[GB] Government protects eight sporting events for terrestrial television

IRIS 1996-4:1/24

Tony Prosser
University of Bristol Law School

The British Government has agreed to provide protection for eight important sporting events which will mean that they cannot be shown live on an exclusive basis either on subscription or on pay-per-view. The effect is that they will be shown on terrestrial television.

The previous position under the Broadcasting Act 1990 was that these 'listed events' were protected from being broadcast solely on a pay-per-view basis, but could be shown exclusively on a subscription channel. The House of Lords voted 223 to 106 to amend the Broadcasting Bill currently before Parliament in order to extend the protection and this was taken into account by the Government in the decision to extend protection.

The eight events are the FA Cup Final (football), the Scottish Cup Final (football), the World Cup finals (football), the Olympics, home test matches involving England (cricket), the Grand National (horse racing), the Derby (horse racing) and finals weekend at Wimbledon (tennis).

See 54 House of Lords Debates, 4 March 1996, Written Answers cols 7-9.

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026