

Disney Africa and SABC announce content distribution agreement

The Walt Disney Company Africa and the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) have signed a distribution agreement to bring local and international live sporting events, news programming, as well as library and film sporting content from ESPN to SABC Sports viewers across South Africa, through its SABC Sports Channel.



Uche Ikpeazu, forward for EFL Championship club Middlesbrough

Image supplied

With this agreement, SABC Sports viewers will unlock a selection of premium sports content. The undisputed home of American Sports, ESPN brings an unparalleled portfolio of US sporting content and documentaries to its viewers across the world. In Africa, the broadcaster extends this offering by showcasing the latest in European football and other international franchises.

Kicking off this past weekend, two brand-new ESPN-branded football slots premiered and will air each Saturday and Sunday on the SABC Sports Channel at midday during European football season. The dedicated slots will offer viewers a live English Championship match on Saturdays at 1:30PM and a Dutch Eredivisie game on Sundays at 12:15PM, as well as highlights from the US' Major League Soccer and premiere football news roundups from ESPN's magazine shows, including the popular ESPN FC.

SABC Sports will bring the world's top track and field athletes to its viewers through ESPN's four live World Athletics Events, with the first coming straight from Nairobi with the U20 Championships, currently on air. Additional events include the World Indoor Championships from Serbia (March 2022), World Race Walking Championships from Belarus (April 2022) and the World Championships from the USA (July 2022).



ESPN Africa gets a refreshed on-air look

5 Aug 2021



After a successful inaugural season in Kigali earlier this year, teams from across the continent will once again gather to showcase the best in local basketball talent in a hotly-anticipated second season of the Basketball Africa League (BAL), a partnership between the International Basketball Federation (FIBA) and the National Basketball Association (NBA). SABC Sports viewers can look forward to select fixtures of this celebrated local league being broadcast live on their screens in 2022.

Boxing fans will need to look no further as the SABC Sports will be bringing live boxing events and programming to viewers in 2022, including over 150 hours of boxing content from ESPN's vast library, showcasing the greatest in boxing events, athletes and moments in the sport's history.

SABC Sport general manager, Gary Rathbone stated: "This agreement is going to add significant depth to our current offering on the SABC Sports Channel. Our channel will now offer unrivalled content to our local sport fans seven days a week, thanks to ESPN's great boxing archive and film and documentary library. With the addition of long-awaited regular live boxing events, as well more live Football, Athletics and African Basketball, it's clear that this partnership will deliver right across the board for our viewers".

Rathbone also added that: "This partnership will not only give our viewers access to great sports content but will see the SABC Sport Channel and our teams benefiting from the resources and experience that this collaboration with ESPN offers."

Says Kyle De Klerk, director: Sports, The Walt Disney Company Africa: "With this content agreement we are excited to not only be bringing ESPN's unprecedented and compelling sporting offering to new audiences, but to also be taking a great step in highlighting and celebrating some of the up and coming leagues and athletes from around this continent."

Says Christine Service, Senior Vice President and General Manager of The Walt Disney Company Africa: "We are delighted to be extending our relationship with SABC to include ESPN, bringing another diversified and exciting brand from Disney's portfolio to local free-to-air audiences."

Tune in on Openview Channel 124, SABC's DTT Service or TelkomONE Mobile Platform.

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