

## SHORTSTOP

**Eurosport:** The pan-European broadcaster acquired exclusive television, internet and mobile rights for the inaugural Airtel Champions League Twenty20 tournament, taking place in India this month, in a deal with Asian broadcaster ESPN Star Sports. The competition features teams from the Indian Premier League, the English Twenty20 Cup, the Trinidad & Tobago team, Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, and Sri Lanka.

**TV2 Denmark:** The broadcast of Danish boxer Mikkel Kessler's fight against Venezuela's Gusmyr Perdomo on Danish commercial channel TV2 drew a 72-per-cent peak market share, on Saturday, September 12. The audience peaked at 1.645 million. Kessler won the fight with a fourth-round TKO.

**ESPN:** ESPN America acquired the English-language television rights in Europe for NFL matches in a four-year deal. The deal begins this season and includes the rights for around 100 matches per season, including pre-season and post-season matches, and the Super Bowl, in 41 European territories. ESPN America will show between four and six live matches per week during the regular season.

**UEFA:** Television rights in Brazil for Uefa's Champions League rights were acquired by free-to-air broadcaster Esporte Interativo, and pay-television broadcaster Globo. Esporte Interativo will show one live match each Tuesday, free-to-air broadcaster TV Bandeirantes will also show a live match each Wednesday, having sub-licensed the rights from Globo, which will at least broadcast the Champions League final. Pay-broadcaster ESPN will also carry live and delayed coverage.

**Canal Plus:** Orad and STATS agreed a deal with French pay-broadcaster Canal Plus to provide it with technology allowing it to track the position of players on pitches and provide statistics on the time they spend in possession, the distance they cover and the parts of the pitch they have spend most of their time.



No bum deal - the IOC's new TV contract in Brazil. - Getty Sport Images

## A TALE OF TWO CITIES

The IOC has secured new, improved television rights deals for the 2014- and 2016 Olympics in Brazil and Spain, two of the markets which hope to host the 2016 event. **Kevin McCullagh** reports.

**THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER** was fruitful for the IOC and its round of television rights sales for the 2014 and 2016 Olympics. New deals agreed in Brazil and Spain are set to deliver increased fees. And the deals come just weeks before each of the countries learns whether they will host the 2016 Summer Games.

According to *TV Sports Markets*, analysts on the business of televised sport, the Brazilian deal will see Olympics rights fees approach the level of the football World Cup, as media group TV Globo and free-to-air broadcasters Bandeirantes and Rede Record committed to pay \$170 million.

In Spain, public-service broadcaster RTVE paid a 20-per-cent increase on what it paid for the 2010 and 2012 Games as the IOC continued its new strategy of selling directly into top European markets, rather than doing its traditional pan-European deal with the European Broadcasting Union. The host bids by Madrid and Rio de Janeiro played a role in boosting the value of the rights, but the increases were achieved in two media markets at polar-opposite stages of development and fortune.

The three-fold increase in the fee in Brazil - again compared to the 2010 and 2012 Games - was powered by the competition between wealthy pay-television rivals Globo and Record, competing in a rapidly developing telecoms market in a booming wider economy.

Record put in a bid for exclusive rights across all platforms, as it did so successfully for the rights for the 2010 and 2012 Games in deals signed in March 2007. But this time it was beaten by a bid from Globo and Bandeirantes for non-exclusive free-to-air rights and exclusive pay-television and new media rights.

Record, which has pushed Globo hard in head-to-head rights battles in recent years with strategically over-the-top bids, had to settle for the other non-exclusive, free-to-air package.

Record is coming away with less than it hoped, but its portion of the rights means it retains some ownership of the Olympics franchise to follow its 2010 and 2012 coverage. If Rio wins the 2016 hosting rights, the huge interest from local advertisers and sponsors should assure that Record makes a tidy profit, even with the smaller package.

In stark contrast to Brazil, the Spanish television market is in such a dire state that the Olympics deal immediately raised the question of whether the IOC would not have been better waiting until the conclusion of an expected period of consolidation in the broadcast sector.

Commercial broadcasters have been hit by a heavy slump in the advertising market, the leading satellite operator Digital Plus is currently up for sale, pay-DTT services have only just been approved, and RTVE is moving from an advertising-funded model to an industry-tax-funded model which telecoms and broadcasting companies are balking at.

The IOC pressed ahead with the 2014-2016 sales anyway, in part to capitalise on the possibility of Madrid hosting the 2016 event, but also in the belief that it was better to get a deal done earlier than later. The European tender process has also been dragging on since May last year, when market conditions were much rosier.

The rights are among the last RTVE can buy as the Spanish government curtails its spending on sports as part of its financial restructure. RTVE's sports rights budget must now be no more than 10 per cent of its overall programming budget.