

CIPR PRide Awards 2014

Region: South of England

Category: Best Event

Agency name: Inside Media

Campaign name: Conti Media Cup: Great Results for Continental Tyres

1. Brief and objectives

Continental Tyres is the main sponsor of women's football in England. It is a partner of The FA Women's Super League, The England Women's Team, The FA Women's Cup and The FA WSL Continental Cup.

As a part of our retained work for Continental Tyres, we were briefed to organise an event for key media to raise the profile of Continental's support of the women's game. The key objective was increased awareness and engagement with journalists, rather than coverage (though we gained this anyway).

2. Strategy and tactics

- We proposed to hold a football tournament for 50 female journalists from a variety of media at the FA's new National Football Centre, St George's Park.
- To highlight Continental's championing of the women's game, we focused on it being run and attended by women-only. We organised female coaches, referees, managers, photographer and crew – as well as all-women teams.
- We pitched in the event as a 'package' which included a tour of the world-class facilities at St George's Park, lunch, an evening BBQ and football kit with personalized shirts
- We arranged for eight of England's top players to act as 'team managers' – offering journalists the chance to meet and interview stars of the women's game including: England captain Casey Stoney, TV pundit and Birmingham LFC star Karen Carney, and England goalie Siobhan Chamberlain
- We had one of the women's game's most famous faces, and the most capped England player ever, Rachel Yankey, to hand out the trophies and medals

- We created significant social media ‘buzz’ around the event encouraging participants to tweet using #ContiMediaCup
- We introduced the journalists to the newly-launched ContiWarmUp - a specially designed football warm-up programme. A 30 minute warm-up took place before the tournament kicked off.

3. Implementation (when, where, how long)

The event was on Friday, August 9 at the new National Football Centre and home of English football, St George’s Park, Staffordshire.

Types and variety of media utilized

- ❖ We had a mix of lifestyle and sports media with journalists/teams from the following outlets:
 - BBC Sport (including Shelley Alexander, the head of editorial on women’s sport for the BBC)
 - Sky Sports (most notably, high-profile presenter Kait Borsay)
 - The Sun
 - The Times/Sunday Times
 - Time Out
 - She Kicks magazine
 - Girls on the Ball
 - Women in Sport Magazine
 - Sport Sister
- ❖ We utilised social media before, during and after the event. Using #ContiMediaCup we encouraged discussion via @ContiUK (which we run for Continental). Afterwards, we shared pictures of the event across Continental’s social media channels for the journalists to share.

4. Research, planning, measurement and evaluation (outcomes and outputs)

❖ Research

We carefully researched the journalists to invite, choosing those we knew we would lead to the most fruitful relationship in the future.

❖ Planning

We planned the event in extensive detail – including everything from recruiting the journalists and ordering their personalized football kit to putting together a detailed pre-event information pack and a press pack, and designing the tournament schedule.

❖ Measurement and evaluation

- We conducted a survey following the event. Topline figures from this include:
 - 100% rated the event as ‘extremely’ or ‘very’ well-organised
 - 100% rated the experience as ‘extremely’ or ‘very’ enjoyable
 - 100% said they would be ‘extremely’ or ‘very’ interested in attending in the future
 - 56.3% said they were not previously aware of how Continental Tyres supports the women’s game (but were thanks to the event)

- The survey also asked for anonymous general comments which were 100% positive. They included:
 - *“Organisation of the tournament was superb. Great to have so many England players involved. Such an enjoyable day out and a pleasure to be involved, so thank you for inviting me. Well done to the team from Inside Media!”*
 - *“The overall day was brilliant. Even prior to the event Inside Media made sure we had all the required info and made the day a complete success”*

- The event was so successful that Continental decided to host the event again in 2014, investing a significant sum of money in expanding it into an evening/overnight event.
- The event was a catalyst for ongoing media relations. For example, 12 of the journalists attended FA WSL Continental Cup Final as our guests and covered the match.
- Because of the relationship we made with Sky Sports presenter Kait Borsay, Continental are now sponsors of The Offside Rule (We Get It!) podcast, which Kait co-founded alongside two other female broadcasters. This has resulted in regular exposure of Continental’s support for the women’s game.

- We also forged strong relationships with the England players we hired as managers. This has resulted in us recruiting two of them (Rachel Yankey and Siobhan Chamberlain) to act as Continental Ambassadors - which has given us great news hooks for ongoing coverage.
- Our objective was to build relationships and raise awareness, not to get coverage, but we did get three pieces on popular sporting blogs, a piece in She Kicks magazine and Kait Borsay wrote a DPS for the match day programme of a women's World Cup qualifier

5. Budget

We worked on the Conti Media Cup as part of our retained work for Continental Tyres. We estimate that we spent seven days on this project at £650 per day, which equates to **£4,450**. In addition to this, Continental spent **£19,500** on the event.

Mark Griffiths, Continental Tyres:

"Inside Media proved to be an invaluable asset in helping to organise and co-ordinate the Conti Media Cup 2013.

"Raising the profile of our support and sponsorship of women's football is no easy task, so to have the relationships with key female journalists which Inside Media established because of the event is particularly commendable.

"The resounding success of the event meant we ran it for a second year in 2014 on a bigger scale for both the men and women's side of the game. We are hopeful it will become an annual event and a key part of our PR activity in the UK & Ireland."

Kait Borsay, Sky Sports/The Offside Rule:

"As a journalist I've felt honoured to be a part of the Conti Media Cup for two years running. It is superbly organised. The Inside Media team do what they excel at - creating an event that involves so much care and consideration yet seems to run so effortlessly smoothly."

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