[DE] New TV Contract Between ARD/ZDF and Sports Authorities

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Sports rights agency SportA, acting for the public service broadcasters Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Rundfunkanstalten Deutschlands (ARD) and Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen (ZDF) has concluded a new television contract with the governing bodies of 32 different sports.

Under the new deal, the broadcasters can report on the sports concerned (which do not include football) until 2006. They will enjoy exclusive global broadcasting rights, which will also cover transmissions via the Internet. The sports bodies will no longer have to pay for television coverage, although some sports will lose their right to a guaranteed minimum amount of airtime. These clauses were also contained in the previous agreement, to which private broadcaster Deutsches Sport Fernsehen (DSF) was also a party.

On the other hand, the public service broadcasters have not yet secured broadcasting rights for the 2002 Football World Cup from KirchHolding. A contract has already been agreed, under which the rights are to be bought for around DEM 225 million, partly offset by the transfer to Kirch of pay-TV rights to the Olympic Games. However, this is subject to the approval of the appropriate ARD and ZDF bodies, which are unhappy with the price, since not all World Cup matches are covered by the proposed agreement. Furthermore, the respective ranges of the broadcasts are not clearly defined and there are doubts about the clause which only gives the public service broadcasters an option, which is considered non-binding, to purchase the rights to broadcast the 2006 World Cup in Germany.

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http://www.sporta.de/deutsch/02b/02b001.cfm

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