

## FOREWORD

I feel very honoured to have been invited to contribute the Foreword to this book on sports TV rights. It is fair to say, I think, that our lives in the twenty-first century are, in many respects, dominated by the media and sport; and, when combined, they are a very powerful force and mix indeed. It has been well said that sport and the media are, metaphorically speaking, a marriage made in heaven. This book in the now well-established Asser Sports Law Series of Titles, the brainchild of the Director of the prestigious T.M.C. Asser Instituut International Sports Law Centre in The Hague, Dr Robert Siekmann, is most certainly both timely and welcome. I am particularly enthusiastic about the fact that a number of esteemed colleagues who are members of the EMR Media Network have been invited to contribute to this collection.

The first part of the book consists of several contributions on the very important European Law aspects of sports broadcasting rights in the digital age as well as TV rights relating to major sports events which are both of particular professional interest to me. Without the commercial exploitation of those rights and the resulting spectacular revenues generated, I may add, many sports events would never see the light of day, much to the disappointment of the general public.

The second part of the book consists of 27 country studies within and beyond Europe: Starting with The Netherlands, then followed by Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Slovakia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom and United States of America.

The authors of the various chapters are all media law and sports law experts and address, from the point of view of the law and practice in their respective countries, amongst others, the following intriguing legal issues: the ownership of broadcasting rights; the commercial exploitation of those rights; and, with sport being such big business nowadays, the impact of competition law, including the vexed questions of the collective sale and purchase of sports broadcasting rights. And one of the particularly valuable features of this book is the ability of the reader to compare and contrast the treatment of sports broadcasting rights in the wide range of countries covered in the book, not only with regard to their different legal systems, but also to the various stages of economic development of those countries, all of which impact – to some degree or another – on the subject.

For this and many other reasons, the book is a veritable mine of useful information and one, I feel, that I can heartily recommend to all those involved in the creation, promotion, exploitation and protection of sports broadcasting rights around the world. A subject that, in my view, will continue to challenge sports administrators, event managers, sports marketers, broadcasters and media service providers themselves and regulators, as well as

their legal and other professional advisers, for many years to come. And, therefore, not a book to be without!

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