

# **Submission for the Secretary of State's review of BBC Radio Five Live Sports Extra**

**March 2004**

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## **Section 1: The vision for BBC Radio Five Live Sports Extra**

The first of the BBC's new digital radio services to launch, BBC Radio Five Live Sports Extra (referred to in this submission as Sports Extra) was set up by the team behind BBC Radio Five Live to provide more sporting action for listeners. A part-time service that only broadcasts when covering specific sporting events, it complements BBC Radio Five Live by broadcasting additional commentaries from the FA Barclaycard Premiership, Nationwide League, Scottish Premier League as well as cup competitions. It also broadcasts additional commentaries from rugby union, rugby league, Formula One, cricket, tennis, athletics and golf, as well as commentaries from some minority sports. It uses the same high quality production values associated with BBC Radio Five Live's award winning sport coverage.

All output on Sports Extra is broadcast live and is commentary based. It is focused on a single sport, meaning that any items broadcast during and around the commentary from a particular match or event relate directly to it. For example, there are no general sports round-ups. Broadcasts normally begin 15 minutes before the start of the match or event being covered to allow the event to be previewed and end a few minutes after the commentary has finished. They are also flexible in that they do not have to finish at an exact time, meaning they can stay on air until the commentary comes to an end.

Sports Extra's schedule is driven totally by the sporting calendar and by what commentaries are provided by BBC Radio Five Live. During some busy weeks, Sports Extra can be on air every day, sometimes providing commentary on several different sports in the same 24 hour period. For example, Sports Extra was on air at the end of June 2003 for 11 consecutive days when it covered one day international cricket, rugby league, Formula One and Wimbledon tennis. An example of a busy weekly schedule is included in Appendix 1. During other, quieter periods, Sports Extra may not broadcast any commentaries for several days. A summary of the range of sports events covered along with the number of hours broadcast for each, is outlined in Section 6 below (p18).

The target audience is the same as BBC Radio Five Live's target audience of 25–44 year olds. However, as sport tends to attract a younger and more ethnically diverse audience than news, it is likely as the service grows that Sports Extra will have more ethnically diverse and slightly younger listeners than BBC Radio Five Live.

Consent for the service was granted in September 2001 and it launched on 2nd February 2002 with a live commentary of the Premiership football match between Manchester United and Sunderland, the first few minutes of which were carried simultaneously on BBC Radio Five Live. This was done to highlight the availability of Sports Extra and BBC Radio Five Live has continued to promote the alternative commentaries since then. In the financial year 2002/03, Sports Extra broadcast **1,216 hours** and **35 mins** and has so far broadcast **858 hours** and **25 mins** in the current financial year (to the end of January, 2004)

Sports Extra is available on DAB Digital Radio, digital satellite television, digital cable TV, Freeview and on the internet (where rights allow).

## **Section 2:**

### **What makes BBC Radio Five Live Sports Extra distinctive**

Sports Extra is an extension of the BBC Radio Five Live service, enabling BBC Radio Five Live to offer enhanced choice to listeners. In particular, Sports Extra:

#### **a: Provides extra choice**

Sports Extra provides extra choice for listeners by offering alternative sports commentaries to those broadcast on BBC Radio Five Live. This sometimes means BBC Radio Five Live and Sports Extra offer commentaries from the same sport at the same time, with listeners given an option of which match or event to listen to. On other occasions Sports Extra provides a commentary from a totally different sport to that covered on BBC Radio Five Live, thus providing the listener with even greater choice.

#### **b: Exploits the sports rights held by the BBC more effectively**

As well as offering greater choice, Sports Extra exploits the sports rights held by the BBC more effectively, by broadcasting live sporting events which cannot be accommodated on BBC Radio Five Live or on Radio 4 Long Wave<sup>1</sup>. Without Sports Extra many of the events it has covered would not have been broadcast, thus helping ensure that licence fee payers receive greater value for money from the BBC's spend on sports rights. It has also meant that during periods of important news events, sports coverage that would normally be transmitted on BBC Radio Five Live can be transferred to Sports Extra. For example, on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2003, *Sport on Five* which was scheduled to broadcast on BBC Radio Five Live between 19.00 – 22.00, actually went out on Sports Extra, allowing coverage of the War in Iraq to continue on BBC Radio Five Live. This enabled listeners to hear uninterrupted coverage of the Liverpool versus Celtic UEFA Cup match which was the key match featured on *Sport on Five* that evening.

#### **c: Provides totally uninterrupted commentaries**

All the sports commentaries on Sports Extra are totally uninterrupted, meaning there are no breaks for news and travel bulletins, or updates from other sporting events.

#### **d: Has the flexibility to change its schedule at short notice**

The flexible nature of the network means the schedule can be changed at short notice to accommodate extra sporting fixtures. For example, Sports Extra was able to broadcast coverage of the final rubber of Great Britain's Davis Cup tie against Morocco last September when it unexpectedly went into an extra day. Another example is the commentary of the fourth round Powergen Challenge Cup match between Bradford and St Helens that Sports Extra broadcast in February 2004. Sports Extra did not originally intend to cover the fourth round of the Powergen Cup, but given the nature of the draw, involving two of the Super League's top teams, Sports Extra decided to cover this match, despite only two weeks notice.

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<sup>1</sup> Which broadcasts cricket (Test Match Special).

**e: Plays an important role in nurturing broadcasting and production talent**

Sports Extra plays an important role in nurturing broadcasting and production talent, by giving staff extensive experience of working on high class sports programming, which they would not otherwise have had. BBC Radio Five Live breakfast sports presenter, Arlo White, had his first experience of national programme presentation on Sports Extra, as did BBC Radio Five Live Drive sports presenter, David Croft.

### **Section 3: BBC Radio Five Live Sports Extra as a multimedia service**

As well as the digital radio network, Sports Extra also has the following multimedia offerings:

- **Online:** Sports Extra forms part of the detailed sports offering on the BBC Radio Five Live website. Web pages dedicated to Sports Extra provide information on how to listen to the network, details of the schedule and an online feed of Sports Extra commentaries where the BBC has the online rights. Listeners are also encouraged to visit the sports content on the BBC Radio Five Live website and to e-mail Sports Extra directly with their comments.
- **DAB Text and DTV Screens:** Every broadcast on Sports Extra is accompanied by scrolling digital text which appears on DAB Digital Radio screens and is updated through the commentary. The aim is to provide the listener with more information about the commentary and to keep the listener updated with the current score in that particular game or event and the text is updated every two minutes on average. For example,
  - **Cricket:** “Test Match Cricket 2nd Test Day 1 Kandy: Sri Lanka 29 for 1 off 10 overs. Kirtley to bowl”; and
  - **Football:** “Aston Villa’s only victory at Old Trafford in the last 47 years was in the old First Division in November 1983. Villa won 2-1.”This service is also available on Freeview and Sports Extra hope to extend it to other platforms as bandwidth and platform operators allow.

## Section 4: Editorial review of BBC Radio Five Live Sports Extra

Sports Extra has been successful in increasing the breadth and range of sports commentaries available to listeners, in many instances giving them a choice of commentaries to listen to. The following examples illustrate the added coverage Sports Extra has brought to the different sports covered by the network:

- **Football**

On Saturday afternoons, while BBC Radio Five Live is broadcasting a commentary on one match from the Premiership, Sports Extra offers commentary on another. It also broadcasts commentaries from football's Nationwide League, or other football competitions, while BBC Radio Five Live concentrates on the Premiership and Champions League. Sports Extra also allows listeners to hear commentaries that they would not otherwise have been able to receive, owing to a clash with another football match or sporting event. Some examples of this include:

- On 16<sup>th</sup> October 2002, **Sports Extra broadcast commentary on Wales v Italy in the Euro 2004 qualifier**, while BBC Radio Five Live broadcast commentary on England's match against Macedonia in the same event.
- On 25<sup>th</sup> May 2003, **Sports Extra broadcast full commentary of the final of the Nationwide League Division Two Play Off Final in Cardiff**, while BBC Radio Five Live broadcast commentary from the final day of a very exciting Scottish Premier League season.
- On 4<sup>th</sup> October 2003, **Sports Extra provided commentary of the Rangers v Celtic match in the Scottish Premier League**, while BBC Radio Five Live had commentary on Liverpool's match against Arsenal in the Premiership, which kicked off at the same time.
- On 18<sup>th</sup> October 2003, **Sports Extra carried full commentary of Leeds United v Manchester United in the Premiership**, which kicked off at 12.00 and clashed with BBC Radio Five Live's coverage of England v South Africa, in a crucial group match at the Rugby Union World Cup.
- On 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2004, **Sports Extra carried full commentary on Celtic v Rangers in the Scottish Premier League**, while BBC Radio Five Live provided commentary on Chelsea's match against Watford in the third round of the FA Cup.
- On 18<sup>th</sup> February 2004, **Sports Extra provided commentary on the friendly football international between the Republic of Ireland and World Champions Brazil**, while BBC Radio Five Live carried commentaries on the friendly internationals between Wales and Scotland, and England v Portugal.

- **Cricket**

Sports Extra has provided uninterrupted commentary of England's test matches and one day internationals (compared to the interrupted service on Radio 4 Long Wave) and has been able to provide greater coverage of the Cricket World Cup and new domestic competition - the Twenty20 Cup. Examples where Sports Extra increased the coverage of cricket include:

- The **One Day Cricket internationals** in the winter of 2002-2003, involving Australia, Sri Lanka and England and the three one day internationals as part of England's winter tour of Sri Lanka in late 2003, although the latter two of these one day internationals were rained off. These matches were only broadcast on Sports Extra and not on Radio 4 Long Wave.
- The **Cricket World Cup** – where three matches were broadcast exclusively on Sports Extra.
- **Domestic Cricket** – Sports Extra broadcast the two semi finals in the new Twenty20 Cup.

- **Rugby Union**

Sports Extra was able to broadcast rugby union matches that would otherwise not have been aired because of being overshadowed by other sporting events, particularly Premiership football matches. Examples include:

- On 13<sup>th</sup> April 2003, while BBC Radio Five Live broadcast commentary on a match in football's Premiership, **Sports Extra broadcast rugby union's Heineken Cup quarter final between Leicester and Munster.**
- On Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2003, while BBC Radio Five Live broadcast commentary on the FA Cup quarter finals, **Sports Extra broadcast commentary on England v Italy in Rugby Union's Six Nations Championship.**
- On Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2003, while BBC Radio Five Live broadcast commentary on football's Scottish Cup Final, **Sports Extra broadcast commentary on rugby union's Zurich Premiership Championship Final, from Twickenham.**
- On 6<sup>th</sup> September 2003, **Sports Extra broadcast commentary on the match between England and France at Twickenham**, while BBC Radio Five Live broadcast the Macedonia v England Euro 2004 qualifying match.

- **Rugby League**

Similar to rugby union, Sports Extra was able to broadcast rugby league matches that would otherwise not have been available to listeners due to being overshadowed by other sporting events. Examples include:

- November 2003, **Sports Extra provided commentary of all three of Great Britain's test matches against Australia.**

- On 13<sup>th</sup> April 2003, while BBC Radio Five Live covered a match in football's Premiership, **Sports Extra broadcast commentary on the rugby league challenge cup semi final between Wigan and Bradford.**
- On 29<sup>th</sup> February 2004, while BBC Radio Five Live covered football's Carling Cup final between Bolton and Middlesbrough, **Sports Extra covered the match between Bradford and St Helens in the fourth round of the Powergen Challenge Cup.**
- **Tennis**  
Sports Extra broadcast commentaries from the Australian and US Opens that would otherwise not have been aired, as BBC Radio Five Live normally only broadcast the finals from these two events. For example, from Monday 19<sup>th</sup> - Friday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2004, Sports Extra provided extensive commentary from the Australian Open Tennis. Sports Extra also broadcast full commentary of Great Britain's Davis Cup tie against Morocco in September 2003.
- **Formula One**  
During the 2003 season, Sports Extra broadcast the Friday and Saturday qualifying sessions which were previously not able to be heard, as BBC Radio Five Live only broadcasts the last 15 minutes of the Saturday qualifying sessions.
- **Athletics**  
Sports Extra enabled athletics fans to follow the major UK athletics events and international events in their entirety. For example:
  - On Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2003, **Sports Extra broadcast uninterrupted commentary for three and a half hours from the World Indoor Athletics Championships in Birmingham**, while BBC Radio Five Live broadcast commentary from Football's Premiership.
  - On four nights in the last week of August 2003, **Sports Extra broadcast uninterrupted commentary from the World Outdoor Athletics Championship in Paris**, again while BBC Radio Five Live provided commentary from Football's Premiership.
- **Golf**  
Sports Extra has made it possible to bring listeners extended broadcasts of the UK's two major golf events, the Open and the World Match Play Championship. For example, on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> and Friday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2003, **Sports Extra provided full commentary on the first two days of the HSBC World Matchplay golf event at Wentworth**, an event which would otherwise just have been covered with updates on BBC Radio Five Live.

- **Basketball**  
Sports Extra broadcast uninterrupted coverage from the final of the British Basketball League play off final in Birmingham in May 2003, which would not otherwise have been broadcast.
- **Ice Hockey**  
Sports Extra broadcast uninterrupted coverage from the Ice Hockey Super league play off final in April 2003, which also would not otherwise have been broadcast.

## **Section 5: Appraisal of BBC Radio Five Live Sports Extra's performance**

### **Audience Figures**

So far, Sports Extra has only had two quarters of research results from the industry body, Rajar, for the six months ending in December 2003. As this is a new network, available on digital platforms only, the samples are small and need to be treated with some caution. In order to even out fluctuations caused by sample shortfalls, the figures for the new services will be looked at across the six month period. These figures show that the network has a share of 0.1% and is reaching 301,000 weekly listeners, rising to 355,000 if children 4+ are included. On average, listeners spent 2.1 hours listening to the service.

### **Audience Profile**

As shown in the chart below, Sports Extra's audience profile is predominantly male (77%) and the station has a fairly even spread across the ages with the highest reach amongst 35-54s. Sports Extra has 54,000 children tuning in and they make up around 15% of the 4+ reach. Like BBC Radio Five Live, Sports Extra has an ABC1 skew but still attracts a significant number of C2DE listeners and reach is highest in the South of England.

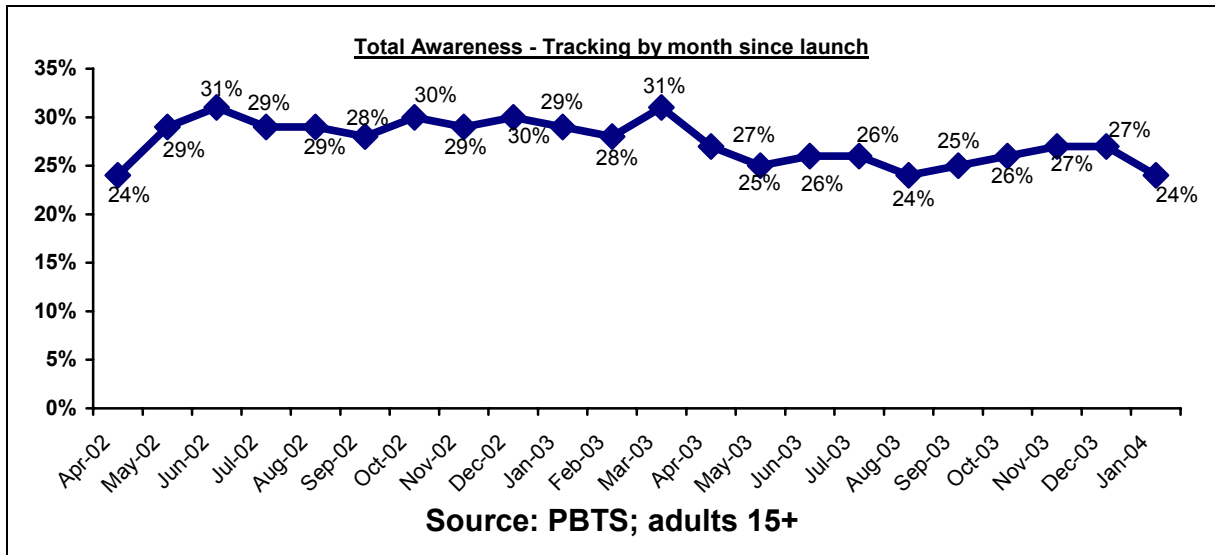
### **Audience Approval**

The BBC monitors "approval" of services on a monthly basis, asking people (for services they are aware of) to give them marks out of ten, where 1 is very unfavourable and 10 is extremely favourable. While there is an insufficient sample for reliable approval scores by month or quarter for Sports Extra, the consolidated approval score for the 12 months to January 2004 is 7.6 out of 10, which compares

favourably to BBC Radio Five Live's monthly average of 7.9 and is above BBC Radio's overall approval rating of 7.1<sup>2</sup>

### Audience Awareness

As shown in the chart below, audience awareness has stayed fairly constant since the service was launched, averaging 27% across 2003.

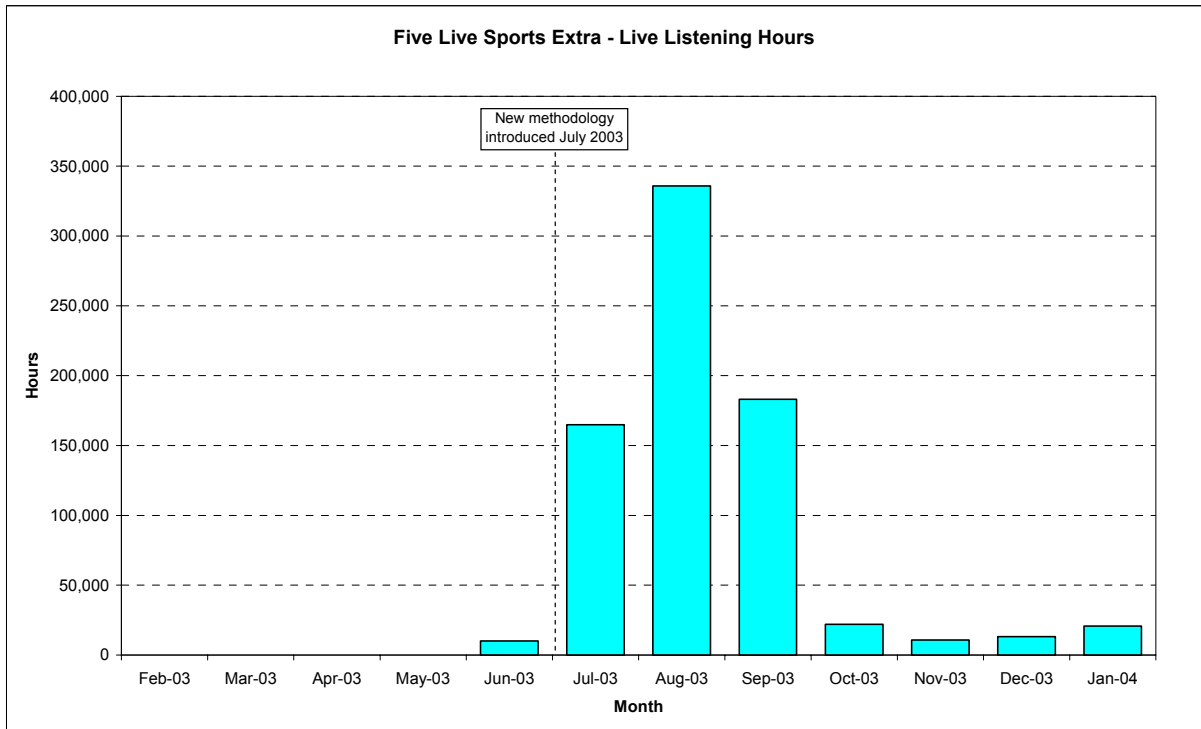


### New Media Performance

As Sports Extra does not have its own web site, data on total page impressions and Unique Users is not available. However, data on monthly hours of listening to live broadcasts online has been collected since June 2003<sup>3</sup> with a new methodology being introduced from July onwards, as shown below. The number of hours of listening to the live audio stream on the website peaked in the summer due to extensive coverage of Test Match Cricket.

<sup>2</sup> Pan BBC Tracking Survey

<sup>3</sup> Before May 2003 this data was not split out as it was incorporated as part of BBC News' online figures.



### Audience response to BBC Radio Five Live Sports Extra

Sports Extra has had a wide range of positive responses from listeners and a sample of these is included below<sup>4</sup>. They have particularly appreciated:

- the greater choice:

**“I like the fact that Sports Extra gives the choice of two matches each Saturday afternoon.”**

***Listener e-mail***

**“I think the extra choice of sporting events on top of what BBC Radio Five Live offer is what makes Sports Extra so good”.**

***Listener e-mail***

**“We all have our own favourite sport. Sports Extra gives me that extra choice. Many thanks.”**

***Listener e-mail***

- coverage of football beyond the Premiership:

**“I tend to tune in for Nationwide Football coverage. Frankly, I’m very bored with the Premiership, so having an alternative to listen to is a real bonus”.**

***Listener e-mail***

<sup>4</sup> All of these responses are from October 2003.

**“The Nationwide League gets a look in too, and in a time when football is in danger of being dominated by the Big Guns of the Premiership, it’s good that the BBC remembers there are other fish swimming in the sea”.**

***Listener e-mail***

- new commentaries that were not previously available:

**“I loved to listen to the commentary of this year’s US Open Tennis. The drama when Andy Roddick saved two matches to beat David Nalbandian in the semi finals. It was pure drama to listen to”**

***Listener e-mail***

**“I love listening to the Formula One Qualifying – especially when the TV audiences have to wait for highlights in the evening”**

***Listener e-mail***

- the full commentaries with no interruptions:

**“I love Sports Extra’s philosophy of going to a match and broadcasting the whole of it. I think it is an excellent philosophy”.**

***Listener e-mail***

**“I like listening to the total lack of commentary interruptions, that seem to turn up on every other channel”.**

***Listener e-mail***

### **Sports Industry response to BBC Radio Five Live Sports Extra**

Sports Extra has also received positive feedback from the world of sport, some of which are included below<sup>5</sup>. Sports bodies, sponsors, and even participants, have particularly appreciated:

- the more comprehensive live commentary of major sports that Sports Extra has provided:

**“BBC Sports Extra has been an excellent development for cricket. The game has benefited enormously from the increased level of exposure it has received around the world through online and digital access, especially at a time when we have introduced an exciting new version of the game in the form of Twenty20 Cricket. ECB relies very heavily on our broadcast partners' ability to reach new audiences which the BBC's new digital radio platform achieves on a global scale. It is a great example of how technology is driving the marketing of sport throughout the world”.**

***Tim Lamb, Chief Executive, England and Wales Cricket Board.***

<sup>5</sup> All of these responses are from November 2003.

**"With athletics being a twelve month of the year sport and competing for coverage on BBC Radio Five Live with other major sports such as football, the digital radio service of Sports Extra provides athletics fans with the opportunity to follow the major UK athletic events and international Championships in their entirety. Any service that increases both choice for the listener and coverage for our major sports is an important step forward for British sport".**

***Jon Ridgeon, former International athlete and now Director of "Fast Track", which promotes UK athletics.***

- the greater range of football commentaries:

**"Sport's Extra's coverage of live events has been a wonderful supporter of the Nationwide League. It has given a new dimension to Sports coverage on the radio and gives the football fan even more choice and access to the Nations favourite past-time. The Nationwide League attracts 15m people every season and BBC Radio Five Live Sports Extra's coverage of the competition reflects its importance to communities up and down the country".**

***Chris Hull, Media Manager, Nationwide.***

- the uninterrupted commentaries

**"Sports Extra is a great way for BAR (British American Racing Team) fans and our factory-based staff to enjoy uninterrupted live coverage of Grand Prix over the whole F1 season".**

***Charlie Almond, Communications Executive, BAR***

- the coverage of major events in minor sports:

**"All media coverage is key to our sport and having live play-by-play of our finals added to the whole event. I've heard tapes of the broadcast and it was fantastic, a real show. We are not used to hearing play-by-play in British accents but those guys were great! When you see the BBC at your event, you know, the microphones and all, it just makes it feel like a big deal."**

***Paul Rushforth, Player, London Knights Ice Hockey Club.***

### **Press Appraisal of BBC Radio Five Live Sports Extra**

Press appraisal of Sports Extra has been limited because it is such a big part of BBC Radio Five Live's service. However, the service did receive a favourable mention from Mediaweek praising what it did to promote digital radio in the UK:

**"There are sadly, still those in the industry who believe that digital radio will sell to consumers on the basis of its audio quality. Most of these people wear white coats, sport National Health spectacles and have desks littered with interesting testing equipment. For the rest of us, the launch, two weeks ago,**

**of the new digital only BBC Radio Five Live Sports Extra represented one of the most significant pieces of promotion yet for the new medium. It's about content, stupid!"**

***Mediaweek, February 2002 (the full article is included in Appendix 2)***

## **Section 6: Performance of BBC Radio Five Live Sports Extra against the Secretary of State's conditions of consent**

Sports Extra was required by the Secretary of State to meet a number of conditions when consent was given to launch in September 2001. These were as follows:

- **“The service will broadcast live sporting events which cannot be accommodated on BBC Radio Five Live. Sports Extra will not be a full time network.”**

Sports Extra is an ad hoc station that is only on air when covering specific sporting events which cannot be accommodated on BBC Radio Five Live. Sports Extra's schedule is driven totally by the sporting calendar and by what commentaries are provided by BBC Radio Five Live.

Sports Extra does not offer continuous programming. From 1 April 2003 to the end of January 2004, Sports Extra broadcast for a total 858 hours and 25 mins only. The total number of hours broadcast in 2003/04 will be lower than the 1,216 hours and 35 mins broadcast in 2002/03. This is due to the higher amount of cricket hours that were broadcast in 2002/03 due to England's winter tour of Australia (which included coverage of five test matches and 10 one day internationals) and the Cricket World Cup in February and March 2003 (during which Sports Extra provided commentaries from 23 matches).

In comparison, the level of cricket broadcast in 2003/04 is lower due to BBC Radio Five Live not having the rights for England's winter tour of the West Indies and the tour of Sri Lanka involving only three test matches and one day internationals respectively, with two of the one day internationals being rained off.

In terms of days, Sports Extra was on air for 171 days between 1 April 2003 and the end of January 2004, and 222<sup>6</sup> days between 1 April 2002 and 31 March 2003. However, it is important to note that the actual number of hours broadcast on a particular day has varied from 2 hours a day up to 12 hours a day on some occasions, depending on the number and type of sporting events that Sports Extra covered on a particular day.

- **“In particular the service must be used solely as an overflow for rights that have been obtained for broadcasting on BBC Radio Five Live or on Radio 4 Long Wave and must not provide an additional outlet for which the BBC will bid against commercial broadcasters.”**

Sports Extra only broadcasts commentaries of sports where the rights have been obtained for broadcasting on BBC Radio Five Live or on Radio 4 Long Wave. Sports Extra has not bid for any additional rights on top of those already owned by the BBC to use on BBC Radio Five Live and Radio 4 Long Wave.

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<sup>6</sup> During England's cricket test series in New Zealand in February and March 2002, although Sports Extra provided commentary of a day's play from each of the three test matches, due to the time difference (e.g. a days play starting at 11.00pm GMT and finishing at 6.00am GMT), it meant that Sports Extra was on air over two calendar days (e.g. a day's play starting at 11.00pm GMT and finishing at 6.00am GMT)

- **“Sports currently covered will include English Test Cricket (Test Match Special), Nationwide football, Open golf, the Scottish Premier League, Zurich Premiership Rugby Union, Formula One qualifying rounds and additional courts at Wimbledon.”**

Sports Extra has covered all of these sports and more. A detailed breakdown of the range of sports events covered and the number of hours broadcast for each, is outlined in the following table:

Sport	Competitions/Events Covered	Hours Broadcast	
		1 Apr 02 – 31 Mar 03	1 Apr 03– 31 Jan 04
<b>Football</b>	Premiership, Nationwide League, Carling Cup, FA Cup, Champions League, Scottish Premier League and Cup Football, International matches.	187 hours, 20 mins	123 hours 30 mins
<b>Cricket</b>	Cricket World Cup, Test matches (uninterrupted commentary, compared to the interrupted service on Radio 4 LW), and one day internationals involving England, domestic competitions including the C and G Trophy and the new Twenty20 Cup	762 hours, 40 mins	445 hours, 25 mins
<b>Rugby Union</b>	Rugby World Cup, Zurich Premiership, Powergen Cup, Heineken Cup, international matches (incl Six Nations)	25 hours	51 hours, 50 mins
<b>Rugby League</b>	Super League matches, Challenge Cup, International test matches	82 hours	50 hours, 40 mins
<b>Tennis</b>	Australian Open, French Open, Wimbledon, US Open, Davis Cup.	67 hours, 10 mins	127 hours, 35 mins
<b>Formula One</b>	Friday and Saturday qualifying sessions	16 hours, 35 mins	19 hours, 40 mins
<b>Athletics</b>	Coverage from the World indoor and outdoor championships	6 hours	8 hours, 45 mins
<b>Golf</b>	Commentary from The Open, and the World Match play Championship.	69 hours, 50 minutes	23 hours, 20 mins
<b>Basketball</b>	British Basketball League	nil	2 hours, 25 mins
<b>Ice Hockey</b>	UK Ice Hockey Super League	nil	3 hours and 15 mins
<b>Total Hours</b>		<b>1,216 hours and 35 mins</b>	<b>858 hours and 25 mins</b>

## Other conditions

Although they were not specified by the Secretary of State in granting permission to broadcast, other commitments were made by the BBC about Sports Extra. These are set out below.

- **“Sports Extra will be a companion network to the core BBC Radio Five Live proposition. The proposition is designed to make better use of the sports rights the BBC acquires for BBC Radio Five Live and Radio 4 Long Wave, providing listeners with an additional selection of live sport from the BBC.”**  
Sports Extra has complemented BBC Radio Five Live’s sport output by broadcasting commentary from 34 different sporting competitions, covering 10

different sports during the past year. The only time it has simulcast has been when broadcasting *Test Match Special*.

As sport remains a core part of BBC Radio Five Live's output, decisions on when to exploit sports rights more fully on Sports Extra are based primarily on what BBC Radio Five Live chooses to broadcast, as well as obligations to rights holders, the level of audience interest in a match or sporting event and the editorial variety on Sports Extra.

Major sporting events and matches continue to be covered on BBC Radio Five Live, while additional commentaries that BBC Radio Five Live is not able to broadcast, due to other commitments or a clash with another sporting event for example, is covered on Sports Extra.

For example, during the Rugby World Cup in October and November 2003, all the major matches (such as vital group matches, the quarter finals, semi finals and the final) were broadcast on BBC Radio Five Live while Sports Extra covered other group matches and the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> playoff.

An example from the Premiership occurred on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2004, when due to a clash where Premiership front runners, Manchester United and Arsenal's respective matches both kicked off at 3pm, commentary of Manchester United's match against Fulham was broadcast on BBC Radio Five Live, while Arsenal's game against Charlton went out on Sports Extra.

- **“Test Match Special and Rugby Six Nations, which are currently broadcast on Radio 4 Long Wave....will move to Sports Extra as their digital home”**  
Sports Extra has broadcast uninterrupted commentaries of all the test matches and the majority of one day internationals and domestic matches that were covered on *Test Match Special*<sup>7</sup>. Sports Extra also broadcast additional one day internationals and domestic cricket to that covered on *Test Match Special*, such as additional matches from the Cricket World Cup in February and March 2003 and matches from new domestic cricket competition, the Twenty20 Cup in July 2003. Six Nations Rugby has also been broadcast on Sports Extra though the preference has still been to broadcast these matches on BBC Radio Five Live or Radio 4 Long Wave.

For the foreseeable future Sports Extra will continue to simulcast cricket with *Test Match Special* on Radio 4 Long Wave until such time as enough people have access to digital radio, at which point Sports Extra will replace Radio 4 Long Wave as the home of *Test Match Special*. The Rugby Six Nations will also continue to be broadcast on BBC Radio Five Live, again until digital radio penetration is at a higher level.

- **“Sports Extra will use the same high quality production team that produces BBC Radio Five Live's award winning sports coverage, including the**

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<sup>7</sup> Only the occasional One Day International and some domestic matches were not broadcast due to a clash with another event, e.g. Wimbledon.

**technical support and commentators and insightful pre- and post-event analysis”.**

Sports Extra uses the same production and commentary teams as BBC Radio Five Live. All staff on Sports Extra are scheduled by BBC Sport, who also schedule all sports output on BBC Radio Five Live.

- **“Sports Extra’s coverage will be commentary based, and will not consist of alternative general sports programming, like that provided by the Sport on Five brand on BBC Radio Five Live.”**

All the broadcasts on Sports Extra are preceded by a preview period of no more than 15 minutes. All broadcasts on Sports Extra go off air within a few minutes of a commentary finishing. All material used within a broadcast relates to the particular sport being covered.

## **Section 7: The way forward for BBC Radio Five Live Sports Extra**

In the two years since launch, Sports Extra has established itself as a valued sister station to BBC Radio Five Live, extending the range and breadth of sports coverage on BBC Radio.

The network will continue to, wherever possible, extract greater value for licence fee payers from sports rights already held by the BBC and deliver a greater choice of commentaries for sports fans.

During 2004, Sports Extra intends to broadcast from a wide range of sporting events, including:

- Premiership, Nationwide League, Carling Cup, and Scottish Football;
- Extra court coverage from the Wimbledon Tennis Championships and matches from the Australian, French and US Opens;
- The British Open Golf Championship;
- Rugby Union's Heineken Cup;
- Rugby League's Super League;
- The Formula One qualifying sessions.

In addition to these, it will broadcast uninterrupted commentary on:

- Several matches during football's Euro 2004 finals in Portugal;
- England's home test cricket series against New Zealand and the West Indies in summer 2004;
- Cricket's ICC Champions Trophy, which is being held in England in September 2004.

## **Appendix 1:**

### **An example of recent BBC Five Live Sports Extra weekly schedule (week beginning 1<sup>st</sup> March 2004)**

#### **Monday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2004**

No broadcast

#### **Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2004**

No broadcast

#### **Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2004**

Premiership Football, Birmingham City v Middlesbrough, TX 1945 - 2200

#### **Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2004**

No broadcast

#### **Friday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2004**

No broadcast

#### **Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2004**

Grand Prix Qualifying round from Melbourne, Australia, TX 0255 – 0500

World Indoor Athletics Championships from Budapest, Hungary, TX 1515 - 1900.

#### **Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2004**

Nationwide Football (Norwich v Ipswich), TX 1145 – 1400

World Indoor Athletics Championships from Budapest, Hungary TX 1425 - 1800

## **An example of a busy weekly schedule for BBC Five Live Sports Extra (week beginning 17 November 2003)**

### **Monday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2003**

No broadcast

### **Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> November**

One Day International Cricket, England v Sri Lanka, TX 0815 - 1615

### **Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> November**

International Football, Euro 2004 Play off, Wales v Russia TX 1915 – 2130

### **Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> November**

Rugby Union World Cup, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> place play off, France v New Zealand TX 0845 – 1100

### **Friday 21<sup>st</sup> November**

One Day International Cricket, England v Sri Lanka, TX 0815 – 1615

### **Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> November**

Premiership Football, Southampton v Chelsea, TX 1445 – 1700

International Rugby League, GB v Australia, third test TX 1800 – 2000

### **Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> November**

One Day International Cricket, England v Sri Lanka, TX 0815 – 1615

## Appendix 2: Mediaweek article (February, 2002)



### Media Choice: BBC RADIO 5 LIVE SPORTS EXTRA

There are sadly, still those in the industry who believe that digital radio will sell to consumers on the basis of its audio quality. Most of these people wear white coats, sport National Health spectacles and have desks littered with interesting testing equipment. For the rest of us, the launch, two weeks ago, of the new digital-only 5 Live Sports extra represented one of the most significant pieces of promotion yet for the new medium. It's about content, stupid!

Typically, 5 Live, the BBC's talk network with "attitude," has had the courage to get on air quickly while many other in the BBC worry about waiting for receiver penetration to increase before launching the rest of the BBC's new digital services. Presumably, the same people would have held the release of videos and DVDs until people had bought the players.

Not only does 5 Live demonstrate the network's courage and pioneering spirit, it also demonstrates that when the BBC does something it tends to do it well.

From the 2.30pm launch – which was carried simultaneously on the "old" analogue network – to the polished coverage of football, cricket and tennis that has followed, 5 Live Sports Extra is mirroring the highest standards of sports coverage established by the "main" network. The BBC is able to make more use of its sports rights, both by extending the range of sports and, within each sport, the range of events covered. My only criticism would be that they could do more: rather than just one alternative Premier league game on the digital service, why not bring us four or five? Digital radio can be instantly split into more services all displayed to the listener in a simple style. The BBC has the bandwidth but is seemingly hung up on audio quality - 48kbs mono is fine for football.

As the BBC joins the commercial sector in investing in new services we can all look forward to 2002 being the year for digital radio. The relentless promotion that 5 Live Sports Extra is getting on the analogue network likely to send a steady stream of questioning listeners into Dixons and other stores – let's hope the retailers are ready to answer them.

*Simon Cole is the Chief executive at UBC Media*