[DE] No Short Reporting

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The public service broadcasters in Germany have agreed not to include short reports of the Sunday matches in the German football Bundesliga in their main news programmes. Neither the "Tagesschau" news programme at 8 pm nor the "heute-journal" at 9.45 pm will show footage of the Sunday matches, and viewers will only see the results and league tables. In an agreement with the German Football League (DFL), the broadcasters are contractually bound not to show any match action before 11 pm.

In principle, all licensed TV broadcasters in Europe are entitled, under Art. 5 of the Rundfunkstaatsvertrag (Inter-State Broadcasting Agreement), to show in Germany (free of charge) short reports of events that are open to the public and of general interest. This includes access rights for short live broadcasts and transmission rights in some cases. Short coverage must take the form of news-type reporting. Its permissible duration is the length of time needed to convey the news content of the event and is normally limited to 90 seconds. Several brief reports may be summarised as long as their news character is preserved.

The public service broadcasters ARD and ZDF therefore have a legal right to short reporting. However, they have both signed contracts with the DFL concerning the secondary exploitation of Bundesliga matches. Under these agreements, their Saturday programmes "Sportschau" and "Das aktuelle Sportstudio" can include match highlights lasting considerably longer than the minimum duration guaranteed by their short reporting rights. As part of the negotiation of these contracts, the DFL insisted that the public service broadcasters waive their short reporting rights in order to increase the value of the primary exploitation rights.

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