

**Category:** 7. Best Sporting Campaign

**Entrant Name:** Holyrood Partnership

**Entrant Title:** U.S. Kids Golf European Championships – Junior Golf Tees Off In the Media

### **The Campaign Brief**

U.S. Kids Golf Foundation is dedicated to promoting golf for children and its U.S. Kids Golf European Championship – which attracts children from all over the world to Scotland – is one of the biggest events in its junior golf calendar.

But the 2012 competition faced challenges. With the tournament in its fifth year, there was a fear that a ‘fatigue factor’ had kicked in as the event was no longer new, while the recession was causing families to assess the value of attending.

Holyrood Partnership were tasked to reverse the negative perceptions to maintain huge attendance as well as showcasing the benefits the tournament brings to the local economy.

### **Objectives**

- Raise awareness of the event in mainstream UK and (where possible) Europe and international media – secure a minimum of 30 pieces of coverage in all target media
- Ensure competitor numbers at least matched last year’s total of 513
- Increase the range of countries who are represented from last year’s total of 35
- Position the U.S. Kids Golf European Championship as Europe’s premier international golf tournament, through key message penetration of 75%
- Highlight the work of the U.S. Kids Golf Foundation and its commitment to promoting and enhancing the sport among children and their families, through key message penetration of 50%

### **Strategy and Tactics**

Initial discussions agreed that the strategy should avoid any negative perceptions and look to position the tournament as the best junior golf event in Europe – and indeed the biggest golf event in the UK in 2012.

This focussed the need to utilise tactics to showcase that, as opposed to a negative, the fifth year of the event was something to be celebrated, using this theme to drive through the message that the overall ethos of the tournament - to celebrate the sport at the ‘Home of Golf’ and to encourage competitiveness among junior golfers - was now being recognised by junior golfers from around the world.

The tactics in detail looked at:

1. Media: Securing stand-out news collateral to showcase the scale and success of the tournament and the competitors; and targeting key golf/sporting media and European media.
2. Marketing: Creating an information pack to issue to all Scottish golf clubs and UK and European Golf Unions.
3. Showcase Events: Planning a ‘Nearest to Pin’ challenge; Securing support of a top professional; Working with Scottish Government to secure attendance of Scottish Sports Minister to authenticate event.
4. Video/Social Media: Planning package of videos to promote events

## **Outputs**

While concerns over attendance numbers led to a restricted budget, Holyrood Partnership remained focussed on a wide-ranging PR campaign.

### **1. Media**

We packaged a series of positive PR stories, designed to promote the event and the value and importance of junior golf, to be drip fed in the run up to the tournament.

The highlights included an initial 'call to arms' release that went to all golf media in UK/Europe; a joint release with VisitScotland who also sent media materials to their worldwide database of contacts; a release to highlight economic benefits to local economy and Scotland; identifying case studies of youngest competitor (five), furthest travelled (Australia) and interesting back stories (nephew of top golfer Ernie Els)

Once we were able to confirm a record number of entrants - thanks to the PR push - a release was issued to highlight the growth of the competition.

The event itself also involved a major media campaign. Despite opening day falling on the Queen's Jubilee and so ruling out TV interest, six journalists attended which - together with our own sourced photography and media targeting - resulted in wide coverage across all traditional and specialist media. BBC Scotland's Sports Nation also ran at 10-minute slot.

### **2. Marketing**

More than 500 information packs were designed and issued to 300 golf clubs in Scotland and golf unions in UK and Europe, to promote and encourage entrants.

### **3. Showcase Events**

To drive interest in the event and promote the ethos of promoting golf for kids, we created a 'Nearest The Pin' competition, designed to encourage young people into the game and give them a chance of winning a set of branded golf clubs. Tournament Co-ordinator Alistair Good was recruited to give the kids tips and advice.

We created and issued 2,000 leaflets to local schools and sports centres to encourage attendance. We also created an eye-catching image of school children wearing Rory McIlroy masks, securing further coverage.

Other showcase events included securing an endorsement from Scots golfer Stephen Gallacher and Sports Minister Shona Robison agreeing to attend the opening day, both of which were used to generate media coverage.

### **4. Video/Social Media**

Five videos were planned to showcase the key events; Nearest to Pin event <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tbbO1vG8znY>; Alasdair Good preview <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0wroNscMaB8>; Stephen Gallacher's support <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yFfsIzzm6NM>; Opening day <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rIwE-OhAs1Q> and Opening Day Pictures <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7JSs5EbxJio>.

## **Outcomes**

- 550 players from 52 different countries entered this year's competition – a record number, making it the biggest junior golf tournament in the world outside USA and a 7% increase on last year's entrant numbers.
  - 60 items of coverage were secured:
    - 25 pieces of traditional coverage
    - 10 pieces of specialist coverage
    - 4 pieces of broadcast coverage
    - 21 pieces of online news and blog coverage
- Reaching a potential audience of 7,651,613:
- Traditional – 3,951,650
  - Online – 2,119,831
  - Broadcast - 1,580,132
- Key message penetration:
    - Premier Golf Tournament: 87%
    - Work of U.S. Kids Golf Foundation: 62%
  - Other key outcomes:
    - 2055 Youtube views

Chris Vonderkall of U.S. Kids Golf said: "Given that this is the fifth year of the event, we fully anticipated an uphill challenge when it came to maintaining media interest in what is now an established event. However, Holyrood Partnership stepped up their game to secure wide coverage, which was instrumental in the event achieving record numbers of competitors from the biggest range of countries ever."

## **Budget**

£5150