

<b>Category Name:</b>	07. Best Sporting Campaign
<b>Title:</b>	Sky Sports Living for Sport - Inspiring Schools through Sport
<b>Submitting Organisation:</b>	Midnight Communications
<b>Budget:</b>	£87,500 per annum

Over 50,000 young people in **one third of UK secondary schools** this year participated in Sky Sports Living for Sport (SSLFS), a free secondary schools initiative delivered in partnership with national charity the Youth Sport Trust, that uses sports stars and sport skills to improve all areas of life.

The 2013/14 campaign has to-date produced **over 620 editorial placements** culminating in May with a live televised broadcast of the Sky Sports Living for Sport Awards (an original Midnight project), and generating over 50 items of coverage in the last three weeks alone.

Midnight's measurable objective - to support the goal of ensuring that **1,500 schools have registered** for Sky Sports Living for Sport by the end of this academic year - has been met, with over 12 weeks of the campaign still to run.

### Brief & Objectives

Midnight's brief for the 2013/14 academic year was to complement our ongoing campaign by helping to develop, and then publicise, new platforms to further raise the presence of the initiative amongst:

- Schools
- Teachers
- Students
- General public
- Key stakeholders

The key objectives and measures of Midnight's success are:

- To **raise awareness** of Sky Sports Living for Sport amongst all secondary schools
- To **highlight the key messages** of Sky Sports Living for Sport
- To drive people to visit [www.skysports.com/livingforsport](http://www.skysports.com/livingforsport) via PR and social media channels
- Deliver **consistent regional print** coverage across every region of the UK, sustained broadcast coverage and regular specialist and online media coverage
- To increase the **brand favourability of Sky**

Our key measurable objective is to support the organisational goal of ensuring 1500 schools register to run Sky Sports Living for Sport projects by the end of the academic year (31 August)

### Strategy & Tactics

A key focus for Midnight's core campaign is to engage the Athlete Mentors as PR ambassadors, through interactive PR and social media workshops, providing them with the tools and confidence to help amplify the impact of the PR campaign on a limited budget.

Our campaign is driven by the inclusion of **authentic content** generated by the athletes' activities during school visits, using this rich content across all media platforms. Photographs, videos and messages are shared across the channels, and fans and followers are encouraged to **interact and share** their experiences.

### Implementation

This year Midnight assisted the strategic development of **two landmark events** supported by global sporting icons and Sky Ambassadors, Jessica Ennis-Hill and David Beckham.

'**Get Inspired with Jessica Ennis-Hill**' saw 300 pupils enjoy a once-in-a lifetime experience being coached by Olympians, Paralympians and world champions after being picked from thousands of entries in a nationwide SSLFS competition. A four-week campaign was developed to drive competition entries at a regional level, maximise media interest in the event across the country and create buzz on social channels. A series of press releases maintained media momentum, while a social calendar, culminating in live on-the-ground tweets, drove online interactions.

The **Sky Sports Living for Sport Student of the Year Awards**, originally conceived by Midnight and now in its fourth year, celebrates the initiative's outstanding success stories. This year, Midnight was briefed to provide recommendations to capture the public imagination and further raise the profile of the awards scheme internally. This led to a **televised Awards ceremony**, with trophies presented by **David Beckham and Jessica Ennis-Hill** and broadcast live on Sky 1 and Sky Sports.

On the day of the event, Midnight's social media team attended the Awards ceremony at Sky Studios and shared posts, tweets, photographs, videos and vines in real-time. Sustained social media activity saw **105 new Twitter followers added** and **132 retweets** achieved, along with **163 @ mentions** and **96 favoured tweets**. 59 press items were secured across key regional titles such as the *Liverpool Echo* and *Leicester Mercury*, as well as targeted education titles including *Education Business* and *Teachers Who Coach*.

Many would regard the support of such global superstars as a PR gift but Midnight faced the **challenge** of ensuring that the main thrust of our campaign - to reach teachers and parents via regional and education media - was not eclipsed by broader PR plans and the considerations of working with global icons. Careful, sensitive and frequent negotiation with other PR partners over a three month period ensured success.

An intensive PR campaign maximised media coverage in a **limited timeframe**, involving a combination press releases, interviews, letters to editor, picture caption stories and thorough article placement. As of 6 June, and just half-way through the Awards campaign, Midnight's Awards activity has generated **over 50 press articles** and the placement of authored articles in key education media including *SecEd*, *Education Business*, *Teach Secondary*, *School Sport* and *Physical Education Matters*.

The social media activity during the Awards delivered a high of 15,429 users viewing SSLFS page content on Facebook with engagement on Twitter evidenced by 536 interactions and 330 uses of the hashtag #SSLFSAwards. Real-time tweeting also secured 105 new Twitter followers and 18 Facebook fans during the day of the Awards ceremony.

#### **Budget and results**

On a budget of £87,500, and without any advertising expenditure, Midnight has already delivered outstanding results, with 10 weeks of the campaign still to run.

We were one of the first PR agencies in the UK to invest in a **new online rich content platform**, enabling us to present our evaluation documents, video, cuttings and charts in a way which significantly **promotes enhanced sharing** of PR results amongst our clients. Please click link for an example:

<http://releasd.com/6ba7>

Over the course of the academic year to date, web traffic has reached over 106,000 with Midnight **increasing the number of site visits from social media channels** from 6.9 per cent to over 10 per cent of all traffic. Key results to date (**with 10 weeks left to go**) include:

#### **Media coverage:**

- 628 items of regional media coverage against a full-year target of 582
- 880 media mentions of the initiative against a full-year target of 810
- A ten-fold leap in circulation in specialist media of almost 64 million against a target of 6m

#### **Twitter:**

- An 81 per cent increase in Twitter followers since August 2013, totalling 6,050 new followers
- An 85 per cent increase in new Twitter followers, on average, per week
- A 70 per cent increase in interactions amongst key education, sports and media influencers, to 4,073
- A 65 per cent increase in interactions against targets, from 4,200 to 6,907
- Sustained and consistent use of the bespoke hashtag #livingforsport with more than 600 uses

#### **Facebook**

- An all-time high of fans viewing Facebook content, over 528,500 in just one week
- Continued development of an active Facebook community, evidenced by over 11,000 engaged users
- An 8 per cent increase in Facebook fans to 5,260

Most importantly, with the PR and social media campaign driving more school registrations via the SSLFS website, **Midnight had met the target of 1,500 schools being registered by 6 June with 12 weeks of the campaign yet to run.**

*"Midnight Communications has taken the regional communication of Sky Sports Living for Sport to another level over the past few years and their drive, commitment and flexibility as an organisation make them a real pleasure to work with."*

**Jack Eatherley, Schools Manager, BSKyB**