



## The Principles of Rugby Sponsorship

1. The essence of Rugby is passion. Rugby is about athletes doing what they love and giving their sport the ultimate effort. As such, sport is a metaphor for life that brings to the fan an example of human accomplishment, struggle and effort, of seeing the best doing their best, of inspiring hope of success in life. Nothing is more important in life than having passion for what you do.
2. Rugby is also about bringing the fan into the sport, giving him or her an experience they will never forget; an experience they can take into their daily living as an example of high courage and deep commitment.
3. Sponsorship is a partnership between a corporate entity and a Rugby team whose goal is to leverage the power and the passion of Rugby in order to gain market share and new business for the sponsor.
4. ***The tangible result of a Rugby partnership should be a return on investment for the sponsoring company of at least twice the value of the overall investment made in the sponsorship.***
5. A Rugby partner or sponsoring company should develop a comprehensive plan in cooperation with the sports team that brings the sponsor to the forefront of the relationship both in the mind of the team and especially in the mind of the sports fan.
6. The sports partner or sponsoring company knows that in order for the team to adequately represent the sponsor adequate funding is necessary; such funding to consist of enough money to compete at a high level.
7. The Rugby team should ask for enough funding to compete at a high level; no more and no less.
8. The team should be an active participant in the partner's marketing plan, become fully aware of the partner's marketing goals and ensure they perform their part to contribute to the sponsor's success.
9. Sponsors should be kept abreast of the results that the Rugby club achieves both on the pitch as well as in the marketing plan. A communications plan should be developed so that the sponsor knows what kind of information to expect from the team and how that information relates to the sponsor's goals.
10. As with all human relationships, transparency and honesty are critical components of any partnership. Punctuality and reliability also ensure a solid, mutually beneficial relationship.

There are many new names for the term we call sponsorship. Such new terms could be promotions, product integration, partnerships and advertising alternatives.

When buying more kit, who do you go to first – the guy who can give it to you for 5 cents cheaper, or the firm that has supplied our kit for many years? When was the last time you (and especially your players) personally thanked your national sponsors? A quick email can work wonders for the relationship.

Cheers,  
Bob Kreasul