



Paris, 31 May 2006

The French Open in HD on Freebox TV with France Télévisions The first commercial HD broadcast of a sporting event in Europe

In partnership with France Télévisions and the French Tennis Federation (FFT), Free is able to offer its Freebox subscribers¹ the chance to watch the matches on the Philippe Chatrier court live and in high definition (HD) throughout the French Open tournament.

This broadcast is the culmination of the process which began with the world preview broadcast by Free in December 2004. Free was then the first to trial the broadcast of two HD channels on its new ADSL2+ network, in partnership with France Télévisions².

It was logical therefore that, having been the first to trial the broadcast of high-definition content, Free should also be the first operator in France to roll out such a service commercially. HD programmes have therefore been available, at no extra cost, on Freebox TV¹ since the beginning of May, and the Roland Garros International Tournament (the French Open) has been shown in HD since Sunday. More than 12.000 households tuned in to this service between the opening of the tournament and 4 p.m. on Wednesday, making the Freebox the most widely used range of high-definition decoders in France.

Available on a television set through Freebox TV channel 66 to those with an HD Freebox, or on a PC¹ using the multi-device function, this European first has been made possible by means of the partnership forged with AteME, a provider of encoding technology.

The high-definition stream is encoded using software developed by the French company AteME, which exploits to the full the potential of the MPEG-4 AVC standard in order to come down to a bandwidth never before achieved for commercial HD broadcasts (5.2 Mbit/s IP) compared with an average of 13 Mbit/s for the solutions offered by the leading players on the market.

The low bandwidth required by the HD broadcast solution used by Free therefore means that a large majority of its subscribers are able to access this new very high quality broadcasting standard.

Yet again, Free is enhancing its service with the introduction of the latest technology, while leaving its price unchanged (€29.99 per month).

1: Subject to ability to receive the Freebox TV service with a minimum IP bandwidth of 5.2 Mbit/s and use of HD-enabled equipment and accessories.

2: http://www.iliad.fr/presse/2004/Cp_Free_141204.pdf

Free is a subsidiary of the Iliad Group. The Iliad Group is a major player in the Internet and telecommunications markets in France through its subsidiaries Free (the leading alternative broadband operator with 1,783,000 broadband subscribers as at 31/03/2006), One.Tel and Iliad Telecom (fixed telephony operators) and Kertel (prepaid phone cards), as well as IFW (wireless local loop). The Iliad Group was established in 1991 and currently has more than 1,000 employees. The Iliad Group is listed on the Euronext Paris Eurolist under the mnemonic code ILD.

ATEME (www.ateme.com) is a world-leading provider of MPEG-4 video compression technology. ATEME's technological solutions are particularly designed for the fields of digital television, video surveillance and professional audio/video applications. They are marketed in the form of FPGA and DSP based software and on-board solutions.

Press contact: Caroline Paulin - c.paulin@ateme.com - Tel: +33 1 69 35 89 71