



Highlights of TWSM December 08 Edition

SPONSORSHIP NEWS

Sponsorship Quick Facts

November saw a marked reduction in the volume of deals reported around the world but whether this is a sign of any longer term reduction in the sponsorship market is too early to say. The volume of sponsorship transactions in any case normally increases in December and January as the New Year and new sports seasons begin. When Johnson and Johnson decided not to extend its worldwide Olympic sponsorship through to the 2012 London Olympics there was plenty of speculation that sponsors would be stretched by what seems to be an increasingly anxious environment. However there are plenty of other factors in renewing a sponsorship than the immediate economic situation.. In any case Johnson & Johnson will probably continue with Olympic sponsorship but not as a TOP partner.

A survey by Sports Marketing Surveys showed that most sports followers feel that, despite the current problems, banks & financial institutions should continue their sponsorship programmes. In addition to that finding there were still plenty of financial sponsorships reported in November.

The European Sponsorship Association's flagship conference, Future Sponsorship, held in Brussels in November highlighted the pivotal role sponsorship plays in connecting all the elements of marketing within a cohesive business strategy. Karen Earl, Chairman of the European Sponsorship Association (ESA), addressing the 200-strong delegates at the close of the conference, emphasized the versatility of sponsorship as a multi-faceted marketing tool operating on many levels to engage the customer, employee and public. "Sponsorship can perform many marketing functions and is also a very effective way of tackling today's important issues such as Corporate Responsibility (CR), social education and sustainability. This is borne out with year on year growth in the sponsorship sector". Karen Earl said that the sponsorship industry, like every other industry, is bound to feel the effects of the economic downturn. She believed however, that there was a general feeling of optimism owing to the growing sophistication of the industry, which enables it to play a real role in achieving business objectives.

Sport continues to find new ways of responding to the move towards being green, and a perfect example last month was the IndyCar Series and APEX-Brasil. APEX-Brasil is a co-operation with the Brazilian Sugarcane Industry Association, UNICA, to identify those interested in supplying ethanol to the series. Initially, UNICA will look to partner with a US ethanol company to supply the series with corn-based ethanol. "The move to other sources of ethanol is a natural progression as the ethanol industry continues to grow and evolve," said Terry Angstadt, president of the commercial division of the Indy Racing League. "We continue to strive to be on the leading edge of the greener racing. The IndyCar Series was the first motorsports series to mandate use of a renewable fuel, and now we will work with the ethanol industry in both the United States and Brazil to promote the use of all types of ethanol by consumers." Several Brazilian drivers already compete in the IndyCar Series.