[DE] Decisions on Bundesliga Broadcasts

IRIS 2006-6:1/14

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The *Kommission zur Ermittlung der Konzentration im Medienbereich* (Commission on Concentration in the Media - KEK) has raised no objections to the granting of a broadcasting licence to Arena. This decision was announced on 12 April 2006. However, the KEK added that Arena's parent company, Unity Media, would have to be monitored in order to ensure that this combination of content provision and network operation did not form an obstacle to other pay-TV providers. When the broadcasting rights for the football Bundesliga were sold, Arena had been awarded the pay-TV rights, leaving the previous rightsholder, Premiere, empty-handed (see IRIS 2006-4:11).

Meanwhile, the *Landgericht Dortmund* (Dortmund District Court) has rejected an application by *Arena* for a temporary injunction which would have given it the right to use Premiere's decoders. Arena was therefore forced to reach an agreement with Premiere or offer its own set-top boxes. Arena has now decided to opt for the latter solution (see IRIS 2006-5: 11).

Meanwhile, Deutsche Telekom, which acquired the Internet rights for the Bundesliga, is planning to provide an IPTV service, i.e. transmission of television services via Internet protocol, to be operated by its subsidiary T-Online and launched in the second half of 2006. The service will include around 100 channels, with matches in the German football Bundesliga as one of the key attractions. In this connection, a dispute has recently flared up between Deutsche Telekom and the German Football League (DFL) concerning the scope of these football rights. Whereas Deutsche Telekom believes that IPTV broadcasting, which can divert signals directly to existing Premiere decoders and can therefore be viewed on a traditional TV set, is covered by the rights it has acquired, the DFL claims that Internet rights should not be used for transmissions to television sets, as this would reduce the value of the pay-TV rights purchased by Arena.

Pressemitteilung der KEK vom 6. Juni 2006

http://www.kek-online.de/cgi-bin/resi/i-presse/396.htm

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