

Broadcaster urges football authorities not to leave market 'to criminals'

October 17 2018



British regulations prevent live football from being shown between 2:45 pm and 5:15 pm local time on Saturdays in a bid to avoid hurting match attendance, and Eleven Sports has agreed to honor the blackout period

Broadcaster Eleven Sports says it will no longer show matches during the Saturday afternoon football blackout in the UK but has urged authorities not to leave the market "in the hands of criminals".

British regulations prevent live [football](#) from being shown between 2:45 pm and 5:15 pm local time on a Saturday in a bid to avoid hurting match attendance figures.

Eleven Sports, which holds the UK and Irish rights to La Liga and Serie A, said it would no longer show matches during the [blackout](#) period "out of respect for the wishes of our partners".

But it said in a statement: "We maintain our strong view that the rule, which dates back to the 1950s, is unfit for the modern, digital era—particularly for overseas games which we hold the rights to."

And the streaming service, which said the football associations of England, Scotland and Montenegro were the only ones to apply the rule, said the blackout was one of the biggest generators of piracy in the UK.

"These games are very easily accessed on illegal sites online and it is naive to think that fans do not watch them because they are not shown on legitimate platforms, except betting sites," it said.

"It is irresponsible to leave the market in the hands of criminals."

Eleven Sports chief executive Marc Watson recently told AFP that piracy poses an existential problem for broadcast rights holders.

The company said fans should have access to the games through the official rights holder as they do all over the world but said "intense pressure" from stakeholders within the football establishment" meant they did not have the option.

© 2018 AFP

Citation: Broadcaster urges football authorities not to leave market 'to criminals' (2018, October

17) retrieved 22 June 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2018-10-urges-football-authorities-criminals.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.