

TV sports embrace change to provide emotional impact

Television audience measurement company Eurodata TV Worldwide says televised sport is continuing to create the emotional impact to attract large television audiences. Eurodata said that rights-holders were successfully changing formats and mixing entertainment elements into sports to retain viewer interest.

Eurodata vice president Jacques Braun also emphasised the power of local sports events as well as the 'mega' events to generate audience interest.

"Local sports and events can be successful on TV by gathering specific viewer profiles. Sponsor and advertisers may be looking for mass-audience but even more for values and emotions, just like what was achieved for the recent Handball and Alpine Skiing World Championships," he said.

The Eurodata press release said, "rights-holders are moving to anticipate the viewer's tastes and behaviour. TV channels are likely to cross sport content with entertainment," citing US broadcaster NBC's American Gladiators programme as an example.

Eurodata said that growing television interest in Formula One had proved that "changing for TV makes sense".

"New rules, new circuits, new pilots, new schedules, less difference between the cars, everything is done to privilege suspense as if it was a successful TV series – even the final episode is frequently the most followed!"

Eurodata figures show that the 2008 Brazilian Grand Prix – the final race of the season – got the best Formula One television audience in France (TF1), Germany (RTL),

Italy (RAI1), Spain (Tele5) and the UK, with ITV1 drawing more than 9 million viewers to witness British driver Lewis Hamilton's dramatic championship victory.

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