pay-television rights to the Copa Sudamericana in Spanish-speaking Latin America for about \$25m per year.

Globo retained its free-to-air rights to the Copa Libertadores in Brazil for about \$30m per year. Globo will pay Conmebol an additional total of \$40m as a settlement after the media group terminated its deal in the current cycle. SBT acquired free-to-air rights to the Copa Sudamericana in Brazil for about \$7m per year.

Finally, OneFootball acquired live clips and highlights rights to both competitions across all

territories. The deals are thought to be worth a total of about \$8m per year with the majority of the value allocated to the deals in Brazil.

## **Libertadores packages**

The rights were divided into four packages per 'territory'. Packages A, B, C and G contained rights to the Copa Libertadores.

### **Package A was won by Globo in Brazil.**

The package includes free-to-air rights to between 19 and 25 matches from the Copa Libertadores across its preliminary rounds, group stage and knockout phase.

The package includes rights to six matches from the Initial Playoffs stage featuring Brazilian clubs; between six and 12 group stage matches involving Brazilian clubs; one two-leg tie per round from the Round of 16, quarter-finals and semi-finals; as well as the final.

Globo will be able to show either one or two group matches involving Brazilian clubs during a matchweek (at Conmebol's discretion), though the same clubs cannot be picked for two consecutive weeks.

### **Package A was won by Paramount in Spanish-speaking Latin America.**

The package contains free-to-air rights to 19 matches across its preliminary rounds, group stage and knockout phase.

The package includes rights to: six matches from the Initial Playoffs stage featuring clubs from any nation; six group stage matches involving clubs from any nation; one two-leg tie from the round of 16, quarter-finals, and semi-finals; as well as the final.

Package B was won by Disney in both Brazil and Spanish-speaking Latin America. Package B is identical across both territories.

It contains exclusive pay-television rights to 81 Copa Libertadores matches each year and includes first-pick rights in each round of the competition as well as all odd-number picks available in each round of the competition.

The package contains rights to: two first-phase Initial Playoff ties; four second-phase Initial Playoff ties; two third-phase Initial Playoff ties; 48 group stage matches (of which three are guaranteed to be exclusive each year); four ties from the round of 16; two quarter-finals; one semi-final; the final; and exclusive rights to the Recopa Sudamericana, played between the winners of the Libertadores and Sudamericana each year.

### **Package C was won by Paramount in Brazil and by Disney in Spanish-speaking Latin America.**

Package C is identical across both territories.

It contains exclusive pay-television rights to 76 Copa Libertadores matches each year and includes second-pick rights in each round of the competition as well as all even-number picks available in each round of the competition.

The package contains rights to: One first-phase Initial Playoff two-leg tie; four second-phase Initial Playoff ties; two third-phase Initial Playoff ties; 48 group stage matches; four ties from the round of 16; two quarter-finals and one semi-final. It also includes delayed rights to the final.

**Package G was won by OneFootball in both Brazil and Spanish-speaking Latin America.**

The package contains highlights and clips rights to all matches from the Copa Libertadores across all platforms on a non-exclusive basis (to be shared with the relevant broadcaster of each live match).

A total of 20 minutes of footage per match can be used across highlights and clips with a maximum of seven minutes and 30 seconds of clips allowed per match. Should the full clips allowance be used, any highlights package must be limited to 12 minutes and 30 seconds.

## **Sudamericana packages**

Rights were divided into four packages per 'territory'. Packages D, E, F and H contained rights to the Copa Sudamericana.

**Package D was won by SBT in Brazil and went unsold in Spanish-speaking Latin America.**

The package contains free-to-air rights to 15 Copa Sudamericana matches each year.

The package contains rights to: one tie from the Initial Playoff round; six group stage matches, with the broadcaster not permitted to select the matches of the same local club for two consecutive weeks; one tie from the round of 16; one quarter-final; one semi-final; as well as the final.

**Package E was won by Disney in Brazil and by DirecTV in Spanish-speaking Latin America.**

The package is identical across both territories.

It contains exclusive pay-television rights to a total of 79 Copa Sudamericana matches each year and includes first-pick rights in each round of the competition as well as all odd-number picks available in each round of the competition.

The package contains rights to: eight Initial Playoff ties; 48 group stage matches (of which three are guaranteed to be exclusive); four ties from the round of 16; two quarter-finals; one semi-final; as well as the final.

**Package F was won by Paramount in Brazil and by DirecTV in Spanish-speaking Latin America.**

Package F is identical across both territories.

It contains exclusive pay-television rights to 78 Copa Sudamericana matches each year and includes second-pick rights in each round of the competition as well as all even-number picks available in each round of the competition.

The package contains the same amount of matches in each stage of the competition as in Package E but contains only delayed rights to the final.

**Package H was won by OneFootball in both Brazil and Spanish-speaking Latin America.**

The package contains highlights and clips rights to all matches from the Copa Sudamericana across all platforms on a non-exclusive basis (to be shared with the relevant broadcaster of each live match).

A total of 20 minutes of footage per match can be used across highlights and clips with a maximum of seven minutes and 30 seconds of clips allowed per match. Should the full clips allowance be used, any highlights package must be limited to 12 minutes and 30 seconds.

## Competition

In Brazil, three distinct battles emerged for rights to the Copa Libertadores. Disney's rival for Package B was ecommerce platform Amazon, which wanted Copa Libertadores rights as a way of driving customers to its wider business in Brazil. Amazon sees Brazil as its next growth market for sport and is keenly studying a bid for domestic Copa do Brasil rights from 2023 onwards.

For Package C, Paramount beat competition from Globo, which wanted to boost its SporTV pay-television channels. Globo previously held the equivalent of Packages A and C in the previous cycle before terminating its deals in 2020.

For Package A, Globo went head-to-head with SBT and emerged victorious. SBT had taken over Globo's free-to-air contract in 2020 after the latter terminated its deal in the current cycle. SBT emerged with Package D in Brazil, bidding for the rights as a failsafe in case it lost Package A to Globo.

In Spanish-speaking Latin America, Disney is thought to have faced competition from DirecTV for pay-television rights to the Copa Libertadores, emerging victorious for both packages. Paramount was happy to acquire free-to-air rights to the competition as a means of supporting its commercial broadcasters Telefe (Argentina) and Chilevision (Chile), as well as its advertiser-funded streaming platform Pluto TV.

DirecTV emerged with rights to Packages E and F, retaining its exclusive rights to the Copa Sudamericana for another four years. It beat competition from pay-television operator Claro, which had been a key partner in pay-television broadcaster Conmebol TV.

OneFootball beat competition from technology conglomerate Meta for live clips and highlights



rights to both competitions across the region. Meta currently holds rights to packages of Copa Libertadores matches in both Brazil and Spanish-speaking Latin America, sublicensing linear rights to Disney. [o](#)

## FOOTBALL

# Viaplay makes first big UK splash with Uefa national team deal

By Callum McCarthy

- Viaplay to pay about £80m for UK rights to bulk Uefa national team package
- Premier Sports thought to pay about £30m for rights to same package
- Deals thought to keep income from package flat on previous deal with Sky

**Viaplay's entry to the UK market has taken a sharp turn toward premium sport as its deal for rights to the 'Home Nations' package of European Qualifiers and Nations League matches shakes up the market.**

Media group Viaplay will pay in the region of £20m (€23.5m/\$25.1m) per season for exclusive UK rights to the national team matches of Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and all other European nations excluding England. Viaplay's deal includes Welsh-language rights to Wales matches, which have previously been carved out for local free-to-air broadcasters.

The four-season deal will run from 2024-25 to 2027-28 and includes the 2024-25 and 2026-27 Uefa Nations League tournaments, including the finals; all qualifiers for the 2026 Fifa World Cup and Uefa Euro 2028; and all friendly matches played during the period.

The deal is a marked departure from Viaplay's UK strategy thus far, which has focused on sport and entertainment programming that mostly appeals to expatriate Scandinavians. Prior to the deal with Uefa, its most significant sports acquisitions in the UK were for rights to [European Handball Federation events](#) and [the National Hockey League](#).

While Uefa's tender for rights in the UK allowed for deals over four or six seasons, Viaplay's deal was agreed outside the parameters of the tender. It is understood Viaplay requested a delayed start to its deal – from 2024-25 instead of from 2022-23 – as it wants to properly establish its brand in the UK.

The deal was negotiated by CAA Eleven, Uefa's exclusive sales agent for its national team properties. The rights were tendered in January this year alongside rights to England national team matches, which were [acquired by commercial broadcaster Channel 4 in a two-season deal](#).

Viaplay will exploit the rights on its eponymous subscription streaming service, though the Scottish Football Association says it has held “positive initial dialogue with both Uefa and Viaplay” about the “potential” of some Scotland matches being made available on free-to-air television. UK prior to the beginning of the deal.

Viaplay has committed to drop its paywall in the Netherlands for certain Formula One races and it is thought the platform could be convinced to do a similar thing for selected national team matches in the UK.

Viaplay is set to launch its streaming platform in the UK in the latter half of this year. The media group’s pricing has not yet been announced.

### **Premier fills the gap**

In 2022-23 and 2023-24 – the intervening two seasons between Viaplay’s new deal and the previous deal with Sky – pay-television broadcaster Premier Sports will hold UK rights to the ‘Home Nations’ package in deal thought to be worth about £30m.

Premier Sports will hold exclusive rights to all matches apart from Wales national team matches, to which it will only hold English-language rights. It is thought commercial broadcaster S4C will hold Welsh-language rights to Wales matches in 2022-23 and 2023-24.

Premier’s deal will begin on June 1 with the Finalissima, a match between the reigning champions of the Uefa European Championship and the Copa America.

The Finalissima between Italy and Argentina will be played at Wembley Stadium in the same kickoff slot as Scotland’s 2022 Fifa World Cup qualifying playoff against Ukraine, the rights to which belong to the previous cycle from 2018-19 to 2021-22.

That match will be the final part of pay-television broadcaster Sky’s four-season deal for the ‘Home Nations’ package, from 2018-19 to 2021-22, understood to be worth about £18m per season.

On average, Uefa will earn around the same amount on a per-season basis in its ‘Home Nations’ deals from 2022-28 as it did in the 2018-22 cycle.

### **Viaplay’s surprise**

Viaplay’s acquisition of the ‘Home Nations’ package has brought another serious player to the UK sports rights market at a time of moderate upheaval.

Media group Warner Bros Discovery’s joint-venture deal with telco BT could inject fresh, top-level competition into a UK market that had fallen quiet since the latter’s cross-carriage agreement with Sky in 2017. Meanwhile, Sky continues to shed sports rights as it streamlines its portfolio, reserving cash to renew rights that are key to subscriber retention.

In addition, Channel 4 has stepped up its investment in sport, most notably via an £80m deal for exclusive rights to England's European Qualifiers and Nations League matches in 2022-23 and 2023-24.

Though Viaplay's deal for national team matches will not secure year-round subscribers, it will bring at least tens of thousands of paying customers to its platform at least four months each year.

Experts say the platform will need an accompanying property to prevent significant churn rates and have pointed to the Scottish Premiership as a potential acquisition target. Pay-television rights to the top tier of Scottish club football are currently held by Sky in a five-season deal, from 2020-21 to 2024-25, worth about £26m per season. It is thought the Scottish Premiership currently drives between 125,000 and 150,000 individual subscribers to Sky Sports. [o](#)

## FOOTBALL

# Emtek deal helps Fifa recover from another difficult Indonesian sale

By Kevin McCullagh

- Emtek paying \$50m-\$55m for 2022 Fifa World Cup rights in Indonesia
- Earlier deal with startup wholesaler Klikdaily collapsed
- Second consecutive cycle that Fifa's buyer in Indonesia has run into trouble

**Fifa and the Infront agency faced significant challenges with World Cup rights in Indonesia for the second successive cycle, rescuing the situation by striking a deal with media group Emtek.**

Emtek is understood to be paying between \$50m (€47m) and \$55m [for exclusive rights](#) to the 2022 Fifa World Cup in Qatar and next year's U-20 World Cup, which Indonesia is hosting. As part of the deal, Emtek has agreed to be host broadcaster for the U-20 World Cup.

The broadcaster will televise the tournament on its commercial free-to-air channels SCTV, Indosiar, O Channel and Mentari TV; its Champions TV sports pay-television channels; and on its streaming platform Vidio.

Infront is managing the sale of Fifa rights in Indonesia and 25 other Asian territories under an [eight-year deal covering two World Cups, from 2015 to 2022](#). The deal also covers rights to all other Fifa events during that period. Next year's U-20 World Cup was originally due to be played in 2021 but was postponed due to the pandemic.

Emtek acquired the rights after an earlier deal collapsed. Last year, Fifa awarded exclusive rights to the 2022 World Cup and 2023 U-20 World Cup to local tech startup Klikdaily. Klikdaily was the highest bidder in a sales process that began in 2020 but its deal was later terminated. The company, which does not have an existing media platform, is thought to have struggled to put together an adequate plan to broadcast the tournaments.

Rights in Indonesia to the 2018 Fifa World Cup were acquired by the Futbol Momentum Asia (FMA) agency in a deal worth around \$60m. FMA was an Indonesian firm that traded sports rights and operated some minor local sports television channels.

FMA sublicensed free-to-air and pay-television rights to broadcaster Trans Media and pay-

television rights to media group MNC. FMA later ran into financial difficulties and had trouble paying Fifa.

Given the inclusion of the home U-20 World Cup rights and host broadcast commitment in the most recent deal, a direct value comparison between the Emtek and FMA deals is not possible. But it is clear there has been no significant increase in rights value; on the contrary, the value may have decreased.

Next year's U-20 World Cup is set to be one of the biggest sports events ever hosted by Indonesia, where football is the most popular sport. As host, Indonesia has automatically qualified. There will be great interest in the exploits of the national team but one industry insider said local audiences will be very sensitive to the team's performance – interest will tail off rapidly if it fails to perform. Indonesia has appeared at the tournament only once before, in 1979.

The tournament will have 52 matches played between 24 teams. Local media reports say matches will be played across six cities: Jakarta, Surabaya, Bandung, Surakarta, Gianyar and Palembang.

## **Klik bait**

Klikdaily is thought to have outbid Emtek and MNC in the sales process run by Infront across 2020 and 2021. The tech company is understood to have bid in excess of \$60m. Klikdaily announced in October last year that it had won the rights.

It was a surprise choice as winner given its status as a business-to-business technology company with no existing media platform. Klikdaily's main business is as an online wholesaler that supplies the small, local shops that make up a large chunk of Indonesia's retail economy.

Full details of Klikdaily's plan to broadcast the competitions aren't clear, but it is thought to have agreed a sublicensing deal with Emtek for at least some of the content before its deal was terminated. Fifa and Infront are thought to have subsequently negotiated directly with Emtek to agree the new deal.

Indonesia has long been a difficult market for rights sellers and many have struggled to get paid after agreeing deals there. The two biggest media groups, Emtek and MNC, are considered among the most reliable rights buyers and payers.

New players in the Indonesian sports rights market have emerged on several occasions, offering big money that sellers have found difficult to turn down. Sellers have been encouraged to gamble by Indonesia's vast size – it has a population of 274m – and dynamic, developing economy.

In some cases, the gambles have paid off – [several rights-holders have profited](#) from streaming platform Mola TV's big spending on sport in recent years. Mola is backed by tobacco giant

Djarum and so had the financial resources to meet its rights fee obligations.

In other cases, such as Fifa's deals with FMA and Klikdaily, the gamble has not paid off. Team Marketing was also stung by a [collapsed deal with FMA](#) for Uefa club competition rights in the 2018-19 to 2020-21 cycle.

## Expanding Emtek

The Fifa deal is the second big football acquisition for Emtek this year after it [secured English Premier League rights](#) for the 2022-23 to 2024-25 cycle. These have strengthened Emtek's sports portfolio but also dramatically increased its costs.

Emtek's broadcasting business has been performing well, particularly streaming platform Vidio. This offers both free and paid content and is Indonesia's biggest domestic streaming business with around 70m monthly active users. Paying users are thought to account for just over 2m of these. Vidio was reportedly valued at \$900m last year when private equity firm Affinity Equity Partners invested \$150m into the company.

Vidio will show live coverage of all 64 matches from this year's World Cup. On free-to-air, SCTV will show live and delayed coverage of 56 matches, while Indosiar will show live and delayed matches from the round of 16 onwards. O Channel and Mentari TV will show live group stage matches.

Coverage on the Champions TV pay-television channels will ensure that rural and remote regions of Indonesia can watch the World Cup. In many of these regions, satellite DTH is the main way to receive television. Emtek is an indirect owner of Nex Parabola, one of the major satellite platforms in the country. ○

## CRICKET

# SuperSport eyes long-term stability with new T20 league investment

By Imran Yusuf

- SuperSport to invest about \$9m per year in new South African T20 league
- Broadcaster takes 30 per cent stake alongside CSA and Sundar Raman
- Third attempt at franchise T20 league in SA since 2017

**Pay-television broadcaster SuperSport is looking for stable, sustainable growth for the new T20 competition it plans to own and run with Cricket South Africa.**

Sources say SuperSport is committed to investing around \$9m (€8.4m) per year in media rights fees and production costs over ten years, from 2023 to 2032, to help grow the property. Cricket South Africa will also invest heavily with a view, in the long run, to putting South African cricket's finances on a surer footing.

Experts say that production costs per T20 match, globally, are usually in the region of \$200,000 to \$300,000. However, in South Africa – and with SuperSport doing its production in-house – the costs are understood to be more in the region of \$100,000 to \$120,000 per match. Producing one season of the T20 league is therefore likely to cost around \$3.5m, leaving a media rights fee of about \$5.5m per year.

SuperSport will hold exclusive rights in sub-Saharan Africa, broadcasting all matches live and producing the world feed for international markets.

In terms of international rights sales, sources told SportBusiness Media that broadcasters in India had been sounded out already but that no firm commitments have been made; there remains uncertainty on many aspects of the league and the quality of the product.

A number of foundational matters are still to be resolved, including key aspects of the commercial strategy and the role of the IMG agency. At present, international rights to CSA properties are brokered by IMG, which has worked as CSA's global media rights adviser for close to three decades.



The format will involve six privately-owned franchises competing in a league system before playoffs and a final, with 33 matches in total.

Sources have confirmed to SportBusiness Media that the ownership structure of the league will see CSA holding 57.5 per cent, SuperSport 30 per cent, and Sundar Raman, former chief operating officer of the Indian Premier League and chief executive of Indian media conglomerate Reliance's sports division, holding a 12.5 per cent share.

It is understood that Raman had an advisory role with the new [UAE T20 league](#) but has now shifted his attention to the South African league. Both tournaments are scheduled to hold their inaugural editions in January 2023 with the South African competition to take place after the national team's tour to Australia in December and January.

Regarding scheduling, the new league is potentially on a collision course with other domestic T20 competitions beyond the UAE T20 league. The latest edition of Australia's Big Bash League took place from December 5 to January 28, while the Pakistan Super League was held from January 27 to February 27.

Sources say, however, that there are specific attractions to hosting a T20 tournament in South Africa, including it being in a good time zone for major broadcast markets such as the Indian subcontinent and the UK, along with a strong cricketing culture in which international stars enjoy playing.

### **Third time lucky**

SuperSport and CSA have been involved in ongoing discussions regarding a new T20 league since last year, according to sources. After the problems with their previous two attempts at creating and running a T20 league, it is understood that both parties were keen to create more sustainable model which, importantly, will enjoy a degree of autonomy and independence rather than being run directly by CSA.

CSA's first attempt was the T20 Global League, which was created in 2017 before being quickly aborted. SuperSport and CSA had clashed over whether the pay-television broadcaster would hold rights for the Global League as part of its existing deal with CSA.

Sources say that SuperSport had been unwilling to pay the \$10m per year (excluding production costs) that CSA had sought in media rights revenue for the Global League, instead offering around \$5m-\$6m per year. Ultimately, no other broadcaster was secured for the tournament which as a result was never held.

CSA instead created the Mzansi Super League later in 2018, which was broadcast by public broadcaster, the SABC. The league suffered from financial and governance difficulties since its launch and did not go ahead in 2020-21 or 2021-22.

International rights to the MSL were held by the Global Sports Commerce agency until 2020, when the [deal collapsed](#) due to GSC's non-payment of rights fees. A report into widespread misconduct and mismanagement at the governing body found that CSA had been underpaid by about R100m (\$6.3m/€6m) for the league's international media and commercial rights.

Some sources questioned whether a broadcaster holding a stake in a property would automatically lower its potential ceiling for growth, though the status of SuperSport as effectively the only major sports broadcaster in sub-Saharan Africa must be taken into consideration. There are also examples of success stories, such as Star India's ownership of the [Pro Kabaddi League](#) in which Disney-owned Star has utilised its broadcasting and marketing might to grow the league since its inception in 2015.

### **Sundar Raman**

Sources say Raman will draw on his vast experience as former COO of the IPL and CEO of Reliance's sports division. Raman has also served as a consultant for IPL team the Chennai Super Kings, among other positions, and will bring much-needed administrative and marketing expertise to the new T20 league.

Raman was also instrumental in moving the second edition of the IPL in 2009 to South Africa at short notice due to security concerns.

It is also thought that Raman will help draw Indian investment in teams, with existing IPL franchises such as CSK, the Mumbai Indians and the Rajasthan Royals, among others, thought to be interested in acquiring teams in the new South African league.

The Kolkata Knight Riders already owns a Caribbean Premier League franchise, the Trinbago Knight Riders, and a team in the new UAE T20 League, to be known as the Abu Dhabi Knight Riders. KKR has also invested in the US's [Major League Cricket](#) with the intention of having a team based around Los Angeles.

Sources say that building a solid product domestically is the immediate goal, with the prospect of strong international sales – perhaps one day boosted by the presence of Indian players, who currently can only play in the IPL – a future possibility. ○

## MOTORSPORT

# ProSiebenSat.1 pays decent increase to extend DTM deal in Germany

By Nick Roumpis

- ProSiebenSat. 1 paying just under €5.5m per season for DTM rights in 2022 and 2023
- DTM production costs of €4m per year leave annual rights fee of just under €1.5m
- ServusTV deal for selected rights across DACH worth just under €500,000

**German commercial broadcaster ProSiebenSat.1 has extended its deal with the Deutsche Tourenwagen Masters motorsport series for another two years, paying an increased fee on the back of renewed interest from car manufacturers and drivers.**

ProSiebenSat.1's two-year deal, covering 2022 and 2023, is worth a little less than €5.5m per season. The deal includes exclusive linear rights, non-exclusive digital rights and non-exclusive highlights rights in Germany, as well as non-exclusive platform-neutral rights across Austria and Switzerland. The deal was completed late last year.

DTM will spend about €4m per year on production during the deal, leaving just under €1.5m per season as a rights fee. DTM has also assumed production costs as part of its previous domestic media rights deals.

The total value of the new ProSiebenSat.1 deal represents an uplift of just under 20 per cent on the previous two-year deal, [covering 2020 and 2021](#), when ProSiebenSat.1 paid around €4.4m per season to secure the rights. That deal was itself an increase on the prior agreement, worth just under €4m per year in 2018 and 2019.

Meanwhile, commercial broadcaster ServusTV has also struck [a separate deal](#) with DTM for non-exclusive digital rights and highlights rights in Germany – to be shown on its OTT platform ServusTV On – as well as non-exclusive, platform-neutral rights in Austria and Switzerland for the 2022 season only. It is understood that Servus is paying a little less than €500,000 for the rights.

It is understood that other commercial broadcasters also showed interest in the rights, but ProSiebenSat.1 was eager to retain the rights as DTM is its flagship motorsports property. Other motorsport properties held by ProSiebenSat.1 include the Extreme E racing series as well as Formula E, both under long-term contracts signed in 2020 and 2021.

## Upward trend

The decent uplift is attributed to the increase in the drivers and teams participating in the 2022 season. DTM started its 2022 season in April with the participation of 30 drivers, 17 teams and 6 manufacturers. This compares to 19 fixed drivers and seven guest drivers in 2021.

Sources said that the increase in teams, manufacturers and drivers placed DTM in a strong negotiating position with broadcasters, resulting in the higher fee paid for 2022 and 2023.

In addition, DTM is one of the most popular touring car series in the world, second only to Supercars in Australia in terms of domestic interest in the series.

DTM's umbrella organisation, ITR, struck the deal with 7Sports, the wholly-owned sports business unit of ProSiebenSat.1 Media. The new agreement means the DTM will remain on flagship commercial channel ProSieben, which will show live coverage of every race on both Saturdays and Sundays.

Although DTM is a domestic racing series mainly popular in the DACH region, DTM has tried hard in recent years to expand its international coverage. The DTM's 2022 season comprises 16 races to be held primarily in Germany, but also in Italy, Austria, Belgium and Portugal.

In one of its most significant deals outside Germany, the Nordic Entertainment (Nent) Group acquired DTM rights in the Nordics, the Baltics and Poland, covering nine countries in total, in a deal running from 2021 to 2023.

German agency EMPA handles the international rights sales for DTM and has secured coverage for the series in over 30 territories. DTM handles the sale of its domestic rights in-house. ○

**BADMINTON**

# Infront and BWF go non-exclusive to maintain revenue in China

By Kevin McCullagh

- BWF maintains revenue from China in new deals from 2022-26
- Infront agrees multiple deals worth total of \$3m-\$4m per year
- Chinese sports streamers become more cautious amid challenging market conditions

**The Infront agency has brokered a series of non-exclusive deals in China for Badminton World Federation digital media rights in order to preserve revenue from the challenging market.**

Streaming rights deals have been agreed with [Youku](#) and Zhibo.tv. IPTV rights deals have been agreed with BesTV and You Sports. Linear rights deals have been agreed with state broadcaster CCTV and regional broadcaster Hunan TV.

The streaming and IPTV deals cover all BWF events, non-exclusively. CCTV has linear rights for all events, and linear exclusivity over the BWF 'majors' – the Thomas & Uber Cup, the Sudirman Cup, and the World Championships. Hunan TV has non-exclusive linear rights for World Tour events only.

All deals cover the five years from 2022 to 2026.

BWF rights revenue from China is understood to be around the same level as it achieved in the previous cycle, from 2018 to 2021. In both cycles, total revenue from the market across all deals is understood to have been between \$3m (€2.9m) and \$4m per year. The proportions of revenue coming from the digital and linear deals is understood to be roughly 50:50 in both cycles.

In the previous cycle, Infront brokered a streaming rights deal with Zhibo.tv, an IPTV rights deal with You Sports, and linear deals with CCTV and Guangdong TV. The deals had varying durations.

The sellers opted to split the streaming and IPTV rights among a bigger group of buyers this time for several reasons.

Zhibo.tv was the main digital rights partner during the previous cycle. However, the platform's

business has struggled in recent years and it was not considered a strong candidate to renew the deal on the same terms.

Zhibo.tv's struggles are in line with wider challenges in the Chinese digital sports rights market that have increased in the past couple of years, particularly following the virtual collapse of former market-leader PP Sports. That platform had driven huge inflation, particularly in the value of football rights, with an aggressive bidding strategy. It has lost most of its properties in the last couple of years and a slew of football rights-holders have seen their values fall by large percentages as a result.

Rival streaming platforms iQiyi Sports and Migu have stepped into the breach left by PP Sports' decline but have been more careful in their spending. It is understood that neither showed strong interest in acquiring BWF rights.

Migu, in particular, has been a saviour for several properties in the last year or so, spending relatively heavily to establish itself as a new power in sports streaming. It helped [World Table Tennis secure an increase](#) in the value of its rights in its new cycle. ITTF table tennis streaming rights in China were another property [previously held by Zhibo.tv](#), via its parent company Seca.

Migu is now slowing down its pace of acquisitions having assembled a strong portfolio, industry insiders say.

The third major Chinese sports streamer, Tencent, is not thought to have shown strong interest in the BWF rights either. Tencent has cut back activity in sports streaming in recent years. It has folded its formerly standalone sports video business into its wider video business. Aside from its crown jewel property, the NBA, it has been making only low-value forays into the sports content market.

Youku has invested in BWF rights despite recently scaling back its activity in sports streaming. The Alibaba-owned platform never managed to establish itself among the market's biggest sports streamers but at one point was a bidder for major properties. It [challenged Tencent for the NBA rights](#), the most valuable sports rights property in China, the last time they were sold.

Since that failed bid, Youku is understood to have drastically reduced the size of its sports staff. It made a couple of notable, although small, acquisitions in the last year: a [one-season deal](#) for the Uefa Champions League and a deal for [Fifa Club World Cup rights](#) this year.

The seven deals secured by Infront have assured the BWF of wider distribution for its content in China in the new cycle.

Some of the seven deals for the new cycle, including the Youku deal, were agreed in recent weeks, shortly before this month's Thomas and Uber Cup Finals (men's and women's team World Championships, respectively). The relatively late agreements are indicative of the current challenging state of the Chinese market.

## Badminton's standing

Badminton is a major participation sport in China and one in which the country's athletes have historically been among the best in the world.

The BWF and Infront faced an additional challenge coming to market this time in that China's standing in the men's game has weakened in recent years. A particularly big factor was the retirement in 2020 of local hero Lin Dan, one of the greatest badminton players of all time.

Badminton never attracted the big digital rights fees enjoyed by major football and basketball properties during the recent boom years. Industry insiders point to a few factors behind this.

First, there is not as high a volume of week-in, week-out content in the BWF schedule as in football and basketball leagues. Audience interest in badminton also tends to cluster around the biggest annual tournaments.

Another factor is that overseas football and basketball leagues have a particular cachet among Chinese viewers by virtue of being major global properties with global celebrities. Badminton is a more traditional and familiar sport in the market, and its top players don't have the same global status as the biggest football and basketball players and teams. ○

## FOOTBALL

# Disney and Globo keep Uefa national team fee steady in Brazil

By Callum McCarthy

- Disney and Globo to pay \$30m in joint deal for Uefa national team package
- Media groups will pay equal share of rights fee and take even share of matches
- Fee about flat compared to previous deal with Warner Bros. Discovery worth \$21m

**Disney and Globo's joint six-season deal for co-exclusive rights to Uefa European Qualifiers and Nations League matches will dramatically boost exposure for the properties in Brazil and keep fees steady in a tricky territory, much to the delight of Uefa and CAA Eleven.**

SportBusiness Media understands the two media groups will pay an equal share of about \$30m over the six seasons from 2022-23 to 2027-28, an average of about \$5m per season. This is a marginal decrease on the \$5.25m per season paid by media group Warner Bros. Discovery in the current cycle, from 2018-19 to 2021-22.

Despite the fee remaining roughly flat, Uefa and its exclusive sales agent CAA Eleven are understood to be pleased with the result. The exposure Disney and Globo will provide across their respective pay-television and streaming platforms – ESPN and Star+ (Disney); SporTV and Globoplay (Globo) – will significantly exceed the current level provided by the incumbent across its pay-television broadcaster TNT Sports and streaming platform HBO Max.

Disney and Globo will share the matches contained within the package over the course of their deal via an alternating pick system. The exception will be the Nations League finals, which the media groups plan to simulcast across their respective platforms for the three editions under the deal in 2023, 2025 and 2027.

It is thought that Disney and Globo did not face any serious competition for the rights, nor did the incumbent make a bid to retain the property.

Since media groups WarnerMedia and Discovery merged earlier this year, the resulting company, Warner Bros. Discovery, has been focused on internal restructuring and its grander media strategies in the US and Europe. Warner Bros. Discovery's only remaining major football property



in Brazil is the Uefa Champions League, to which it holds exclusive pay-television rights [in a deal worth \\$30m per season from 2021-22 to 2023-24](#).

The joint deal was largely due to the strong relationship between the sports departments of Disney and Globo, afforded by distinct acquisition strategies that rarely sees one bid against the other. Disney is primarily focused on acquiring premium European football to populate its Star+ platform while Globo is almost entirely focused on domestic football properties such as the matches of the Brazilian national team, the matches of Campeonato Série A and Série B clubs in Brazil, as well as the Copa do Brasil.

Rights to the European Qualifiers and Nations League package are understood to have gone on sale in Brazil in April, shortly after the rights were tendered across Spanish-speaking Latin America.

After Globo was informed its bid for pay-television rights to the Copa Libertadores in Brazil from 2023-26 had been rejected in the first round of that process, sources say Disney saw an opportunity to acquire Uefa national team rights alongside Globo, which now had spare budget and a desire to acquire top-tier football content for its subscription platforms.

The two media groups' joint bid is thought to have been submitted in contravention of the terms of Uefa and CAA Eleven's tender, however it represented by far the most attractive offer.

The deal will begin on June 1 with the Finalissima, a match played between reigning European champions Italy and reigning South American champions Argentina. The Finalissima will be shown exclusively on Disney's platforms.

Rights in Brazil to Uefa Euro 2024 will be sold at a later date by CAA Eleven, which is keen to see how market dynamics unfold following the now-concluded tender for Copa Libertadores and Copa Sudamericana rights in the country. [Disney and rival media group Paramount each emerged with packages of pay-television rights](#) to each competition, while Globo secured a package of free-to-air rights to the Copa Libertadores.

Disney is also understood to have acquired rights to the European Qualifiers and Nations League package in Spanish-speaking Latin America (excluding Mexico) from 2022-23 to 2027-28, while pay-television broadcaster Sky Mexico is thought to have secured the rights in Mexico over the same six-season period. ○

**TENNIS**

# SuperSport strikes steady renewals for French and Australian Opens

By Imran Yusuf

- SuperSport paying around \$850,000 per year for French Open, from 2022-26
- Deal for Australian Open worth about \$1.3m per year, from 2022-26
- Both deals see SuperSport pay modest increases for extended deal terms

**African pay-television broadcaster SuperSport renewed its exclusive English-language rights to the French Open and Australian Open, paying slight increases in both to secure longer terms.**

SuperSport's five-year deal with the Fédération Française de Tennis, the governing body of tennis in France and the French Open's commercial rights-holder, is understood to be worth about \$850,000 (€806,800) per year. The deal runs from 2022 to 2026 and will continue to provide SuperSport with exclusive English-language rights in sub-Saharan Africa.

The new deal represents an increase of about 13 per cent on SuperSport's previous deal with the FFT, which was worth about \$750,000 per year and ran from 2018 to 2021.

Meanwhile, SuperSport's new five-year deal with Tennis Australia for rights to the Australian Open is thought to be worth around \$1.3m (€1.23m) per year. The new agreement is worth just over 20 per cent more than its predecessor, a three-year deal from 2019 to 2021 that was worth just over \$1m per year.

SuperSport will show both tournaments in the English language across sub-Saharan Africa, though the rights in South Africa are worth at least half the total value of each deal. SuperSport holds rights to all four grand slams across the region as well as ATP Tour 1000, 500 and 250 events across the region.

## French Open

The partnership between SuperSport and the FFT began over 15 years ago and sources say the strong relationship ensured that the rights-holder was able to secure an increased fee despite the absence of competition.

No formal tender was issued and it is understood the deal was finalised during the Sportel conference in Monaco last October.

Regarding the duration of the contract, sources say the FFT factored in that there would be no other competitor in the sub-Saharan landscape in the near future. As a result, agreeing a five-year deal suited all parties. SuperSport's most recent major pay-television rival in the territory, Kwesé TV, [shut down](#) its pay-television channels in 2018 following financial difficulties.

Pay-television broadcaster Canal Plus holds French-language rights to the French Open in sub-Saharan Africa. Experts say the media rights value for these rights is significantly lower than the English-language rights.

While the timezone is the same in France and South Africa, the grand slam has historically not been as popular in SuperSport's primary territory as other grand slams.

## Australian Open

SuperSport's new deal places the Australian Open's value above what SuperSport currently pays for Wimbledon. That [five-year deal](#), from 2018 to 2022, is worth around \$1.1m per year, though industry experts anticipate a new long-term SuperSport deal for Wimbledon at a higher fee covering 2023 onwards.

As part of the new agreement, SuperSport has committed to televising the Australian Open on a minimum of two linear channels and streaming coverage across its mobile and internet services. It will also have rights to Australian Open original programming, however Tennis Australia has retained significant digital clip rights.

Tennis Australia has negotiated its own media rights sales since 2015. IMG was responsible for the Australian Open's media rights before the association moved sales in-house and took control of the host broadcast contract.

Despite the long distance between Africa and Australia, the time zone for the Australian Open is not prohibitive for viewing in the territory. The 2022 men's final took place on a Sunday in the 'twilight session' in Melbourne, which does not start before 10.30am in South Africa. [o](#)

## TENNIS

# Kosmos gets increased fee and exposure in Italy for Davis Cup

By Nick Roumpis

- Sky Italia, Rai and SuperTennis paying more than €1m per year for Davis Cup
- Deal represents three-fold increase on previous agreement with SuperTennis
- United paying just over €1m per year for rights across active territories

**Kosmos Tennis has made a strong start to its Davis Cup media rights sales by securing increases in fee across Italy and the Balkans, a sign that the competition's revamped format is bearing fruit.**

Agency Kosmos Tennis, which forms part of the investment group Kosmos co-founded by Spanish footballer Gerard Pique, has secured deals worth over €1m per season in Italy over the three years from 2022 to 2024.

The rights will be shared across pay-television broadcaster Sky Italia, public-service broadcaster Rai and digital terrestrial broadcaster SuperTennis, the broadcaster owned by the Italian Tennis Federation.

Sky has acquired Davis Cup pay-television rights, Rai has secured free-to-air rights, while SuperTennis has secured highlights rights for its linear channel and digital rights for live games on its OTT platform supertennix.it.

The total annual fee to be paid by the three broadcasters is just under 300 per cent more than the €350,000 SuperTennis paid in its one-year deal for Davis Cup rights, covering 2021 only.

Apart from the big increase in the annual fee, the latest deal will bring the Davis Cup much increased exposure in an important tennis market. The competition will be shown on various platforms including on Rai's biggest channels.

Davis Cup games will mostly be shown across Sky's pay-television channels and Rai Sport, but key matches involving the Italian national team will also be shown on Rai 1 and Rai 2, the most-watched channels in Italy. Italian national team matches will also be shown on Sky.

The significantly increased fee is partly due to the strong performance of Italian players in recent years, which has driven up the interest in the country. At least four Italian players – Fabio Fognini, Lorenzo Sonego, Jannik Sinner and Matteo Berrettini – are regularly in the ATP's top 50 male players, strengthening the Italian national team.

In addition, one of the groups in this season's Davis Cup Finals will play in Bologna, further adding to the value of the Italian deal.

Kosmos Tennis has also increased its media rights fee across the Balkans, Greece and Bulgaria in a multi-territory deal with United Media Group, which owns pay-television broadcasters Nova (Greece, Bulgaria) and Sportklub (Balkans).

United has secured exclusive Davis Cup rights across the territories in a four-season deal running from 2021 to 2024. Croatia will be added to the deal from 2022 as public-service broadcaster HRT's existing deal ended in 2021.

The total fee starts at just under €1m in 2021, gradually increasing to nearly €1.5m in the last season of the agreement. Sources say the average fee paid by United across the territories is more than three times higher than the Davis Cup earned in its previous deals with pay-television broadcaster Arena Sport covering the Balkans, pay-television broadcaster Cosmote in Greece and HRT in Croatia. The competition had no exposure in Bulgaria.

The Balkans and Greece have emerged as important markets for tennis properties due to the growing number of high-calibre players competing in the Davis Cup, resulting in higher interest.

### **More deals to come**

Although only a few Davis Cup deals have been formally announced from 2022 onward, many more are in the final stages of negotiations or close to final signature.

Some of the deals nearing completion include deals in Romania with media rights agency Playbook International; in Mena and France with pay-television broadcaster beIN Sports; in the Netherlands with Ziggo; and in Germany and Switzerland with ServusTV.

Outside of Europe, Kosmos Tennis appointed Sportfive in May as its exclusive Davis Cup media rights agent in all Asian markets except China, Japan, Kazakhstan and Singapore. The three-year agreement will run from 2022 to 2024.

Kosmos took commercial control of the Davis Cup after signing a lucrative 25-year deal with the International Tennis Federation in 2018, worth \$3bn.

The group stage of this season's Davis Cup Finals will be played across four cities – Bologna, Glasgow, Hamburg and Valencia – from September 14 to 18. The top eight teams will advance to the knockout stage, which will be held in Malaga from November 21 to 27.

The 2022 Davis Cup will add a host city for its group stage, increasing the number from three to four. The duration of the Finals will be extended by one day to 12 days in order to ease pressure on the schedule. [o](#)

## MOTOR RACING

# W Series secures first UK rights fee with Sky

By Imran Yusuf

- Sky paying around £300,000 per year for W Series rights, from 2022-24
- W Series runs alongside Formula One race weekends, to which Sky also holds rights
- Channel 4 to show highlights and W Series British GP live

**The W Series will receive its first UK rights fee from Sky Sports in a new three-year deal, moving the series to pay-television after an exposure-focused deal with Channel 4 last year.**

Sky's deal for the W Series, the women's open-wheel motorsport series, is understood to be worth about £300,000 (\$366,480/€352,720) per year. The deal will run from 2022 to 2024.

In the W Series' [previous UK deal](#) covering 2021 only, commercial broadcaster Channel 4 did not pay a rights fee, instead offering the value of free-to-air exposure.

Sky will show live coverage of every W Series qualifying and race session, though Channel 4 will simulcast live coverage of Silverstone's British Grand Prix and show highlights of the nine other races each season.

The Sky deal was negotiated in-house by W Series, which [appointed the Pitch International agency](#) in 2019 to distribute its broadcast rights outside the UK in a deal that will end at the conclusion of this season. The W Series is thought to be weighing up its options for its international media rights strategy for 2023 onwards.

For the UK deal, it is understood that the W Series held conversations with all major UK free-to-air broadcasters before partnering with Sky. The BBC in particular expressed strong interest in the rights.

## Slipstreaming F1

Sky had attempted to secure the rights to the W Series last year with a bid thought to be slightly lower than the new deal's annual value. The W Series opted for greater exposure on Channel 4,

which had covered the series' debut season in 2019 before the 2020 campaign was cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Since 2021, the eight W Series weekends (featuring ten races) have been paired with F1 weekend races. This will now complement Sky's coverage of Formula One, which it shows in the UK under a [six-year deal](#) from 2019 to 2024 worth about £180m per year. The W Series deal also ends in 2024, reinforcing the notion that the two properties are now paired in Sky's mind as a broad offering to motorsport fans.

In the US, the W Series has a [deal for this season](#) with ESPN, which also [holds F1](#) rights in a deal concluding this year.

Riding on the coattails of F1 has advantages for the W Series, as motorsport fans are able to watch every race of the championship live on Sky Sports F1, as well as qualifying sessions (which Channel 4 previously only showed on its YouTube channel) and weekly preview shows across Sky Sports' linear and digital platforms. Sky is also able to amplify its W Series coverage more broadly across its vast network of platforms and programming.

Some experts told SportBusiness Media, however, that the W Series could have gone to pay-television too early as it remains a very young property.

To combat the lack of exposure on pay-television, Sky will simulcast W Series races on its basic-tier Showcase channel, thus broadening access. The broadcaster, though, is not obliged to show all races on Showcase.

Experts also say that for a fledging property to receive the 'Sky Sports treatment' – a high level of promotion and production across linear and digital platforms – counts for a lot in terms of the trade-off with free-to-air coverage.

While Sky's investment in W Series across the rights fee and production costs might not bring immediate return on investment, sources say the broadcaster generally takes a medium- to long-term view in helping to build sports properties in which it sees growth potential.

The 2022 W Series season openers, which took place on May 7 and 8 in Miami, drew strong viewership on Sky, with a peak audience of 453,000 viewers. Sky stated that more people under 25 watched a W Series race than ever before.

## Channel 4

The W Series' highlights and British GP deal with Channel 4 also offers synergy, as the broadcaster already [sublicenses highlights from Sky](#) to all Formula One races as well as live rights to the British Grand Prix in a three-year deal, from 2020 to 2022. Channel 4 previously held a 25-per-cent stake in production company Whisper, W Series' host broadcaster.



Channel 4, meanwhile, secured [a deal](#) in January with Formula E for two years, covering 2022 and 2023, with the option of a third year if mutually agreed. The BBC [held Formula E rights](#) last year.

Sources say that scheduling was a key driving factor for the commercial broadcaster in partnering with Formula E; Channel 4 was not able to offer firm commitments to the W Series about broadcasting all its races in their entirety.

The W Series has its Europe-based races during prime time on Saturdays, and last year Channel 4 encountered some difficulties broadcasting races in full due to delays during races and qualifying sessions, extending its coverage into key news programming slots. As a public-service broadcaster, Channel 4 has regulatory requirements such as showing the news at an appointed time.

Furthermore, five of this year's 10 W Series races take place in the Americas, as well as one race in Japan. This strongly limited the value for Channel 4 and hampered their ability to commit to live coverage.

By contrast, Formula E operates under a timed race system – as opposed a set number of laps – and is therefore, experts say, a better fit for free-to-air broadcasters with regard to its scheduling commitments. ○