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BRANDING AN ATHLETE AND CREATING STRATEGIC SPONSORSHIP  
CO-OPERATION RELATIONSHIPS – CASE CARINA KETONEN

Bachelor's Thesis 2010

## ABSTRACT

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Branding an athlete and creating strategic sponsorship co-operation relationships – case Carina Ketonen

Bachelor's Thesis

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Sponsorship, co-operation, branding, sport, cycling, strategic alliance, competitive advantage

This thesis deals with sponsorship co-operation relationships and with the branding of an athlete. This research was commissioned by Rose Factory and Merja Naroma, Carina Ketonens manager. And the aim of this research was to find out how the sponsorship co-operation relationships can be improved and handled in Carina Ketonens case in order to get the best out of them

The reason why this topic is of interest is that Carina Ketonen, a finish amateur cyclist is aiming at participating in the London Olympics in 2012 and to achieve this goal involves strong backup troops and funding, thus the concepts of branding and sponsorship co-operation come into play.

The research was carried out by taking a look at previously existing literature, by carrying out interviews with Antti Heiskanen, Jan Goeman and Carina Ketonen and conducting field research in the GoExpo fair in Helsinki Fair Centre and in the European Championships in MTB 2009 in Zoetemeer, Netherlands.

The main conclusion that was made is that sports and sponsorship co-operation are constantly evolving fields with strong links to business. And successfulness will always be defined by the situation at hand. Carina Ketonen should focus on the sponsorship co-operation relationship formed with Fietsen Goeman, as this should help her in reaching her goal of competing in the London Olympics in 2012.

## TIIVISTELMÄ

KYMENLAAKSON AMMATTIKORKEAKOULU  
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Urheilijan brändäminen ja strategisten sponsorointi yhteistyösuhteiden luominen – tapaus Carina Ketonen

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Ulla Puustelli, lehtori  
Rose Factory

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Tämä lopputyö käsittelee sponsorointi yhteistyö suhteita ja sitä kuinka urheilijasta luodaan brändi. Tämä tutkimus tehtiin Rose Factoryn ja Carina Ketosen managerin Merja Naroman toimeksiannosta. Tämän tutkimuksen tavoitteena oli selvittää kuinka sponsorointi yhteistyö suhteita voitaisiin parantaa ja kuinka niitä pitäisi käsitellä jotta niistä saataisiin parhaat mahdolliset tulokset Carina Ketosen tapauksessa.

Tämä aihealue on mielenkiintoinen siksi, että suomalainen amatööri pyöräilijä Carina Ketonen pyrkii osallistumaan vuoden 2012 Lontoon Olympialaisiin ja tätä varten hän tarvitsee vahvoja tukijoukkoja ja rahoitusta. Näin kuvaan siis astuvat käsitteet brändäus ja sponsorointi yhteistyö.

Tutkimus tätä lopputyötä varten tehtiin luomalla katsaus aiempaan kirjallisuuteen aihealueesta, haastatteleamalla Antti Heiskasta, Jan Goemia ja Carina Ketosta ja ottamalla osaa sekä GoExpo messuihin Helsingin Messukeskuksessa ja MTB Euroopan Mestaruus kisoihin 2009 Zoetemeerissä, Alankomaissa.

Pääjohtopäätöksenä voidaan todeta että urheilu ja sponsorointi yhteistyö ovat alati muuttuvia aloja joilla on vahva yhteys liike-elämään. Ja mitä menestykseen tulee, niin se tulee aina riippumaan kyseisestä tilanteesta. Carina Ketosen tulisi keskittyä solmimaansa sponsorointi yhteistyöhön Fietsen Goemanin kanssa, sillä tämän tulisi auttaa häntä saavuttamaan tavoitteensa kilpailla vuoden 2012 Lontoon Olympialaisissa.

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this thesis is to answer the following research questions. That is how to create successful wide-ranging sponsorship co-operation between athletes and businesses, which will benefit all parties involved and how to create a strong brand of an athlete and how to make a successful amateur cyclist Carina Ketonen into a well known attractive brand with whom businesses want to establish co-operation?

The reason why this topic is of interest is that Carina Ketonen, a Finish amateur cyclist is aiming at participating in the London Olympics in 2012 and to achieve this goal involves taking part in world cups abroad. As can be easily understood all this will require strong backup troops and funding, so that Carina can focus her energy in racing and succeeding. The aim is to find out how to make Carina Ketonen in to an attractive option, that is a strong brand, with whom businesses with the necessary resources want to co-operate.

One might be wondering what exactly sports have to do with international business and trade. The answer lies in the fact that sports, business and media are all without doubt interconnected to each other nowadays and what is more also sports are increasingly globalizing and crossing borders. Thus some of the world's most well known athletes are as famous and popular both home and abroad. (Economist 2008, 3-4) Nowadays sports are a billion dollar industry that has effects both for the local and global business environment, taking part in the shaping of the economy (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 2). Thus sports as business and as a game are nowadays sometimes in conflict with each other (Rein, Kotler & Ryan Shields 2006, 30).

Nowhere else are these commercial aspects of sports more evident than in the Olympic Games. Although it is said that the athletes competing at the Olympics are doing so for the glory and although the venues themselves include no advertisements, nonetheless the Olympics are also an important event for global business. The Olympic Games are a huge marketing opportunity for businesses as they are apt to reach the audience of billions



of people, the ones in the actual audience and the ones reached through television and other media as well. It is no wonder businesses are intrigued by the Olympics and the opportunities they provide. The Games are good for anyone selling pretty much anything but especially for example sportswear manufacturers. The Olympics themselves have its main sponsors including for example Kodak. As for from the perspective of the athletes themselves, winning a medal in the Olympic Games should produce such benefits as more financial support as businesses are more interested in Olympic winners as potential sponsees. (Economist 2008, 3-4.)

As for the aspect of sports being truly global business, this can be observed through for example that via media sports reach a global audience, capital invested in sports and also sports products are crossing borders and the sports labour that is, the athletes themselves, are also crossing borders. Furthermore we should not neglect the effects of media. Sports and media can be seen as forming a relationship of mutual benefit. Sports and the commercial side involved are based on the audience as is media. Sports need a paying audience and media expands this audience. The more audience the media is able to attract the more the advertisers are interested in exploiting that media in question. (Economist 2008, 3-4.)

### 1.1 Carina Ketonen a successful Cross Country Cyclist from Kouvola

This thesis is built around the case dealing with Carina Ketonen. Carina Ketonen is a 33 year old successful Cross Country Cyclist from Kouvola. Carina first got interested in cycling through her brother and in 2001 she participated in her first cycling competition in Kouvola, Finland and since then she has achieved several Finnish Championships in Cross Country and Road Cycling. The most renowned achievements so far have been the sixth place in the World Cup Marathon in 2008 and the seventh place in the European Marathon Championships in 2007. The cycling association Carina is a member of is called the Riverside Cycling Club (RCC).

In 2009 alone she has won the Finnish Road Championships, the Finnish Championships XCO, the Finnish Cyclo Cross Championships and the

Finnish Championships XCM. In addition she was on 17<sup>th</sup> place in the European Championships in XCO held in Zoetermeer in Netherlands in 2009. The current goal of Carina Ketonen is to be competing in the London Olympics in 2012 and of course succeed in all the other races she will participate. Carina has twin daughters Ciia and Kira, and yet with the support and help of her husband Kaj, and with her own ambition and youthfulness, Carina has managed to create a balance between her cycling career and family life. But all this will not be enough to help in achieving her goal of competing in the London Olympics in 2012. To reach this goal she will need also businesses and sponsorship co-operation with them as back-up troops. Sponsorship co-operation relationships should enable her to compete in World Cups around Europe. These World Cups and competing in them are of interest as the points gained from these will enable the competing in the actual Olympics.

## 1.2 The structure of the thesis and the research methods used

As can already be seen from the table of contents this thesis starts by outlining the theoretical framework for both sponsorship co-operation and all the relevant related issues for this thesis and the case Carina Ketonen, and also for branding and all the relevant related issues for this thesis and the case Carina Ketonen. The theoretical framework is built by taking a look at already previously existing knowledge and literature. First sponsorship co-operation relationships as strategic alliances will be investigated and after this the creation and building of successful sponsorship co-operation relationships. The theory part of this thesis is finished by taking a look at branding and branding of an athlete.

After dealing with the theory it is time to move on to the empirical part of this thesis. The empirical part consists of interviews and some field research carried out. The first interview deals with a Finnish business called Keittiömaalma that has established a co-operation relationship with Carina Ketonen and the second interview deals with a Belgium business Fietsen Goeman that just recently established co-operation with Carina Ketonen. In addition an interview from Carina Ketonen is included. As for the field

research it was carried out by taking part in the GoExpo fair at the Helsinki Fair centre and also by taking part in the European Championships 2009 in MTB in Zoetermeer in the Netherlands. After this, both the theoretical and empirical part it is time to tie up all the issues in the conclusion part.

## 2 SPONSORSHIP CO-OPERATION RELATIONSHIPS AS STRATEGIC ALLIANCES

Sponsorship co-operation nowadays is seen as including commercial interests and incentives and as being a major marketing communication tool. What is more it should be recognized even in a wider context it should be regarded as part of a firms all business activities. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 5, 11-12, 17; Alaja 2001, 20) In fact nowadays sponsorship co-operation relationships should be and are treated as strategic alliances that are used to accomplish competitive advantage. This is due to the fact that the use of sponsorship co-operation is growing and it is used by businesses to reach such strategic goals as business and brand positioning objectives, the growing amounts of money invested in these co-operation relationships, the growing importance and role of it in many businesses marketing efforts, and the use of sponsorship co-operation as a basis and premises for the development of a marketing strategy. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 235-237, 248)

All in all it can be stated that in recent years the meaning and nature of sport and other sponsorship co-operation relationships have gone through some major changes and evolved considerably (Burton, Farrelly & Quester 2006). Also the growing meaning of sport sponsorship co-operation relationships in Finland is to be detected for example through such factors that nowadays there are businesses that have specialised in sport marketing and managerial activities with an aim to connect athletes and businesses. One such business for example is Atletika, which was established in 2008. The aim of Atletika is to connect businesses, which are looking for co-operation possibilities with athletes, with athletes who are looking for co-operation partners as well to gain the needed financial and other resources in order to better exercise and concentrate on their sport. (Atletika 2009a; Atletika 2009b) As the meaning of sponsorship co-operation relationships as

strategic alliances is being increasingly understood and appreciated also the inputs and stakes, both financial and strategic, have grown considerably (Burton, Farrelly & Quester 2006).

A sport sponsorship alliance is created between those marketing sports and those marketing via sports, so it is a business-to-business relationship. In sponsorship co-operation strategic alliances the sponsor business and the sponsee share skills and resources. Businesses are engaging in these sponsorship co-operation relationships and strategic alliances in order to compete successfully both in domestic and international markets and many multinational businesses have chosen it as their preferred communications tool as sport sponsorship among other things is apt to cross cultural and other boundaries between different countries and markets. Sponsorship co-operation as a strategic alliance can be used in such efforts as for example to accomplish corporation and brand image objectives, brand positioning strategies, the basis of marketing activities, co-branding, advertising campaigns, sales and trade promotions, international market entry and diffusion strategies to name a few. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 235-237, 248.)

## 2.1 Development of sponsorship co-operation

But it was not until the 1960s that the modern sponsorship co-operation began. The reason behind this was the launch of commercial TV and programmes in the United States (US), and it is from here where the modern sponsorship co-operation spread to Europe and also to Finland. In the 1970s the volume of sponsorship co-operation grew rapidly and it was in fact the sports organizations that were most actively looking for co-operation partners and associates. As for the 1980s this is the time when the communication and interaction between the businesses and sponsees increased and common rules of conduct were sought that would lead to the creation of co-operation relationships that would be mutually beneficiary for both parties involved. In the 1990s sponsorship co-operation became more professional, that is, it was seen as being part of a company's marketing communication and was characterized by facts and rationales. More money and personnel was invested in this field and both businesses and the

sponsees got their own professionals in the field of sponsorship co-operation. And now in the 2000's we are witnessing ever more commercial interests behind the sponsorship co-operation relationships and as competition is increasing the need for innovation and new solutions and studies also in the field of sponsorship co-operation is evident. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 5, 11-12, 17; Alaja 2001, 20.)

When it comes down to examining the sponsorship co-operation and the development of sports marketing we can state that the real breakthrough happened in the 1990's in Finland. This is due to the fact that the competitive environment was changing and the only way that sports could really maintain its competitiveness was to acknowledge marketing also as a prerequisite to its survival. As a disciplinary sports marketing is quite a new concept. As such it goes without saying that for people involved in sports more marketing oriented thinking and activities are required. Today it is not enough anymore that the top athlete develops and improves their own skills and accomplishments in relation to its own competitors, that is, the other athletes it competes against. In addition sports marketers are required to create competitive advantages into the product or brand, which in this case is the athlete. Alongside the product, price, availability and marketing communication, sponsorship co-operation is one way of creating this competitive advantage. (Alaja 2001, 15-17.)

## 2.2 The share of sports in the total of sponsorship co-operation investments

As for the targets of the sponsorship co-operation that is the sponsees, the major target for businesses to do co-operation with is the field of sports (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 12-15). Sponsorship co-operation in the field of sports can include sponsees such as sports teams, individual athletes, sports events, sports organisations, television programs on sports or some other of the kind (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 12-15; Alaja 2001, 23). It should be noted nonetheless that team sports is a more popular co-operation option for businesses than individual athletes. Altogether in 2003 in Finland 66 per cent of the funds that were spend on sponsorship co-operation went into

sports as shown in figure 1. In Finland businesses spend around 70-80 million euro's in sponsorship co-operation. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 12-15)

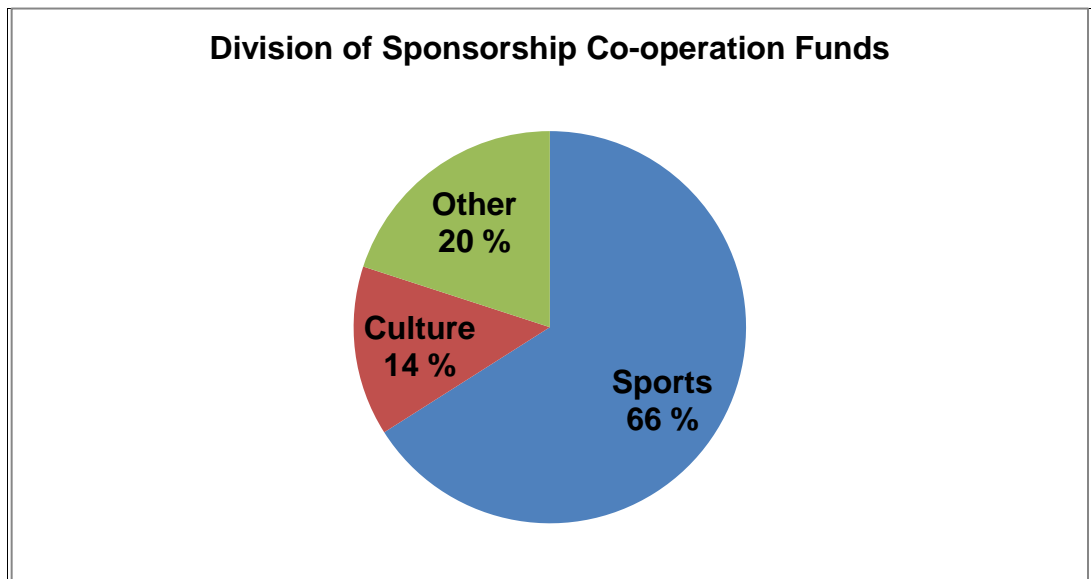


Figure 1 Division of sponsorship co-operation funds in Finland in 2003, based on Alaja & Forssell (2004, 15)

As for the sponsorship figures for the entire world, in 2003 businesses were recorded to spend about 30 billion US dollars on sponsorship activities. From this US\$ 30 billion about 77 per cent went into sports as sited in figure 2. From these figures it is easy to conclude that the strategic meaning of sponsorship co-operation relationships and contracts is of great importance to businesses worldwide nowadays. The reason behind the amounts of sponsorship activities and investments targeted at sports on a global scale is that sports itself is growing at rapid pace into a truly global product. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 12, 117.)

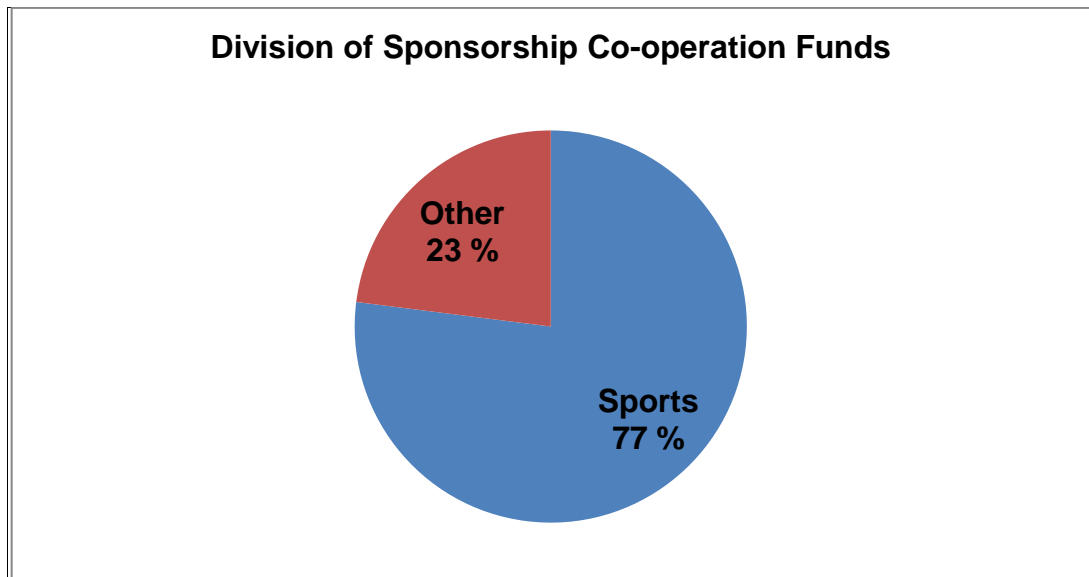


Figure 2 Division of sponsorship co-operation funds in the entire world in 2003 based on Amis & Cornwell (2005, 12, 117)

It should be kept in mind that sponsorship co-operation is only one of many marketing communication tool options from which businesses can choose from. These other marketing communication tools can include for example advertising, direct marketing, brochures, internet pages, publicity, trade fairs. The point here is that sponsorship co-operation competes for popularity with these other forms of marketing communication. Especially nowadays as the amounts of money invested in marketing communication by businesses seem to be increasing. Nonetheless it should also be kept in mind that rarely do businesses rely only on one means of marketing communication that is, most businesses exploit multiple different marketing communication tools simultaneously. (Hertzen 2006, 157-161, 168.)

### 2.3 Defining sponsorship co-operation

Although the word sponsoring has been used for ages to describe the marketing co-operation that occurs between businesses and sponsees it bears negative connotations, such as for example that it is an activity that is based on the "aid/benefits" granted by the businesses to the sponsees without them gaining anything in return. It can be concluded from this the term sponsorship co-operation might be a better one to be used, as it takes

into account the reality of these relationships, that is, these relationships are based on co-operation whereby both parties involved benefit from the relationship as shown in figure 3. Both the business in question and the sponsee are equal partners in the relationship, both giving and gaining something in return. This is no charity based activity or relationship. It should also be noted that only with a tight and close relationship both parties can achieve their goals and simultaneously provide the other party benefits and opportunities. In order for the sponsorship co-operation relationship to function as it should real team spirit and playing among the parties involved is required and both parties should try and understand the other parties' point of view. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 21; Alaja 2001, 23-24, 29.)

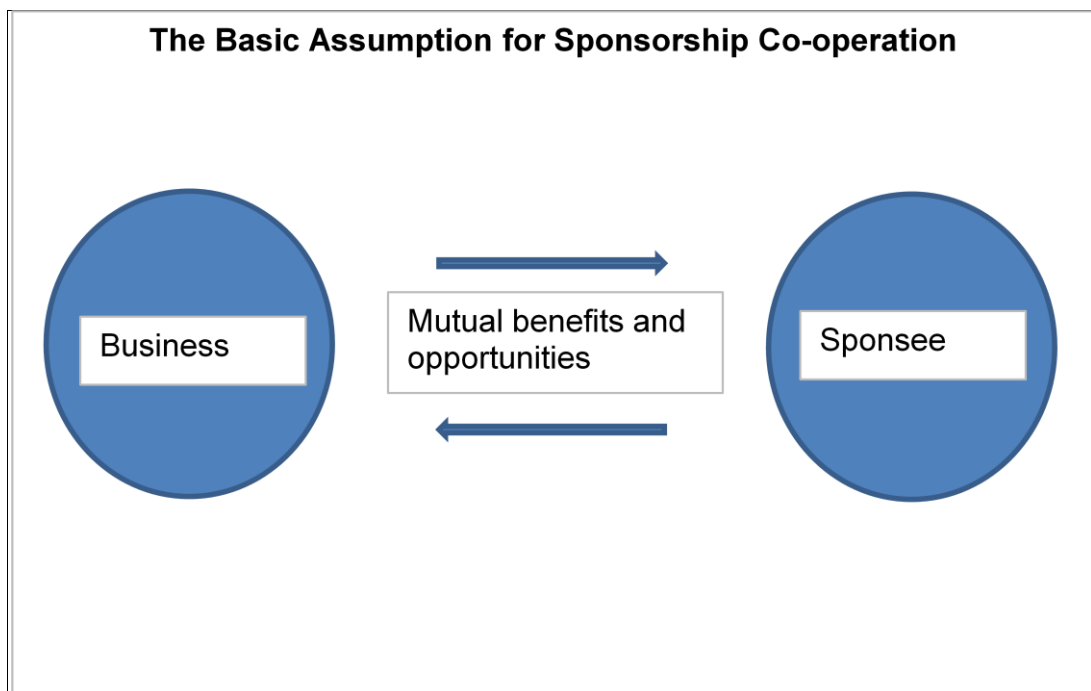


Figure 3 The basic assumption for sponsorship co-operation based on Alaja & Forssell (2004, 21)

This issue of sponsorship co-operation can also be looked at through the concept Exchange Theory whereby two or more parties exchange resources of equal value. In sport sponsorship co-operation terms this implies that the sponsor business for example might offer media-visibility, money or services and as for the sport sponsee, they may for example offer product trials, increased awareness, image benefits or sales opportunities to name a few.



The questions to be asked when considering in engaging in sponsorship co-operation relationships are: “What is in it for me and what does it cost for me?” The gains and costs should equal with respect to all parties involved in the sponsorship co-operation relationship. (Erbschloe 2008.)

As it is with most concepts also the concept of sponsorship co-operation has a wide variety of different definitions. Some of the definitions being more limited and narrower than others. But the basic message under all definitions is the same, that is, both the business and the sponsee give and in return gain and receive something, that is, both parties should benefit from the relationship as sited in figure 4. This co-operation is seen as a voluntary partnership where both partners are active and equal. Sponsorship co-operation is a marketing communication tool that has clear and set commercial targets and objectives. Sponsorship co-operation can also be looked at as being a process whereby it includes planning, organizing, utilization/implementation and follow-up. As for the sponsorship co-operation target, the sponsee, for businesses to achieve their objectives, it can be for example in the field of sports, culture or the social sector. Also it should be noted that commercialism, responsibility for the society, ethical and long-term thinking, idealism, mutual respect, image, brand and the targeted audience play a central role when thinking about sponsorship co-operation. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 22-23.)

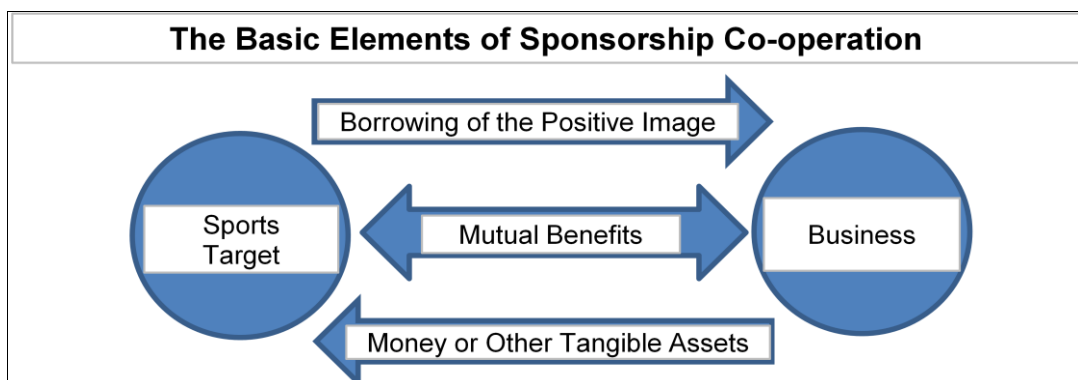


Figure 4 The basic elements of sponsorship co-operation, based on Alaja (2001, 23)

When the sponsorship co-operation involves a business and sports we can define the basic elements into seven main points. First of all, both parties to the co-operation relationship need to make inputs in order to gain from the relationship. Furthermore the sponsorship co-operation relationship is a marketing communication tool for the business and a tool for competitive advantage for the sponsee. The business in a figure of speech borrows the positive image of the sports target to its own marketing communication objectives. The sports sponsee might gain a financial settlement or other tangible assets in return for its own inputs to the co-operation relationship. The sponsorship co-operation relationship should be equally beneficial for both the business and the sponsee. The implementation of the co-operation is to be done in an ethically sustainable way. (Alaja 2001, 23.)

### 2.3.1 The different roles and dimensions played by sponsorship co-operation

For a business sport and other sponsorship co-operation is a strategic tool and as such can have multiple roles and uses for the business (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 13). Sponsorship co-operation is an indirect marketing communication tool. That means that in this perspective it differs from the other marketing communication tools, such as for example advertising, direct marketing as these are all direct ways of communication. But sponsorship co-operation is not merely a marketing communication tool, that is, it is related also to the broader concept of marketing. As such sponsorship co-operation has three different dimensions related to marketing: story teller, accelerator and engine as sited in figure 5. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 25-26.)

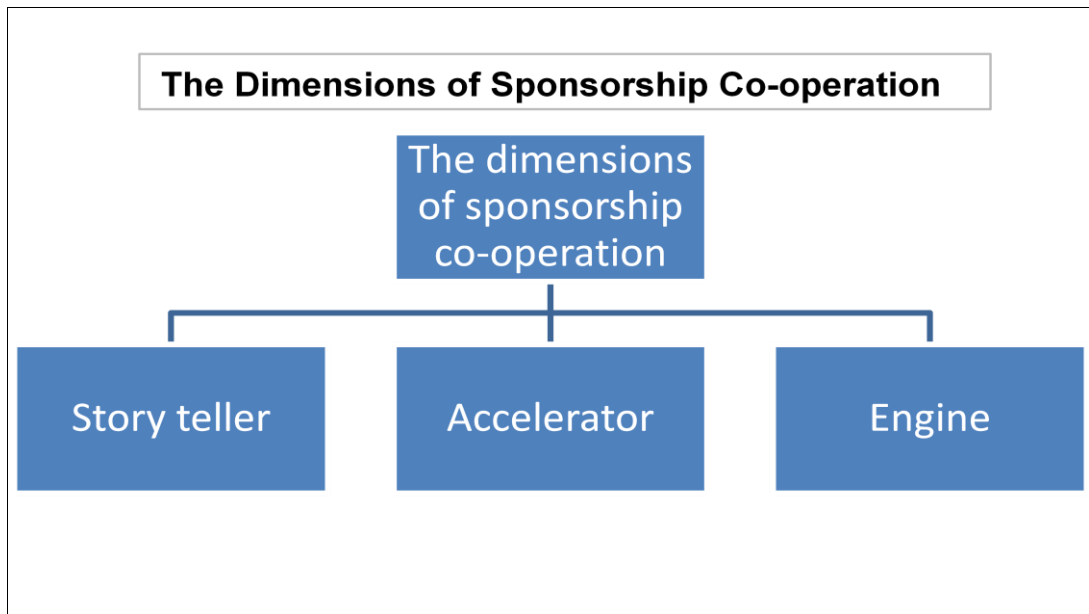


Figure 5 The dimensions of sponsorship co-operation, based on Alaja & Forssell (2004, 26)

The first dimension, that is story teller, is most commonly used form in sponsorship co-operation and is related to the marketing communication aspects of the relationship. This means that the co-operation communicates for example the reputation, image, about the possible products or services. The second dimension, accelerator refers to the situation where the whole marketing of a business is based solely on the sponsorship co-operation relationship. For example international manufacturers of sports equipment often use sponsorship co-operation as the main basis on which the whole marketing concept is based on, that is, for example the price, product, availability and marketing communication of the business is based on the co-operation relationship. As for the final, third dimension, the engine, in this situation the sponsorship co-operation is the driving force of the whole business and its operations. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 25-26.)

When the co-operation relationship is acting as a means of marketing communication for the business in question then the sponsee can be acting as a courier of the communicated message and also as the message itself. The sponsorship co-operation can have a variety of roles and it can be the leading force behind the marketing communication or on the other extreme

only a supportive force. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 27) Sponsorship and sport sponsorship can be used for example in such activities as in market penetration and market development. For example in market penetration sport sponsorship co-operation can help in increasing the levels of brand awareness and thus increase usage of the product or attract the customers of the competitor. In market development sport sponsorship can be used to attract and appeal to the new targeted markets or customer groups. Also sport sponsorship co-operation is a useful tool in brand positioning, that is creating a unique place in the consumers' minds for the brand. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 162-166)

Sponsorship co-operation is one of the most powerful, maybe even the single most powerful one, tools a business can use as a means of revealing and communicating its values to the public. The conception, image and values of the sponsee become the businesses in question. Sponsorship co-operation can be useful in bleeding to the targeted audience in a personal and unique way. It is possible for a business to reveal and convey its soul and bleed to the emotions of the targeted audience. The audience is reached in the right time and around surroundings that have positive meaning to the recipient and thus the receiving of the message happens more naturally and actually is actively received by the targeted audience. Thus the operations of the business become more tangible and visible. In addition when the sponsorship co-operation is done with the right partner and in a unique way and with careful planning and implementation it can help in distinction from the competition. Also the co-operation is apt for the business to communicate positive aspects and news about itself which of course is difficult to do in today's media society where people are surrounded by thousands of messages all the time. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 27-29.)

But it should be kept in mind that the role that sponsorship co-operation plays is dependent on the co-operation relationship in question. For example the sponsorship co-operation businesses can be divided into different categories depending on the role they play as shown in figure 6. Often the sponsee for example has its main partners and partners, which come

second in importance after the main partners. In this context it should be mentioned that the sponsee should not have too many partners as this makes the controlling of the sponsorship co-operation relationships more complex and difficult if not even impossible. In addition to the previously mentioned partners the sponsee usually has supplier partners and advertiser partners. Supplier partners offer things such as necessary services and equipment for example. As for the advertiser partner businesses, these are businesses that simply buy advertising space. Thus in a way this kind of a relationship is not really even considered to be a sponsorship co-operation relationship, yet alone a strategic alliance. (Alaja 2001, 55-56.)

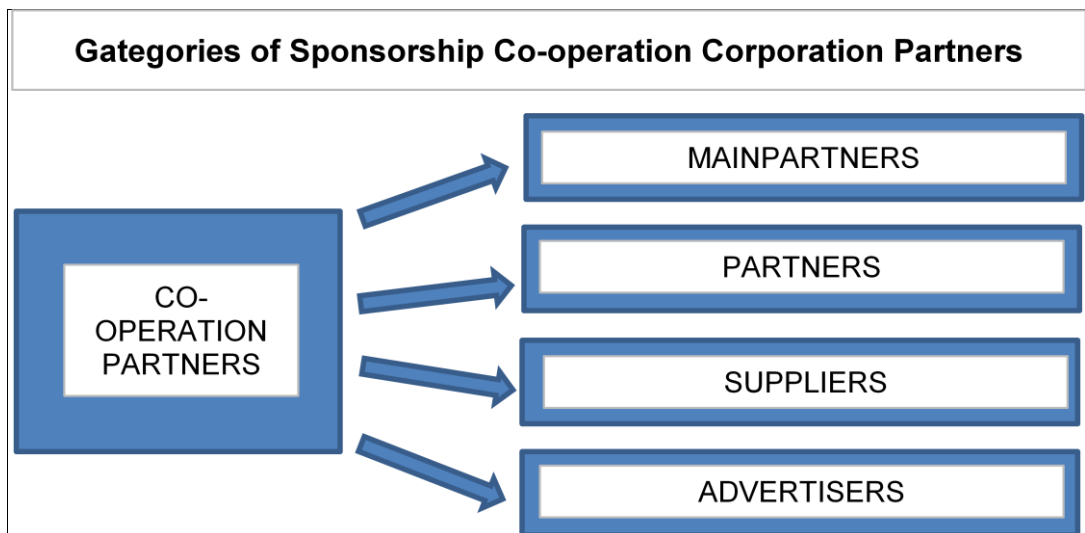


Figure 6 Categories of sponsorship co-operation partners, based on Alaja (2001, 56)

#### 2.4 Benefits of the sponsorship co-operation between businesses and athletes

In the early days of the sponsorship co-operation businesses engaged in them more easily based on personal interests instead of actually basing the decision on careful evaluation and business rationale on the benefits that should result from the relationship (Erbschloe 2008). Today sponsorship co-operation relationships of course need to produce benefits both for the business and the sponsee in question, as why would either one of the parties engage in such a relationship otherwise nowadays. Although it should be kept in mind that in order to maximize the benefits to be received

long-term relationships instead of short-term relationships should be applied. The benefits that can be received, some of them are tangible and some are on the other hand more intangible. The sponsees usually receive more of the tangible benefits such as for example monetary settlements, whereas the sponsors receive much more of the intangible benefits, such as for example brand value and image building, that are harder to detect, realize and measure, especially in the beginning of the sponsorship co-operation relationship. In fact a lot of the intangible benefits will most likely become evident in a much later phase of the sponsorship co-operation relationship. (Burton, Farrelly & Quester 2006) Nonetheless sponsorship co-operation relationships can prove to be more direct and cost-efficient means to be used than for example the traditional mass advertising means (D'Alessandro & Owens 2001, 93; Erbschloe 2008).

A successful sponsorship co-operation relationship can help a business in establishing its values and identity and further communicate these values and identity to both internal and external interest groups. A sports marketer can for example provide the co-operation business with image benefits, marketing communication and other business benefits and opportunities (Alaja 2001, 18). Meaning sponsorship co-operation for a business is a way of conveying its value world to the targeted audience and simultaneously to gain recognition and respect (Hertzen 2006, 194). But for this to become the reality the sponsorship co-operation relationship must be compatible with the business. A good and well functioning sponsorship co-operation relationship can prove to be a good tool in controlling the reputation of the company, which in return can be useful in creating goodwill and positive publicity among different interest groups and help in retaining their loyalty in any possible bad times. Also sponsorship co-operation can be used as tools of conveying the desired brand identity and image. For example well known or emerging successful athletes can serve as symbols of the brand in question. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 17-19, 26, 89)

The truth of the matter is that many businesses today realize the benefits produced by sport and other sponsorship co-operation and are using it as a tool to their global brand positioning strategies. So for businesses

sponsorship co-operation is a strategic tool that can be utilized to produce a versatile set of benefits. Coca-cola and Pepsi are both good examples of truly global companies that have successfully exploited the possibilities provided by sponsorship co-operation and celebrity endorsers. Especially useful sport sponsorship co-operation has proved to be when these two corporations, that is Coca-cola and Pepsi, have been establishing their presence in new emerging and developing markets. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 12, 19, 82-93.)

Sponsorship co-operation is a central part of a business's marketing communication and among side the other marketing communication tools can help in conveying the wanted message, in the correct time, to the correct recipient of the message (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 17-19, 26, 89). When comparing sponsorship co-operation as a marketing communication tool to a direct marketing communication tool such as advertising, sponsorship co-operation possesses a unique feature, that is, when perceiving direct advertisements people usually develop automatically a high defence system where as when receiving such messages through sponsorship the level of the defence system is a lot lower. People usually instinctively distrust direct advertising whereas the indirect messages perceived through sponsorship are experienced in more goodwill. (Erbschloe 2008)

Sport sponsorship co-operation can benefit the business in that that it is an excellent means of dodging some cultural and linguistic barriers that might occur. In addition the co-operation relationship can help in gaining direct access to local media and provide corporate hospitality opportunities for the business in question. These corporate hospitality opportunities can be used to build and enhance relationships concerning employees, business partners, politicians and regulators. Using sport sponsorship can help in creating positive associations towards the global business on a local level. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 12-17, 81-82, 99, 162.)

It becomes possible through sport sponsorship for a transnational business to achieve both global and local objectives. Sport sponsorship for example

can be used to reach a global audience, for example through Olympics or other sport property with global reach, and thus send a coherent brand message or it can be aimed at more local markets, for example through a local athlete. The point is that although the world is turning out to be ever more interconnected businesses still need to take into account the differences inherent in different markets, that is, it is not possible to successfully operate in a totally same way, using same tactics all over the world and neglecting all the cultural and other differences. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 12-17, 81-82, 99, 162) When the co-operation is functioning as the dimension of the accelerator then the relationship can help in creating distribution relationships, distinct from competition and also help in getting exclusive rights. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 17-19, 26, 89; Amis & Cornwell 2005, 19)

We might indeed be living in a global world yet the local cultural differences in tastes and preferences remain and this leads to, at least in part, to product and brand differentiation by businesses. One means of dealing with such issues by a business is to engage in a sponsorship co-operation relationship with a local athlete. This in turn leads to the possibility of conveying customized marketing messages according to local tastes and preferences. For example Adidas is known to use such solutions, that is exploiting local athletes as endorsers, from time to time. On the other hand sports and athletes are crossing borders more than ever before and this makes it possible to access new, developing and versatile markets through sports sponsorship, meaning it makes global access possible. Sponsorship co-operation and the competitive advantages gained via engaging in such a relationship are hard to copy, if not even impossible, by the competitors. The sponsorship asset is not that easy to sell or transfer to the competitors as other assets the business owns might be. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 112, 122, 160.)



#### 2.4.1 Benefits of the sponsorship co-operation for the business with regards to its interest groups

Sponsorship co-operation relationships tend to produce benefits with regards to the interest groups of the business in question. These interest groups can include any of the following ones depending on the business and the co-operation relationship conditions in question; personnel, shareholders and other financiers, customers, media, societal and other policymakers, potential employees, subcontractors and other business partners, advocates and the public in general as shown in figure 7. By sponsorship co-operation it is possible to develop internal relationships of the business, re-enforce the team spirit and produce good will towards the business among the personnel, which of course is important for any business. The corporation can also affect the shareholders and other financiers in a beneficial way through sponsorship co-operation relationships. Also goodwill of the customers is possible to gain. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 85-87.)

As for the media, it is a prerequisite in order to actually receive the positive publicity. Policy makers usually play a huge role in any businesses operations and sponsorship co-operation relationships can be used to create a more positive attitude from these policy makers towards the business, for example by exploiting the hospitality aspects of the sponsorship co-operation relationship. The co-operation can prove to be useful in attracting skilled labour and also students, as these are sometimes a scarce resource as well and there is competition over them. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 85-87) In general sponsorship co-operation can produce direct and indirect business opportunities, for example sports competition projects may prove to be good for selling the businesses products or businesses that are in co-operation relationship with the same target might develop business operations and opportunities with each other (Alaja 2001, 25). Through sponsorship co-operation the business can also benefit in maintaining and strengthening its network of subcontractors and other important business partners. Also it is possible to gain new influential advocates of the business. All in all it is possible to raise goodwill among the public. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 85-87)

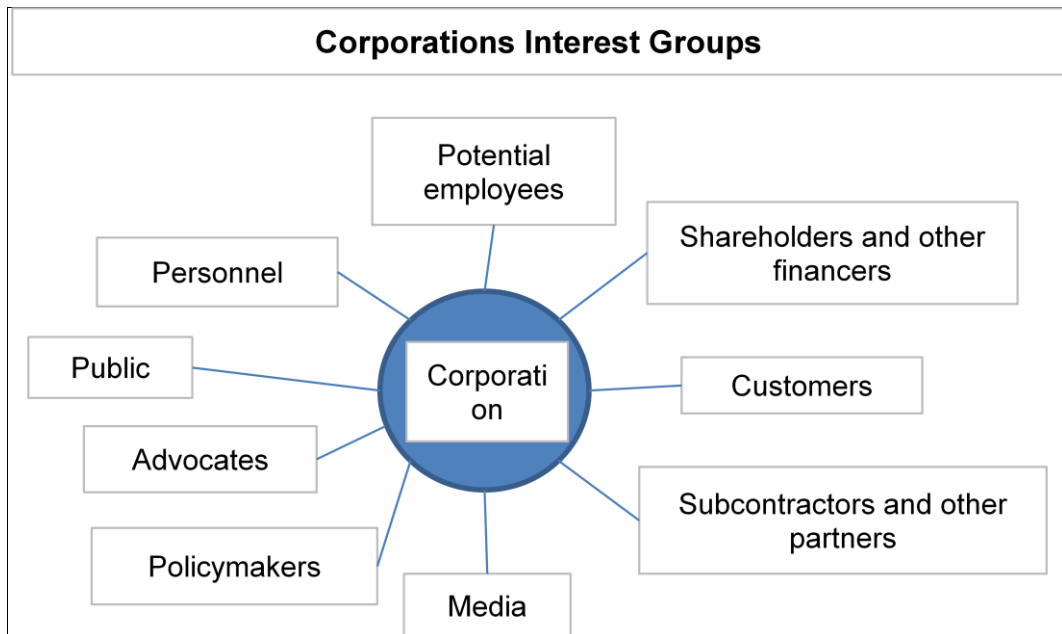


Figure 7 The interest groups of a corporation, based on Alaja & Forssell (2004, 87)

#### 2.4.2 The basic benefits businesses are seeking from sponsorship co-operation

In the early days of sponsorship co-operation relationships businesses treated sponsorship as an option to be used instead of advertising and were aiming at gaining media coverage and visibility. Nowadays the basic benefits businesses are seeking to gain from sponsorship co-operation relationships include awareness and image enhancement, demonstration possibilities, hospitality opportunities, product trials and increased sales. In addition as a flexible and unique tool sponsorship co-operation is used to reach such benefits as for example for opportunities for licensing, merchandising, cross promotions, dealer incentives and differentiation from the competition. (Erbschloe 2008.)

It can be stated that the usual objectives and benefits businesses seek to gain through sponsorship co-operation include objectives both on corporate and product level and in addition personal motives sometimes come into play. In the broad sense the main benefit to be gained on the corporate level from the co-operation is to promote the reputation and name of the business. (Alaja 2001, 24) This includes the reaching of the interest groups, increasing

recognition, developing images and generating commitment of the interest groups, and showing that the business is socially responsible (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 81-83, Alaja 2001, 24). The benefits that the business can gain on the product level include the three dimensions of sponsorship co-operation, that is, story teller, accelerator and engine. When it comes down to the story telling aspect the benefits a business receives are the ones related to marketing communication, such as for example reaching the wanted interest groups. This in turn implies to the possibility of distinguishing hospitality activities, distinguishing from the competition, exclusive rights to advertising spots, collecting interest group contact information and permission to take contact and other procedures aiming at the quantity and quality of contacts. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 23-25, 81-83)

Also through this marketing communication benefit the level of recognition and creation and development of desired images should become evident. Through sponsorship co-operation activities such as for example sales and share of the market can be increased and also feeling based commitment, from for example the customers or distributors, is possible to achieve. It is also possible to gain exclusive rights to the sales of a product or the sponsee might commit to use the business's products. The business receives different kinds of marketing and marketing communication rights and privileges. These might include for example advertising, briefing/communicating, relationship building, activities to increase sales, personal selling and direct marketing. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 23-25, 81-83.)

Sponsorship and sport sponsorship can help in gaining valuable and detailed customer information. And in addition sport sponsorship can help in producing customer involvement and produce a closer relationship between the business in question and its customers. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 144) As an accelerator the benefits to be received include for example the creation of new products, price and availability and competitive advantages. New product and service ideas might be created or new doors to the distribution channel might be opened, and in addition the business might be able to actually raise its prices due to the value added by the sponsee in the eyes of the customers. The benefits to be received when the co-operation

relationship acts as an engine include the development of the business operation network and collection of strategic marketing information. The co-operation relationship can also be the result of a package deal, which the aimed benefits for the business in question are in some other business activity. Engine benefits might even include the promotion of whole business concepts. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 81-83)

In addition to all this it can be stated that sponsorship co-operation is an excellent means to be used in the business's internal communication, it can help in rising up the team spirit within. This is especially true in the case of a well known athlete, the employees can be proud of the athlete in a more personal experience level. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 30, 43) It is good to note that sports targets today are often expected to provide the co-operation businesses with high quality tailored VIP services (Alaja 2001, 25). As for the situation where the business is a manufacturer of sports equipment for example, then the athlete in the sponsorship co-operation relationship can help in developing the equipment and test them. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 30, 43) All in all sponsorship co-operations has the potential to add value to the business and its operations. When we are dealing with sport sponsorship and a transnational business then one of the benefits is the possibility of achieving economies of scale, as sports tend to reach a truly global audience. Sport sponsorship makes it possible to act locally globally. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 19, 79-80)

#### 2.4.3 Competitive advantage gained through sponsorship co-operation

There is a theory that a business can gain a competitive advantage in one or more of three different categories as sited in figure 8. The three categories are operational excellence, product leadership and customer intimacy. And the competitive advantage usually gained through sport sponsorship co-operation is customer intimacy. Customer intimacy is usually accomplished through understanding and meeting customers' needs better than the competition and providing excellent customer service. But it should be kept in mind that these means are not the only ones that make it possible to accomplish customer intimacy and help in getting closer to the customer.

Through sport sponsorship co-operation it is possible for the business to associate itself to the sponsee' and its image and connect emotionally with its target market. In a way the positive emotions of the target audience toward the sport in question are extended towards the business as well and so customer intimacy is accomplish. This achieved intimacy between the business and the targeted audience is hard for the competitor to copy or accomplish. Thus the business has achieved competitive advantage through sport sponsorship co-operation. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 160-161.)



Figure 8 The three categories of competitive advantage, based on Amis & Cornwell (2005, 160-161)

When thinking about brand positioning via sport sponsorship co-operation and competition it is safe to state that also here lies an opportunity to gain a competitive advantage. By successful competition based positioning through sport sponsorship it is possible to convince the targeted audience of the superiority of the brand compared to the competing brands. A business may gain some exclusive rights related to the sport sponsorship co-operation and thus prevent the presence of competitors and direct competition in this aspect. A good example of a business and brand that has managed to

create a competitive advantage via sport sponsorship is Mountain Dew, a carbonated beverage. Mountain Dew has managed to uniquely position itself as a beverage for young active people by sponsorship co-operation with all sorts of action sports. It has for example conducted co-operation with successful individual athletes in BMX biking. Mountain Dew has created such a strong position in the minds of its target market that competition is unlikely as it will be more than difficult for them to gain a similar brand position, as Mountain Dew has successfully prevented its competitors from deploying action sports in a similar way it does. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 166-167.)

#### 2.4.4 The benefits of the sponsorship co-operation relationship for the sponsee

As for the benefits that the one that is being sponsored by a business, that is the sponsee, first of all they might get money and financial assets that are a prerequisite for their activities. The sponsorship co-operation might provide a competitive image benefit. Also other tangible or intangible benefits than mere money and finance might be received. All in all for a sponsee such as an individual athlete the sponsorship co-operation relationship acts as a competitive tool to gain competitive advantage as shown in figure 9. (Alaja 2001, 23.)

Also it is good to keep in mind that in addition to the financial benefits the sponsee in the sponsorship co-operation relationship is most likely to receive there exist also the more qualitative benefits that might occur. For example if a sponsorship co-operation relationship is formed with a business with a good reputation and prestige this might create so called added value to the sponsee' of the co-operation relationship and thus it can be seen as a strategic tool also from the perspective of the sponsee'. That is it conveys a positive image to the interest groups and might even help and be beneficial in gaining other co-operation partners, and give access to information that is relevant and useful for the sponsee'. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 149; Alaja 2001, 54.)

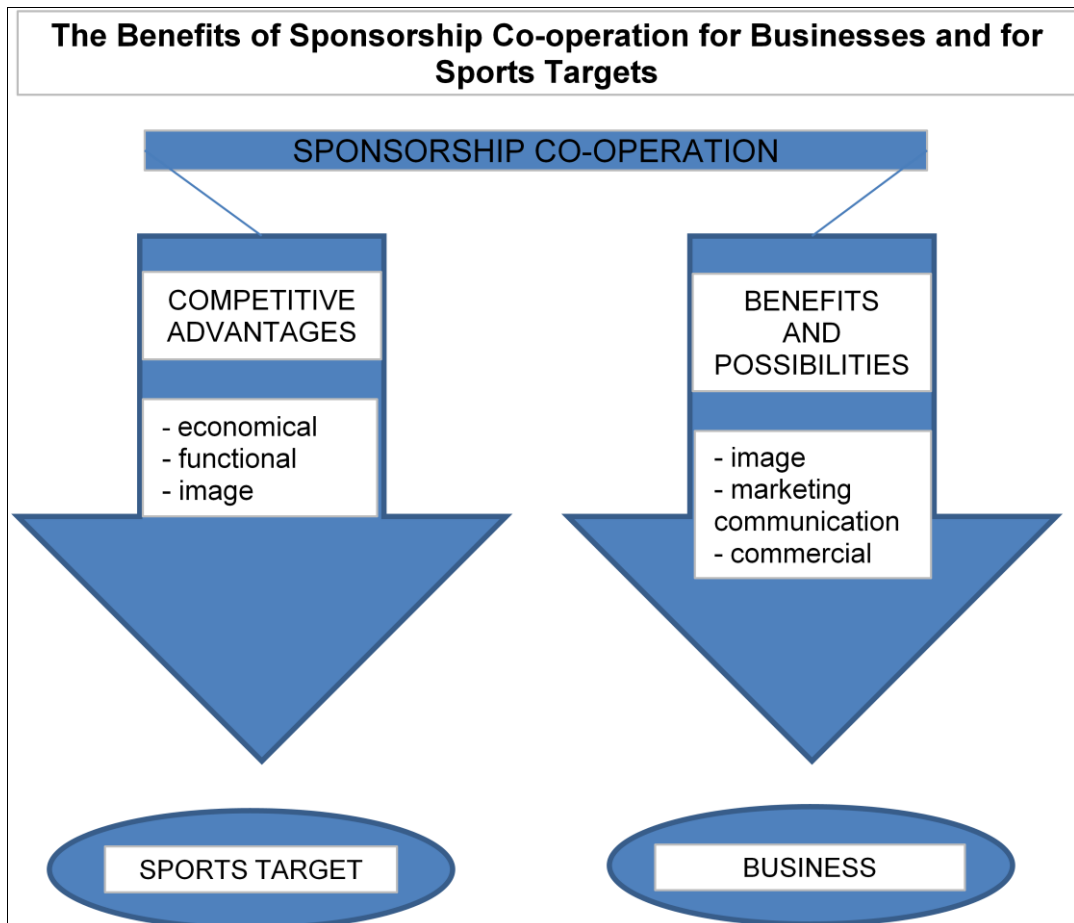


Figure 9 The benefits of sponsorship co-operation for businesses and for sports sponsees, based on Alaja (2001, 18)

Nonetheless it is good to keep in mind that as it is with all good things, that is they usually come bearing risks as well. That been said also sponsorship co-operation relationships bear risks within them. For the business in question risks can be found for example in associating the image of the target to the business. This form of marketing communication is in fact usually associated with higher levels of risks than what are involved in other means of marketing communication. This is due to the fact that they are usually easy to predict and the possible risks easily evaluated whereas sponsorship co-operation as a means of marketing communication is highly volatile and unpredictable and the risks are not so easily mapped and controlled. In these co-operation relationships risk management is highly important. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 29-30) In fact due to the high levels of risks thought to be present in the co-operation relationships with individual athletes the

popularity of athletes as co-operation partners for businesses has somewhat diminished nowadays (Hertzen 2006, 195).

## 2.5 The current status and trends in sponsorship co-operation

As the different parts of the world are getting more and more integrated and people are nowadays living in a global village and all this has also had a major impact on sport and other sponsorship co-operation activities. This is due to the fact that with this integration of the world comes also increased trade around and across the world and for a business that has no previous experiences or heritage present on a foreign market in question sport sponsorship offers an excellent opportunity to try and integrate themselves to the local community. Especially important this might be when dealing with totally new emerging markets. Businesses are engaging in sponsorship co-operation with teams but also actively with national athlete heroes. Major sporting events such as the Olympics are regarded currently as providing great commercial opportunities for businesses. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 14, 81.)

The integration into a global village can be seen as having many different manifestations. For one there is the economic integration. Furthermore there is the modern concept of a network society. Also the modern technology has an important impact on the integration of the world, with the Internet and all that. Images, messages, people are all crossing borders faster and more freely than ever before. It is the large private businesses that are said to lead this process of integration of national economies. What has all this to do with sport sponsorship? The answer lies in the fact that all of the previously mentioned facts have lead to the increased utilization of global sponsorship by businesses. Sport sponsorship plays an important role in the formation and strengthening of networks between businesses, sport organizations, media corporations, and governments. Sport sponsorship nowadays is an important if not even the dominant element in businesses marketing mixes. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 14-15, 137.)



Sport sponsorship is increasingly realized as a strategic tool by businesses and having transnational benefits and advantages to offer among other things. It is acknowledged nowadays that it is a strategic resource that can for example be used for the strategic positioning of the whole business or a brand. Furthermore sport sponsorship can be used by businesses as a tool to create a competitive advantage. All these in turn have led to businesses investing increasing amounts into sport sponsorship and lengthening of the duration of the sponsorship co-operation agreements. As the amount of sponsorship co-operation activities and contracts is increasing businesses have started to demand more complete co-operation packages from their sponsorship targets. What this means to the sponsorship co-operation targets is that they should maximize the services they offer to businesses and constantly seek to add value to the product they are offering and provide innovative solutions to businesses needs in order to gain sponsorship partners and investments from businesses. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 18-19, 137-138.)

When taking a look at sports, so called action sports or more modern forms of sport to be more exact, and sponsorship co-operation a current trend can be observed. This trend revolves around a specific target group that is the influential 10-24 year olds all over the world, which is quite a fragmented target group and thus sometimes hard to reach with traditional means by marketers. For example via action sport, which is a rapidly growing sports art, and with the help of music and fashion it is possible to reach this target group by conveying a certain lifestyle and brand image appealing to them. Action sports can be seen as including sport arts such as for example skateboarding, snowboarding, rock climbing, and mountain and BMX-biking. Action sports convey the image of passion for risk taking and are an excellent means for a business to directly connect with this target group and have one-on-one interaction with them. In general it can be stated that sports bare a youthful image, so for example with the combination of the internet and sport sponsorship it is an excellent chance for a business to appeal to the younger target group, because both sports and the internet are known to appeal to the youthful target group and thus go well together. In addition this youthful and more modern approach should prevent brand

ageing. It is no wonder that businesses are getting more and more interested in creating sponsorship co-operation relationships with action sports, which are filled with energy and true passion for sports, and many businesses are in fact positioning and repositioning their brands via action sport sponsorship co-operation. But it should be kept in mind that action sport sponsorship co-operation will be successful if the target group perceives the business to be a true supporter of action sports instead of just trying to sell something to them. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 20-23, 145, 201-212.)

A further point under scrutiny nowadays are all the ethical issues involved in sponsorship co-operation relationships, such as for example marketing products such as tobacco and alcohol, the unequal distribution of sponsorship funds, the pressures and influence posed by sponsoring businesses. For example there are some discussions nowadays on how athletes are expected to represent specific images, behave, look like, and dress like in order to get sponsorship funds from businesses. For example Anna Kournikova and the Williams sisters are deemed to fulfil these stereotypes and thus have no problems in gaining sponsorship funds and co-operation contracts to back them up. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 20-23, 145.)

A further trend that athletes and other sponsees are faced with currently is that as the global market is experiencing increasing competition they as well are faced with increased competition when selling and marketing the product they have to offer. Furthermore the situation is made more challenging also by the internet and the globalization of markets. So as it comes down to the internet it poses both threats and brand new opportunities. And of course neither one of these two should not be neglected as the internet in fact is a great tool to be used in today's global marketplace. Nonetheless the internet and sponsorship co-operation can be used both to localize and globalize. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 138-139, 146.)

### 3 CREATING SPONSORSHIP CO-OPERATION

A sponsorship co-operation relationship can begin either from the initiative of the sponsee or by the initiative of the sponsor, the business. Some businesses do not actually actively seek for sponsorship co-operation partner instead they take a more passive approach and rely on the initiative of sponsees to contact them. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 98-99) This is in fact the traditional way in which sponsorship co-operation relationships are formed and build between businesses and sports targets (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 98-99, Alaja 2001, 26). So it is not enough that the business understands the sponsees perspectives also the sponsee must understand the businesses perspectives, ways of thinking and operating principles as this will help the sponsee or sports marketer to build an attractive proposal to the business in question and in addition when both parties know from where the other one is coming from this should lead into successful co-operation. Nonetheless sponsorship co-operation relationship tasks are often regarded as difficult and challenging by people involved and working in the field of sports. (Alaja 2001, 24, 35) But as the field of sponsorship co-operation is getting ever more professionalised so have many businesses started to take initiative themselves in finding co-operation partners. In this way they exert more control over the whole relationship building and process of the sponsorship co-operation. This is because not only do sponsees compete over good businesses but also businesses compete over good sponsees. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 98-99)

In this context, when thinking about the creation of sponsorship co-operation it should be noted that there is no standard contract duration for these relationships. Generally speaking long-term contracts and relationships are preferable as these create safety and sustainability, but on the other hand these should be drafted so that they are flexible and adaptable for any possible changes. The truth is that many businesses want to start the co-operation relationship first with a more short-term contract. Anyway when thinking about the duration of the sponsorship co-operation relationship contract it should be taken into account that the first year of the relationship is usually characterised by learning by both parties involved and thus the

actual yields produced by the relationship are to be made at a later phase of the relationship. (Alaja 2001, 56.)

In order to create successful sponsorship co-operation both the business and the target should be compatible and right for each other. Briefing and other communication play a central part in creating a successful sponsorship co-operation relationship. These require open and interactive communication style of course. In addition seamless co-operation between the parties involved is a prerequisite for the successfulness of the relationship. Thus liaison and collaboration on both parties' behalf is a prerequisite in the creation of successful sponsorship co-operation relationships and also commitment of course is important (Burton, Farrelly & Quester 2006). Much input of resources is required from both parties to the quality and commitment. That is team spirit and playing are required. Also the choice of contact persons is important. In general it can be stated that this form of marketing communication requires more team playing than any other form of marketing communication. It is extremely important that the business in question respects the identity of the sponsee as otherwise the relationship will never succeed as it otherwise would. Also risk management and its importance should not be overlooked. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 29-30, 33-34, 48.)

Although sponsorship co-operation relationships in the field of sports are mainly built on strategic thinking and reasoning, still the personal networks and friendships can be meaningful and beneficial when looking for co-operation partners. Nonetheless it must be kept in mind that the most important factor behind any business's sponsorship co-operation decisions is commercial, at least in most cases. Businesses' seem to be putting more importance on the contents of the relationship than what they used to. This means that the visibility produced by the relationship is no longer as important as before. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 46-47) It is also important to acknowledge the fact that the purpose and goals of the sponsorship co-operation vary according to the business in question. The business can for example have one single aim in respect to the co-operation relationship or multiple aims. (Alaja 2001, 24)

When creating sponsorship co-operation there are some main principals that should be taken into account by the business. First of all the co-operation should be looked at from a wide perspective as the different possibilities are endless. It should be also recognized that sponsorship co-operation is both an ideal and a commercial activity and as such includes the element of corporate responsibility. The relationship should be based on a contract that includes the ground rules. The parties to the co-operation should also set clear objectives and have a clear vision about the implementation (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 37-39; Herten 2006, 194). It is also important for the business to select the right partner for the co-operation relationship to ensure that the right message is conveyed to the right target group. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 37-39.)

In addition the relationship itself will naturally require evaluation, investigating and monitoring since risk taking is present and this is one way of detecting them in time to correct them. But as risks usually entail unique opportunities as well they should be taken but under strict control. Also building a close, well functioning, uncomplicated relationship with mutual respect is essential in the creation of sponsorship co-operation. When thinking about the implementation of the relationship tailored, unique solutions are usually more productive and beneficial than huge, expensive campaigns. The important elements of sponsorship co-operation are based on emotions but yet reason and commonsense needs to be included in everything. Related to this is the fact that everything possible in line with the sponsee should be done in order to distinct from the competition. All in all strategic thinking and result orientation are required, that is things should be kept simple enough, and believe in ones visions and targets set to the relationship should be maintained. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 37-39.)

### 3.1 Stages in the creation of sponsorship co-operation from the businesses perspective

Probably the most important thing for businesses to do when creating sponsorship co-operation relationships is to make sure that they are doing it for the right reasons (D'Alessandro & Owens 2001, 95-96). One useful way

of looking at creating of sponsorship co-operation from the perspective of the business is to divide it into four stages. These four stages are planning, tailoring, integration and evaluation. Proceeding by following these stages should result in logical implementation and help in gaining the desired results and gains of the co-operation relationship. Each of the four stages can be divided into further action categories. But nonetheless one thing that should be kept in mind is that in the end all comes down to the business in question, that is, depending on the business they all have their own way of doing things and proceeding with sponsorship co-operation. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 53-55, 70, 73.)

The first stage planning holds that clear guidelines should be set and required financial and personnel resources should be reserved. To get started the current situation of sponsorship co-operation should be evaluated, the philosophy and outlines for the co-operation should be set, all the necessary organizing activities should be taken and a budget created. The second stage, tailoring, includes setting of the objectives, targeting, that is who is the audience we wish to reach with our message, creating the target selection criteria and screening the potential sponsorship co-operation partners. The aim of the third stage, integration, is to accomplish a carefully planned and successful co-operation relationship. This stage is marked by the selection of the sponsee(s'), drafting of the co-operation contract, drafting of an action or implementation plan and actually implementing the sponsorship co-operation according to the previous plans. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 55-60.)

The final stage, that is evaluation, aims at giving an analytical picture of the results of the co-operation relationship and gives an idea on how to further improve the co-operation relationship. This stage includes analyzing, reporting, making further decisions and thanking all the key people involved. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 55-60) When thinking about the evaluation of the success and the actual results of the sponsorship co-operation and the feasibility of it all businesses should keep in mind that the benefits produced by sponsorship co-operation are not always simple to measure or even see. For example the brand building benefits might be practically impossible to

measure and the financial and other benefits resulting from that. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 159-160) The matter of fact that all these four stages are characterized by research should not be neglected. Research activities are present throughout the whole sponsorship co-operation relationship process. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 55-60)

When creating sponsorship co-operation businesses should keep in mind that also with sponsorship co-operation relationships there exists a certain level of uncertainty and risks as it exists with all the other business activities the business might have. For example these risks might include quality risks, return on investment risks, athlete scandals, ambush marketing, and the actual success of the sponsorship co-operation relationship. The discontinuing of the sponsorship co-operation relationship poses its own set of risks and not only for the business but also for the sponsee. The business should prepare for such an event in a way that it can nonetheless continue its business operations without too much disturbance. As for the sponsee they might as well experience similar difficulties and furthermore if there had existed a strong bond and a successful relationship between the sponsorship co-operation partners then future sponsors might experience difficulties in establishing themselves as the new sponsorship business. Businesses might even be reluctant to do so. Thus the sponsee might experience difficulties in finding new sponsorship co-operation partners. (Erbschloe 2008.)

### 3.2 Stages in the creation of sponsorship co-operation from the sponsees perspective

Not only can we look at the creation of sponsorship co-operation relationships from the corporate perspective we can and should also look at it from the sponsees perspective. As it is with all stories also sponsorship co-operation has two sides. Also from the sports target perspective the creation of sponsorship co-operation can be divided into four stages: planning, selling, enablement and earning. (Alaja 2001, 35-41.)

The first stage, that is, planning aims at providing a good well functioning sponsorship co-operation concept based on which the sales and sales pitch

can later on be build on. The planning stage consist of analysing the current situation with regards to the existing co-operation relationships, the mapping of the products and services the sponsee can produce and offer for the co-operation as exchange, setting the goals and aims for co-operation, both financial and qualitative targets, and categorizing the co-operation businesses by giving each business an individual role and place in the hierarchy. In the analysis of the current situation one useful tool that can be used is the SWOT-analysis, that is, analysing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The planning stage includes the building of service packages, that is, building packages of the products and services the sponsee has to offer in a way that the packages fit into the different business categories and in a way that each package serves their intended purpose. (Alaja 2001, 35-41, 49-50, 54.)

In the planning stage it is also essential to find the sponsees “own thing”, that is, the factor or factors that make it unique and makes it superior in comparison to others, as this is often the crucial factor and criteria in the proposal made to a business and might have profound implications on the willingness and decision of the business to engage in the proposed sponsorship co-operation relationship. This so called own thing will provide added value, distinguishing and competitive advantages as shown in figure 10. The “own thing” can be based on for example principles, values, traditions, success, media and publicity, history. (Alaja 2001, 35-68.)



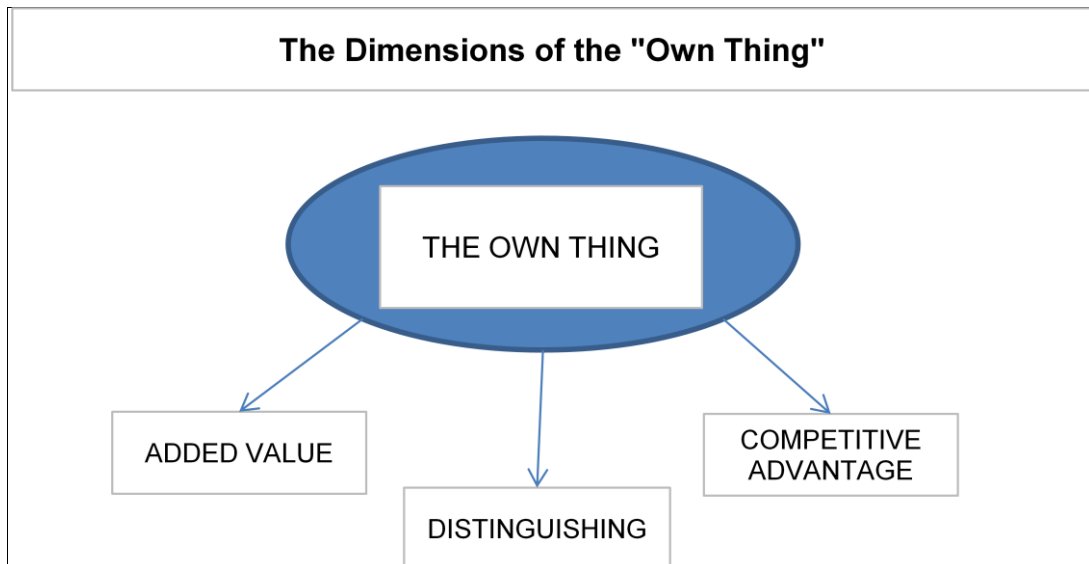


Figure 10 The dimensions of the “own thing”, based on Alaja (2001, 59)

Also the right pricing of each of the created packages is important and not as simple as one might think. The right price is the current market price, that is, the price the co-operation partner business is willing to pay. This price can be found by reflecting to own experience, observing the competition, consulting with experts in the field and by testing the pricing with the target group as sited in figure 11. In addition the finding and screening of all the potential co-operation businesses, and finding the contact persons, that is the correct influential persons, in these businesses whom to approach with the sponsorship co-operation proposal are included in the planning stage. It is of course preferable that these potential co-operation partners fit in with the targets image and values, there exists a natural connection with the business and the sponsee and in the case of an athlete the business should value sports. (Alaja 2001, 35-41, 49-50, 54, 59, 61-63, 65-68.)

The individual proposals to all of the potential businesses should be drafted in writing, tailor-made according to the service packages and categories. The written sponsorship co-operation proposal should be concise and brief and error free, including a prescription of the product on sale, the concrete offer and the rationale for the business to take up the proposed co-operation. Also the tasks involved in the sponsorship co-operation process should be clearly divided among the persons involved in the process already in this

early stage. Schedules, time-lines, organisation, internal communication and everything else should be made clear and planned. (Alaja 2001, 35-41, 49-50, 54, 59, 61-63, 65-68.)



Figure 11 Finding the right price, based on Alaja (2001, 61)

The aim of the second stage, that is, the sales is to implement the sponsorship co-operation operations according to the plans and in such a way that the set objectives are met and achieved. This stage starts by contacting the contact person sought in the planning stage. Although it is important to keep in mind that businesses often receive more than enough sponsorship co-operation proposals and thus it is of utmost importance to stand out. Preferably this will lead to a face to face appointment. After this thorough and careful preparation for the sales negotiations take place. The actual sales or pitch of the co-operation proposal situation is hopefully characterised by a relaxed and informal atmosphere. The sales pitch should include all the important facts and main points and made in such a way that

it arouses the interest of the counterpart and get them involved in a discussion about the issue at hand. Hopefully the sales pitch is approved and further actions agreed on. (Alaja 2001, 35-41, 71-83.)

The third stage, that is, enablement or implementation aims at enabling to proceed with the actual co-operation relationship according to the negotiations of the second stage and what was agreed and implementing it according to the plans. The first thing to do is to draft and sign the co-operation agreement or contract. The contract should at least include the following minimum details, the contracting parties, the purpose of the contract, the duration of the contract, the role of the business, the rights of the business, the contract amount, ethical issues involved, handling of disputes and date of the contract and signatures. In order to produce a good team spirit and atmosphere among everybody involved in the co-operation relationship creating commitment is important. Of course the actual implementing all the actions agreed on in the contract are part of this third stage. Continuous informing to the business about all the things concerning the co-operation relationship should be present in all the stages of the actual co-operation process. Openness and honesty should form the basis of the whole sponsorship co-operation process and should lead into trust and loyalty. Although of course the implementation and active leading of the co-operation relationship should be equally the concern of both parties, nonetheless at least the target should be active in the co-operation. Implementation is an everyday job and responsibility. (Alaja 2001, 35-41, 87-92.)

The fourth and final stage is the earning stage. The purpose of this final stage of the sponsorship co-operation process is to get an analytical picture of the results of the co-operation and all deviations from the set targets that might occur. The results of the sponsorship co-operation can be divided into numerically measurable results and into qualitative results as shown in figure 12. It is also essential to stay objective and critical during analysing the results. Everybody in need of this information should be reported about them and it is a feasible idea to draft a written report about the sponsorship co-operation in question. This stage can be seen consisting of measuring the

results, analysing the measured results, reporting and thanking everybody involved. Thanking is important for example because this simple thank you might bear a significant positive meaning with regards for possible future co-operation projects. (Alaja 2001, 35-42, 97-100.)

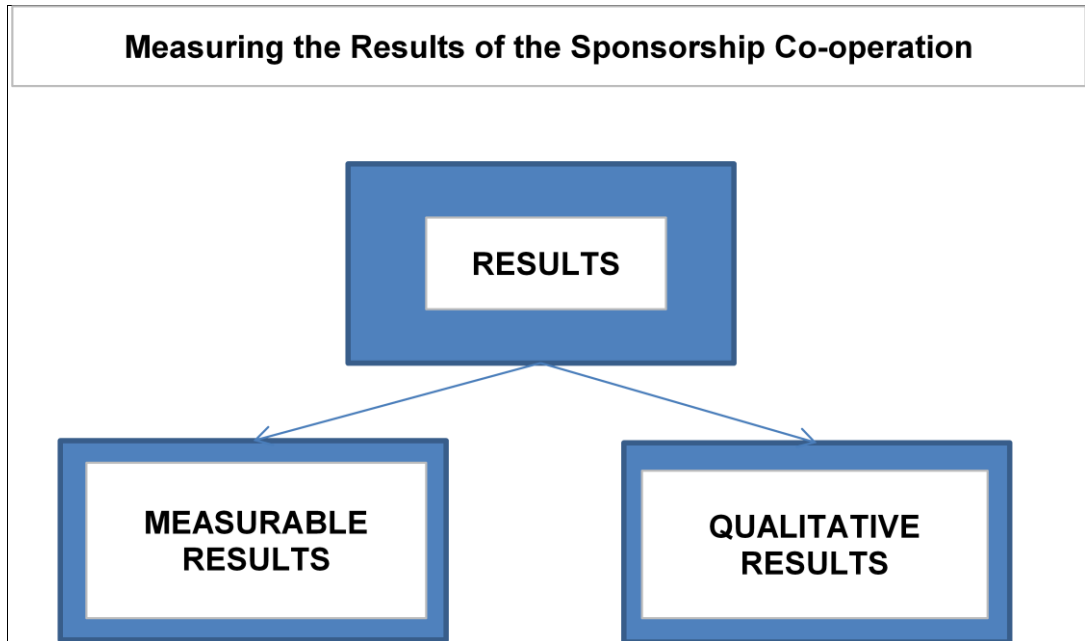


Figure 12 Measuring the results of the sponsorship co-operation, based on Alaja (2001, 97)

Furthermore it is important to keep in mind that although it is beneficial and recommendable as well to acquire the necessary expert help from the outside in the different stages of the sponsorship co-operation process it is still a prerequisite to keep the relationship itself under the control of the sponsee. This is due to the fact that at the end of the day the sponsee itself owns the rights to its activities, products and services and thus should bear the lead role in the actual sponsorship co-operation process itself. (Alaja 2001, 35-42, 97-100.)

### 3.3 The sponsorship co-operation partner selection process

The selection of the right sponsorship co-operation partner is of outmost importance for the whole co-operation process and the business. It is evident that the screening and selection process will require among other

things time, commitment and professionalism. There are lots of versatile selection criteria different companies can use, as shown in figure 14, depending on the situation and objectives at hand. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 89) But probably one of the most important selection criteria to be used is the fit between the business in question and the sponsee, in order to make sure among other things that the right audience, in the right place and in the right time are reached with the right message (Janoff 2005).

Traditionally it has been the sports targets and other sponsees that have taken the initiative and contacted businesses with their co-operation proposals. This in turn has in some cases lead to the situation where companies are basically bombarded with proposals for sponsorship co-operation. Many businesses have created clear action guidelines for their sponsorship co-operation relationships that they follow also in the selection process. Although emotions and feelings might still bear a meaning in the selection process the decisions today are mainly maid based on facts and reasoning. (Alaja 2001, 26) Nonetheless sport sponsorship is important for businesses due to the fact that lots of people around the globe are touched by sports and for example events such as the Olympics have truly a global reach, which of course is of importance to a multinational or even global business, and thus it is forth the while to go through the careful selection process and everything else. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 158)

Some of the things that businesses see as being important in a sponsorship co-operation relationship include things such as for example strategic compatibility with the sponsee', a common ground for the motives behind it all and the goals of the relationship, compatibility or similarity, shared visions, similar beliefs in opportunities and mutual trust (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 243-247). Although the fact that different businesses look for different things from sponsorship co-operation should not be neglected and also thus have their own unique selection processes and criteria for the sponsorship co-operation partners. For example some companies are looking for something larger scaled whereas others are looking a narrower co-operation activity, or some are looking for broader visibility whereas some only local visibility, some look for longer period relationships and some for a

relationship for a short time period, some look co-operation only with teams and some only with individual athletes, and some insist on being the main co-operation partner. But the basic assumption behind the selection of the sponsorship co-operation partner would seem to be always the same, that is, that the co-operation relationship between the sponsee and business produce a positive image association as sited in figure 13. (Alaja 2001, 26-27.) In the selection of the target such issues as the interests of the businesses own target groups, the values of the business, visibility in the media and otherwise and also other exploiting possibilities provided by the sponsee have an effect for most businesses when choosing their co-operation partners (Hertzen 2006, 194).

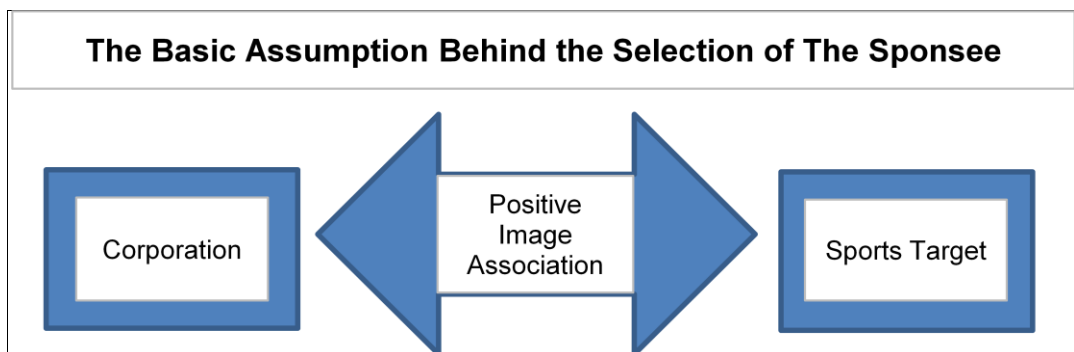


Figure 13 The basic assumption behind the selection of the sponsee, based on Alaja (2001, 26)

When considering the issue from the point of view of sport sponsorship it can be stated that athletics are probably the sport art that enjoy the largest truly global spread. On the other hand team sports such as for example baseball or basketball enjoy by far a larger audience and participation than athletics, although they do not enjoy the same big truly global spread. Nonetheless in their more local spread they reach huge audiences and participation and the most popular teams, for example the Manchester United, and team sports do in fact at the end of the day reach a wide range of different markets around the world although not the whole globe. And of course then there are the individual celebrity athletes such as Michael Jordan that enjoy global recognition. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 124-125.)

When specifically dealing with sponsorship co-operation that involves an international business looking for to build a co-operation relationship with an athlete then the personality and adaption skills of the athlete come into play. This is due to the fact that there are for example athletes that can be clearly associated always to their own nationality and culture where as on the other hand there are also athletes that can always easily blend in. By this blending in we mean that the athlete is not tied into their own local culture and nationality instead they possess the ability to adopt and plea to different nationalities and cultures throughout the global market place. So the selection criteria of course then depends on what the business is looking for from the co-operation, that is do they wish to reach a global audience or a more local one. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 103.)

One of the important selection criteria to be considered by any business who is considering in engaging in a sponsorship co-operation relationship is the one dealing with how well the potential co-operation partner is compatible with the business in question. The values of the sponsee have to be compatible with the values and reputation targets of the business otherwise the image and reputation of the business might become fractioned and even broken and ruined entirely. All the brand and product and/or service objectives need to be compatible with the sponsee. In addition it is important that the sponsee is capable of reaching all the wanted interest groups of the business. Thus the selection criteria might include such factors as the geographical coverage reached by the target or the socio-economical and lifestyle factors displayed by the targeted interest groups. The sponsee needs to fit into the world of the targeted interest groups. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 89, Alaja 2001, 27-28.)

In many cases public relationship activities have an essential role in the sponsorship co-operation and form a major part of the relationship. Through sponsorship co-operation it is essential for the business to gain the possibility to show hospitality to its own interest groups by providing VIP and other tailored services. Successful public relations activities may be helpful in distinguishing from the competition and even provide even new business-to-business opportunities for the business. The ability of the sponsee to

provide for such public relationship services is an important selection criterion for businesses looking for sponsorship co-operation partners. In addition all the possibilities related to the economic activities of the business provided by the possible co-operation partner are an important criterion in the choice of the sponsee. It should not be forgotten that sponsorship co-operation is inherently a risky business for any business and thus also the risk factors have a heavy bearing on the choice of a co-operation partner. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 89-91; Alaja 2001, 27-28.)

In addition it is naturally of outmost importance that the potential co-operation partner is accepted by the society. In this relation such selection criterion as the values, opinions and reputation of the potential sponsee are used by the business. A further criterion used by most businesses in the selection process is the current and expected success of the sponsee. Naturally everyone is looking for a successful co-operation partner as the publicity and other attention is higher towards them. This is especially true when we are dealing with a sponsorship co-operation relationship in the field of sports. Some businesses seek to establish co-operation with athletes that are already now big and successful whereas others seek for athletes that have the potential of becoming something great. But success alone is not enough. Thus popularity is also an important criterion for businesses when choosing a co-operation partner. And popularity is in large part created by the ability to attract the attention of the media, which in turn depends on the popularity of the sponsee among the audience. But yet it should be kept in mind that it is not the amount of publicity that counts it is the quality of the publicity that bears more meaning. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 90; Alaja 2001, 27-28.)

Among the selection criterion that businesses use when selecting their partners for sponsorship co-operation relationships are also criteria that are not that easily measured and clearly detected, such as the personality of the possible target. In general businesses are on the look for charismatic and radiant personalities, who get along well with all the interest groups. Furthermore potential co-operation partners are evaluated from many different angles and are expected to have a positive attitude towards the co-



operation relationship, possess the required experience and professionalism and in general be able to co-operate. It should not be forgotten that companies expect their co-operation partners to make inputs into the relationship as well and have the resources for that available for use. But it is also important to note that this is not only a buyers' market we are dealing with currently, that is although the amount of sponsees available for businesses is more than abundant nonetheless this is not the case with good and suitable sponsees. So also the sponsees looking for sponsorship co-operation partners can benefit from distinguishing from their own competition in this respect in a beneficial way. That being said it is important that the sponsee can bring their strengths forth clearly. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 90-91; Alaja 2001, 27-28.)

Although if all of the above mentioned selection criteria are met perfectly by the potential co-operation partner it will not matter in case the business and the potential co-operation partner have different expectations concerning the context of the sponsorship co-operation relationship. That is what the sponsee is offering must match what the business needs from the sponsorship co-operation relationship. Some of the key questions in relation to this issue that need to be considered include the following; what is the role of the business, that is, is it the main sponsor of the sponsee, are there other sponsors, if there are, does the possibility of co-operation also with them exist. Also the duration of the contract needs to be taken into account. Is it going to be a long-term or short-term contract, is there the possibility of extending the duration of the contract, what about the contract termination rights? What about the advertising visibility and other marketing communication activities? For example where can ads be posted or can they, does the business get the right to use the sponsees picture and sound, is the sponsee to make performances to different interest groups. Is the potential sponsee willing to pay damages on any, for example ethical violations? And of course businesses also use the price quality ratio as a criterion, when making the decision to go ahead with the planned sponsorship co-operation relationship. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 91-92; Alaja 2001, 27-28.)



Figure 14 The selection criteria for choosing a co-operation partner, based on Alaja & Forssell (2004, 93)

Although the sponsee and their proposal for sponsoring co-operation might not fit in with the business's sponsorship co-operation guidelines and criteria the business might still take up the proposal in certain situations. Sponsorship co-operation processes and co-operation partner selection processes are mainly based on rationale and clear guidelines based on reasoning, so the more the target and the proposal made by the target fit into these guidelines the greater the likelihood of the proposal being taken up by the company in question. Yet if the proposal is made in the right way in the right time it might be approved by the business in question although it does not exactly fit in with the businesses operational guidelines. Based on this it can be conclude that behind the decision to engage into a sponsorship co-operation relationship there are both conscious and unconscious forces. (Alaja 2001, 26-27.)

### 3.4 Co-operation possibilities between a business and an athlete

There are many different partner options for those businesses considering engaging in sponsorship co-operation, one being sports. Furthermore also

the target field of sports includes almost an endless set of different co-operation partner options for the businesses considering sponsorship co-operation. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 95-96) Nonetheless it should be kept in mind that each and every sports sponsee have their own possibilities with regards to sponsorship co-operation (Alaja 2001, 43). For example it is possible to identify six different sponsorship categories related to sport sponsorship. These six categories are the following ones; event sponsorship, sponsorship of individuals, team sponsorship, competition sponsorship, sponsorship of venues and sponsorship of sports development schemes. The three largest and most widespread of these three categories are most likely to be event sponsorship, sponsorship of individuals and team sponsorship. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 123-124)

But the interest in here is on the option of an individual athlete. In general sports is the most common co-operation partner for businesses, this is, at least in part due to the fact of long tradition, popularity of sports and the activeness and initiative of the people in the field of sports in co-operation activities. Sports get a lot of publicity and thus are good for a business's visibility. This in turn is because sports are generally exiting, emotionally charged and entertaining. A further benefit of sports as a sponsorship co-operation partner is that conduct with them is usually uncomplicated as long as all the limitations of different parties, such as for example the Olympic committee, union, society and the individual, are carefully taken into account of. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 95-96.)

As there are many different partner options for sponsorship co-operation from which businesses can choose from there are also many different options for how the co-operation is conducted. That is what the actual co-operation between the business and the target withholds. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 95-119) For one the business can benefit from the co-operation relationship in means of advertising, marketing and communication purposes (Alaja 2001, 29, 57-58; Erbschloe 2008). For example brand logo of the business can be placed on an athlete's uniform or the name of the business can be written on the stadium or other sports venue (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 173). Advertising in sponsorship co-operation relationships is mainly used to

develop the businesses and brands image and to raise awareness. Different media that can be used for these purposes include for example magazines, newspapers, television, radio, outdoor and electronic media. The choice of the media depends of course on the situation in question. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 95-119)

The co-operation relationship can also be used for all kinds of public relations activities. These public relations activities can be more massive and extensive or as is more and more common nowadays they can be more minor and subtle. The mere opportunity for people to meet personally for example a well known athlete can be enough and produce positive reactions. It goes without saying that good social and communication skills are a prerequisite for the sponsee to possess. Athletes have usually already become accustomed to interact with different interest groups. Anyway the target in the co-operation relationship can appear in all kinds of events as an expert, informer, experienced person or as a coach. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 95-96 112-115, 119) Also such things as VIP tickets can be organized for customers in order to maintain and reimburse customer relationships and gain for example new business from them. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 173) For example the sponsorship co-operation relationship with an athlete can be exploited by the business when it deals with its own customers. The business can organise for example representative events in the setting of a sport event of some sort. (Hertzen 2006, 172)

Also one opportunity for sponsorship co-operation is all kinds of sales promotion activities, which include for example competitions, promotions and corporate gifts. Further possibilities include for example fairs and exhibitions and also displays. Sponsorship co-operation can add a lot of additional value and contributions to these activities and can be targeted to customers and other interest groups as well. Furthermore the co-operation relationship can be helpful in personal selling, in all kinds of sales materials and brochures, product displays and samples. The appearance of the target on sales materials can for example distinguish from competition. Also sponsorship co-operation can have a role to play in direct marketing. For example the target can prove to be useful in acquiring contact info of potential customers that

are otherwise hard to reach and also in acquiring permission for direct marketing or by initiating a dialect with the customers. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 95-96 112-115.)

Generally speaking the sponsorship co-operation relationship exploitation can be divided into three main categories: advertising, communication and informing, and public relations activities as shown in figure 15. The more the business tries to exploit these different opportunities provided by the relationship the greater the benefits usually are. The level of exploitation of the possibilities and opportunities offered by the relationship depends on the businesses own activeness, aims and goals, and naturally also resources. (Alaja 2001, 29.)

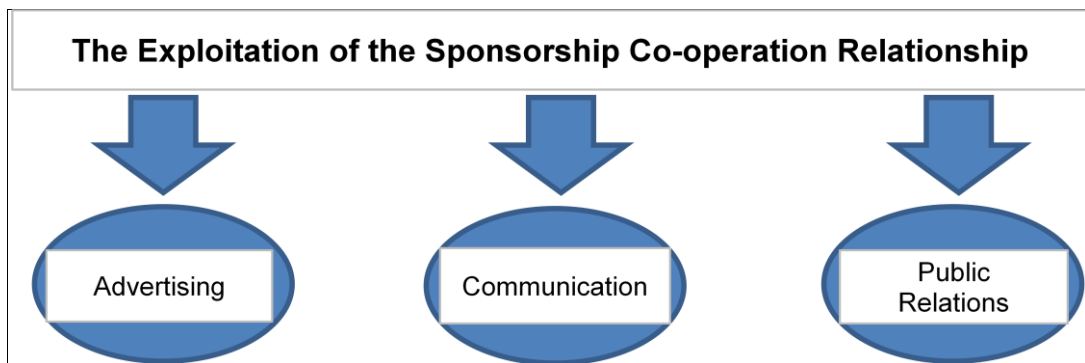


Figure 15 The exploitation of the sponsorship co-operation relationship, based on Alaja (2001, 29)

The current trends in sponsorship co-operation relations is the growing of new not that well known sports arts, the continuing interest in sports events, popularity of team sports over individual sports and the growing interest in youth sports and associations over top sports. In addition sponsees are used more and more in internal and external training and education events. As it goes for sports targets these events often deal with topics such as leadership, teamwork development, encouraging creativity and motivation. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 96-97, 119.)

As an example an athlete might provide the sponsoring co-operation partner business such co-operation possibilities as for example visibility through

providing advertising space in the athletes uniform, the right to exploit the athlete in all marketing, advertising and communication activities, the right to the attendance of the athlete in customer, training/education, employee or public relations events, visibility on the athletes web pages, entrance tickets to competitions and other events and the right to use the athlete in all sorts of events. (Alaja 2001, 57-58.)

Large transnational and multinational businesses are known to use famous athletes, so called global sport celebrities, in their marketing and other operations as endorsers. A rather good example of this is Adidas with its three stripes and sport celebrity endorsers. On the other hand it should be acknowledged that it is not only the world wide famous, global sport celebrities that are used for these endorsement purposes. Again if we use Adidas as an example they have many sport endorsers that do not enjoy global celebrity status, that is, they are not globally recognized. In this connection we should also acknowledge that sometimes using the global celebrity athletes as endorsers may actually be a hindrance in local markets, as these endorsers may represent and convey values and things that do not fit into that local market in question. When dealing with sport sponsorship co-operation both the global and local aspects need to be taken into account by the business, as is the case with all foreign trade and business activities. Thus also marketing messages need to be conveyed according to the requirements of the market in question. Again we can use Adidas as an example of such activities. Adidas for example has been engaging in sponsorship co-operation activities in such events as the Olympics, which obviously reach a truly global audience and market place, yet it is also known to engage in sponsorship co-operation activities with local athletes and clubs. These sponsorship co-operation relationships with local athletes and clubs provides for Adidas the possibility to reach a more national and local set of audience and consumers with their truly global brand. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 99-102.)

### 3.5 Building blocks for successful sponsorship co-operation relationships

For a sponsorship co-operation relationship or alliance to be successful the parties involved should fit in together, either through related product categories or through historical development. It is claimed that there are six different elements that determine this fit. The six elements are shared strategic vision on developments in the alliance environment, compatibility, strategic importance of both parties, complementary balance, that is, mutual dependence, added value for clients and partners and market acceptance by the partners' market. Some other aspects that determine the success of the alliance include things such as mutual understanding of the relationship, the relationship should be based on specific strengths and resources, precise definition of rights and duties of the parties involved, trust and non-opportunistic behaviour, a well functioning information sharing system and effective communication, top management support, commitment and satisfaction of both parties. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 237-240.)

Different people have differing opinions on what are the most important issues affecting in the success of the sponsoring co-operation, but one thing is certain all of the issues are important in one way or another in the success or failure of the relationship. The meaning of the actual purpose of the co-operation and the content of it should not be forgotten (Alaja 2001, 42-43). First of all it is argued that it is of outmost importance that the business and the target are soul mates, that is, they must share the same basic values and identity. Furthermore the communicational connection between the co-operation partners must be such that it is credible. The story that is told and shared via the relationship should have an open ending so that it is left to the interpretation and imagination of the target audience. Also businesses should not be afraid to be innovative and multidimensional in the exploitation of the sponsorship co-operation relationship and of the new opportunities it provides. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 145-146) More generally speaking for a sponsorship co-operation relationship to be successful and to act as an effective marketing tool, mostly through image and reputation enhancements, for the business in question it should be treated and developed as a strategic resource from the start of the relationship, if not

then most likely the relationship will at least fail to produce adequate return on investment (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 19).

It is also important that the personal chemistries of the parties involved in the sponsorship co-operation match, as this is the pathway to common goals and these of course are of outmost importance. In addition the goals should be adjusted to changing circumstances and checked regularly. The sponsorship co-operation activities must take into consideration the current trends in for example consumer behaviour. For example consumers exert ever more power and control and in general the society has become more emotional based and people are looking for life with a meaning. This in turn means that consumers are for example more interested in traditional experiences such as entertaining sports. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 145-146.)

For a sponsorship co-operation relationship to be successful all the basic elements of this kind of a relationship must be present. That is the co-operation relationship must be built on an idea with an aim or a goal. This means that the reason behind the decision to engage in sponsorship co-operation relationship must be clear. The co-operation relationship must be planned. The relationship must be actively run and pro-activeness must be present. The sponsee must have a required personality and character, and also have the will to get involved in such a co-operation relationship. Obviously the co-operation target must be carefully selected. Important is also to possess all the required resources, both financial and personnel, and to remember that at the end of the day the business is buying a story. (Alaja & Forssell 2004, 145-146) When it comes down to the businesses personnel that are important for the utilization of the sponsorship co-operation relationship, such as the ones in marketing and advertising departments, they should be well informed and equipped to create and develop useful sport sponsorship relationship as this is of outmost importance (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 19).

Also here it is important to keep in mind that also small can be big. For example it is too often assumed that sponsorship co-operation is only something meant for large businesses and organizations, large events and



large projects, but this is far from the reality. As the case is often that most of the existing sponsorship co-operation is conducted in the local level and with small investments and co-operation settlements. (Alaja 2001, 43) On the other hand sponsorship co-operation can be for example the key element in businesses marketing communications for example for a business engaged in international trade. As such sponsorship can be used for market penetration, brand positioning and improve market share. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 19)

The goals and aims of the sponsorship co-operation relationships in question should be kept in mind when discussing the success and the building blocks of the success. This is due to the fact that these define the success and how it is to be evaluated. These aims usually include both financial/economic and qualitative aims as sited in figure 16. The usual way to set the economic aims is to count the amount of money required, that is, other incomes deducted by the total expenses. But this is not feasible and not always the amount the co-operation businesses and other partners are willing to invest. As for the qualitative aims, these should cover such issues as the quality of the sponsorship co-operation relationship itself, coverage, image, reputation and other trades. A good and prestige co-operation partner business is a valuable asset in more than one way. And what is more for the relationship to be successful it is important to keep up with the current time, situation and trends and marketing environment. Also the extend of the available resources should not be neglected and as a result the aims should be realistic. It is better to build the co-operation relationship slowly and sustainably on a solid ground. (Alaja 2001, 54.)

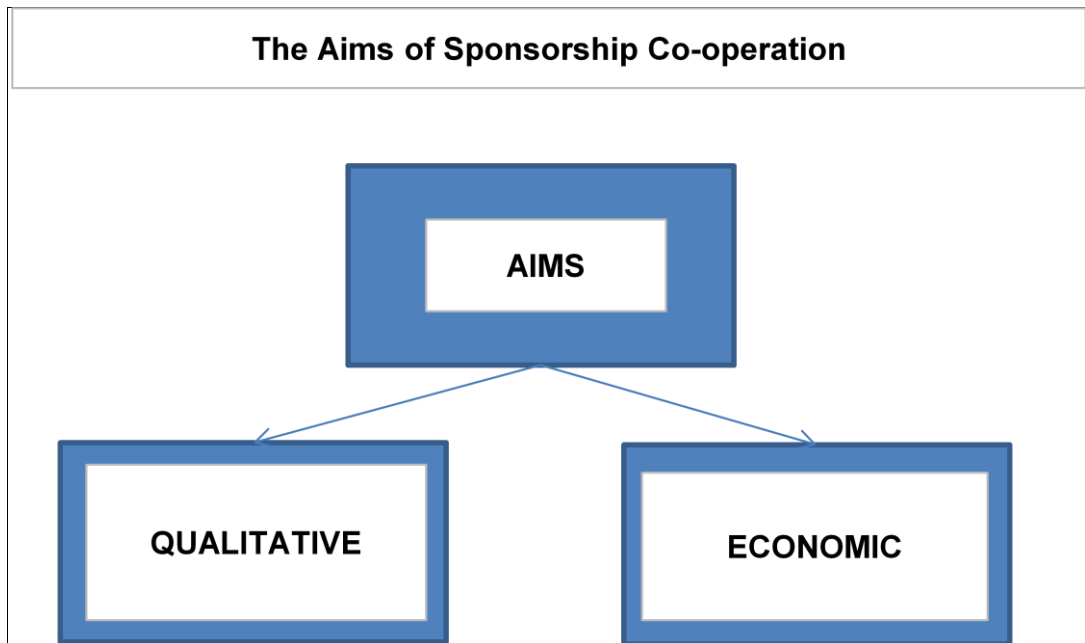


Figure 16 The aims of sponsorship co-operation, based on Alaja (2001, 54)

#### 4 CREATING A SPORTS BRAND AND A BRAND OF AN ATHLETE

Sponsorship co-operation makes it possible for a business to transfer the passions and feelings the target market or audience experience towards the sponsee' to apply also to its brand. Thus the target market should interact with the brand in question in a more emotional and passionate state of mind. Here the interest is more on the brand from the sponsee's point of view, that is, the sponsee, the athlete in our case, as a brand themselves, that is their personal brand. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 191-194) In fact earlier it was mainly entertainment and sport stars that were seeking visibility for themselves through branding activities but currently more and more entities and people are realising the benefits of the visibility and other benefits produced by branding and strong personal brands (Rein, Kotler & Stoller 2005, 13-14). The truth of the matter is that in today's fragmented sport marketplace different sports and their brands are faced with increased competition for popularity. Sports is a huge market with huge amount of money involved but the competition over market share and profits is fierce also. It used to be enough in the sports market to perform well in competitions and win, but that is not the case anymore. Also sports need to be focused on successful

brand building and maintaining the successful brand in order to differentiate from the competition and to be competitive and survive. (Rein, Kotler & Ryan Shields 2006, 11-12, 21-22, 38-39)

For example the brand of Olympics is seen as including such values, things and associations as hope for a better world through involvement with sport, the inspiration to achieve personal dreams through the lessons of athletes' sacrifice, striving and determination, friendship and fair play and joy in the effort of doing one's best; the most important attributes being friendship, multiculturalism, globality, participation and fair competition. These attributes are perceived also as applying for the sponsor businesses and their brands and thus they receive a positive association and feeling, which makes it feasible to engage in sponsorship co-operation with such an event as the Olympics. So it is not surprising that the Olympics gain around one third of their marketing revenue through sponsorship co-operation. As a return the sponsor businesses gain the right to use the Olympic symbol and imaginary, direct advertising and promotional opportunities, onsite stands and product display opportunities, hospitality, tickets, access to National Olympic Committees, and ambush protection. It is also good to keep in mind that sponsorship rights to the Olympics can be gained both through international and national level. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 191-194.)

#### 4.1 Defining a brand

Nowadays, in the highly competitive market place, the meaning of brands is greater than ever before (Gad 2001, 7-11; Amis & Cornwell 2005, 141-142). Brands are something that convey meaning and emotions (Andreasen & Kotler 2003, 175). Brands are something that separate from the competition. This separation may be for example accomplished through such elements as a name, symbol, design or logo. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 189; Salzer-Morling & Strannegard 2004) It does not matter whether we are dealing with services, products, business-to-business or something else, all commercial activity nowadays are affected by brands and branding in one way or another. (Gad 2001, 7-11; Kotler & Pfoertsch 2006, 1-13) Even such entities as for example government agencies have taken upon the task of branding

themselves (Andreasen & Kotler 2003, 170-177). In addition individual politicians, banks, pop stars, film stars and athletes are branding themselves and engaging in branding activities, all having their own brand identities (Haig 2004, 153; Jevons 2005, 117-118).

The concept of a brand and branding nowadays should and is increasingly applied in a much wider perspective, the traditional concept that is applied to mainly only on products and services to be sold is not simply adequate enough anymore nowadays. So brand definitions such as “A brand is a name, term, sign, symbol, or design which is intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors.” are not broad enough. Definitions like these are simply too product oriented and neglects for example all the intangible parts a brand might possess. A definition of a brand nowadays should be more communication oriented. (Haig 2004, 153; Jevons 2005, 117-118) It should be acknowledged that creating, nourishing and maintaining a brand is not as easy and straightforward as one might think (Andreasen & Kotler 2003, 170-177; Amis & Cornwell 2005, 141-142). Let alone creating a strong brand (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 141-142). In addition when thinking about the concept brand the term brand equity and a brand as an asset that needs to be managed should be taken into account. Brand equity can be defined by and consists of four different assets. These four assets are the following ones; brand name awareness, brand loyalty, perceived quality and brand associations. (Salzer-Morling & Strannegard 2004)

Nowadays such things as ,for example the internet, which has for one made communication more interactive and thus harder to control, are only making branding activities more complex. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 141-142) But yet branding is a prerequisite for survival as it enables distinguishing from the competition. Although it should be kept in mind that if the actual thing behind the brand is in fact bad then there is nothing that will save the brand and make it a success or superior compared to the competition. (Hertzen 2006, 91, 227-228) Yet among other things strong brands make it cheaper to gain customers, produce increased customer loyalty and retention rates, and as already mentioned protect from the competition. (Amis & Cornwell 2005,

141-142) It is important to keep in mind that brand and person characteristics nowadays are seen as being increasingly interchangeable. (Rein, Kotler & Ryan Shields 2006, 167)

A brand is an impression that is conveyed to and interpreted by the perceivers mind and it includes both tangible and intangible features and attributes that make it unique and one of a kind, separating it from the competitors offerings and brands. (Moilanen & Rainisto 2009, 6-7; Amis & Cornwell 2005, 190) A brand is something that has its own identity (Salzer-Morling & Strannegard 2004). A brand consists both from facts and images that make up for example a sports product. The brand or image is a persuasive tool. A strong brand gives a promise of a benefit or performance to the percipient of the message. (Rein, Kotler & Ryan Shields 2006, 113-114) A brand is a personality that has both psychological and sociological features. The brand is in fact created in the percipients mind and only when the conveyed brand personality is conceived and interpreted in the same way by enough percipients. (Moilanen & Rainisto 2009, 6-7; Amis & Cornwell 2005, 190) Of course on the other hand the image of the brand is always slightly different in different peoples' minds. This is due to the fact that behind the perceiving of the image are influencing such factors as own values, interests, knowledge and possible previous experiences about the brand in question. (Hertzen 2006, 91-92)

In addition the brand image is affected by such uncontrollable factors as for example the field of business and competition, as these create the general prevailing image for everyone operating on that field in question. So for example a bad image and news about one operating on the field can have an impact on everyone operating on that same field of business. But of course the creator of the brand and sender of the brand message can influence on the knowledge and experiences given by the brand through its actions and communication. (Hertzen 2006, 91-92) And in general when we are dealing with a person as a brand for example an athlete there might occur some problems and damages to the gained image based on the bad or unaccepted behaviour of the athlete either on the field or in their leisure time, leading to a bad image and reputation. (Jevons 2005, 117-118) Brands

are characterised by three important elements that are identity, image and communication. Identity refers to the identity of the brand given by the sender, that is, the experience the sender wants the brand to convey, whereas the image is the experience that the percipient in reality gets from the brand. Communication on the other hand refers to the process of transferring the so called brand message from the sender to the recipient. (Moilanen & Rainisto 2009, 6-7)

Nonetheless it should be acknowledged that also the concept of brand, as many other concepts, have been given a plenitude of different definitions by different people (Ellwood 2002, 22-24 & Herten 2006, 15-17,98 & Rein, Kotler & Stoller 2005, 22). But one thing in common with all the definitions of a brand is that it distinguishing and uniqueness. The concept of brand is no longer limited to cover only products and services, it can be also applied as a concept for example to people, ideologies. (Herten 2006, 15-17,98 & Rein, Kotler & Stoller 2005, 22) One example of an athlete brand is Michael Jordan. Michael Jordan as a successful brand has a strong effect on things such as for example ticket sales, product sales and television revenues. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 189) In this case we are of course more interested in applying the concept of brand and branding into a person. Whatever the brand in question one thing is clear, that is, every brand has a story to tell, the reason for its existence, content, aims and a targeted audience. All these form the brand promise and should be uniform and compatible with each other, thus all of the previously mentioned elements should go hand in hand. (Herten 2006, 15-17, 98)

#### 4.1.1 Benefits of branding

And obviously brands produce certain benefits why else would anyone go through the trouble of actually branding anything (Moilanen & Rainisto 2009, 6-8,11-12). Broadly speaking the aim of creating a brand and communication is to support success (Herten 2006, 96). The following are some of the benefits that might be gained through the process of branding; differentiation from the competition, producing emotional benefits for the customer/user/buyer of the brand and facilitates their decision making,

reduce the need for information retrieval and risks, produces marketing protection and long-term strategic benefits, increases marketing efficiency and creates financial value and also goodwill value, gives a guarantee of quality and gives protection against things that do not go the way they were planned, and increases turnover. Furthermore it should be kept in mind that these benefits are only to mention a few, that is, there exists abundance of other benefits as well not mentioned here. As for the added value created by the brand it is derived from five main aspects, which are brand awareness, brand loyalty, brand image, perceived quality, brand associations and property rights. These five aspects should lead into higher brand equity. (Moilanen & Rainisto 2009, 6-8,11-12)

It is not a wonder that also the ones operating in the field of sports are increasingly starting to realise the importance of branding as well. This is largely due to the intensifying competitive environment they are experiencing and the resulting need to differentiate themselves from the competition. Branding should result in more long-term relationships and loyalty. The sports brand should provide a unique experience and thus make the brand less dependent and affected by winning or losing. What is more we can observe three different benefits that should result from sports branding. These three benefits are permanence, connectivity and a premium as shown in figure 17. Permanence refers to the aspect of the sport product becoming less dependent on mere success in competitions and winning. Whereas connectivity refers to the widening of the connection and communication network of the sport brand. This connectivity should result to the brand, the sport product that is, becoming more flexible and elastic. As for the last of the three major benefits, the premium, it refers to the increased attention and pay or price compared to the competitors. All in all branding should result in the creation of a successful sports product. (Rein, Kotler & Ryan Shields 2006, 114-116.)

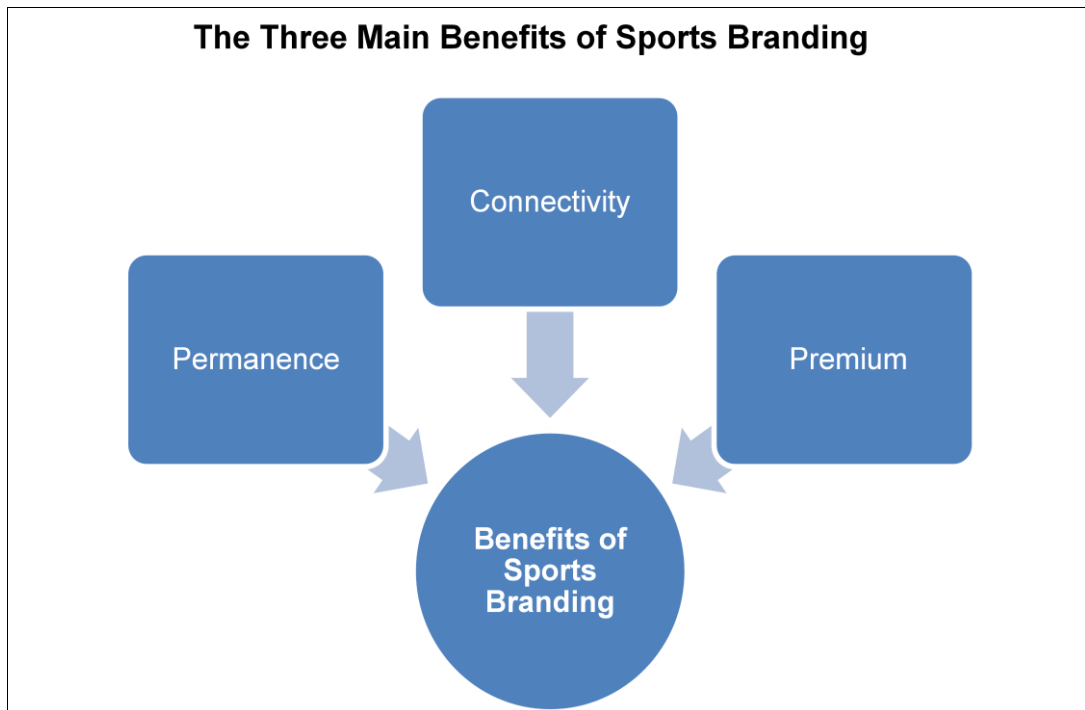


Figure 17 The three main benefits of sports branding, based on, Rein, Kotler & Ryan Shields (2006, 114-116)

#### 4.2 Creating a strong and successful sports brand

Creating a strong and successful sports/athlete/personal brand is of interest as it should produce such benefits as for example attention, visibility and recognition, long-term sustainability in the marketplace, clear differentiation from the competition, new opportunities and gaining of a pay premium. Thus creating a strong and successful personal brand is also important for an athlete and this should be done in a deliberate, planned and structured manner, control over their images should prevail and decisions should be rational. (Rein, Kotler & Stoller 2005, 22-24, 29, 216) Different athletes possess a versatile set of different characteristics and abilities they can offer for businesses engaged in sponsorship co-operation relationships with them. Again it would seem to come down to the fact that what the business is seeking for. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 103-104)

Something might be seen as successful from ones perspective where as from a different point of view it might be deemed as far from successful and desired. For example the already earlier on mentioned fact about the global



and local reach and the differences between them go well with proving this point. Some businesses seek a local athlete that is able to only reach the local market efficiently, whereas on the other hand some businesses seek for a more global coverage, and thus the athlete they are looking for should be for example a global celebrity athlete and be able to adapt and appeal to different nationalities and cultures simultaneously, such as David Beckham. It should also be noted that a local athlete that is unknown to the rest of the world might still be appealing also to global markets. This is due to the fact that the feature of unknowns and foreignness makes the athlete appealing to foreign and global markets. The athlete is seen as representing something new, refreshing and exotic and will thus be great for, for example, marketing products or services that are meant for a target group that is attracted by everything unfamiliar. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 103-104.)

For example when we think about making a successful brand out of an athlete, he or she might be considered valuable and worth investing in when they are perceived as good looking, well-spoken and their profile is growing internationally. It is safe to say that accomplishments such as winning Olympic or world medals or even breaking a world record do not hurt when building up a successful brand out of an athlete. Nonetheless it should not be forgotten that by some businesses one of the highly appreciated features of an athlete is that they should be somehow really unique and different from the other athletes or in any way represent kind of otherness. These aspects will no doubt help the business in question to differentiate itself from its own competition, with respect to marketing and communication. This in turn implies that businesses are often seeking to establish sponsorship co-operation relationships with national athlete heroes instead of only with global celebrity athletes. Obviously these are some aspects and traits of an athlete that might be utilized when creating a successful brand out of them, since businesses see these factors as making the athlete a good marketing package for them. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 107-112.)

Anyway one thing is certain all the successful and strong athlete brands have at least one thing in common that is, they all possess certain star power in them. There is without a doubt star power in such strong brand

athletes as for example David Beckham, Tiger Woods and Anna Kournikova only to name a few. It should be kept in mind that it is not enough for an athlete to be successful and a winner to become a successful brand. The reality is that in sports there are always both winners and losers. A truly successful sport brand should be based on something else than winning, even such a thing as looks can prove to be a more useful attribute to an athlete brand. (Rein, Kotler & Ryan Shields 2006, 39, 111-113) When thinking about female athletes it should be noted that nowadays the trend is such that they have become in fashion and are stars and icons for many. They are seen as representing control and strength. (Heywood, Dworkin & Foudy 2003, 16-30)

Returning to already previously mentioned global celebrity athlete David Beckham it must be mentioned that he is in fact currently probably one of the world's best known global brands. Thus it is safe to state that Beckham's brand value is high and he in fact represents an excellent example of a strong and successful sports brand. This strength of his brand and the success is based and build on his ability to adapt and intrigue a global audience. David Beckham is versatile enough to provide and show different aspects about himself to fans and people with differing tastes and preferences. He has managed to blend in into different nations and cultures, and yet at the same time be a transnational and an international brand. The Beckham brand is in a way both a local and a global brand simultaneously. Nonetheless we should not forget that he is also good at what he does, that is playing football, and this fact of course also makes a contribution to the creation of the strong, highly successful brand David Beckham. And as he is a strong and successful brand it is safe to state that he has no problems in finding endorsers with whom to establish sponsorship co-operation relationships. Behind him we can spot such huge brands and businesses as endorsers as for example Adidas. And this is all due to his well established and strong brand image. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 104-106; Haig 2004, 160-161; Rein, Kotler & Stoller 2005, 34-35.)

When thinking about the creation of a strong and successful personal brand, a brand out of an athlete in this case, there exists six important elements

related to it and communicating it. These six elements are the following ones; audience, story selection, timing, positioning, placement and staging. The specific needs of the targeted audience should be taken into account of. The story should be the right one for the targeted audience. The timing should be correct. The correct place to do it in should be sought. Also the sector, venue and channel should be carefully selected. And finally the right launching vehicle for the brand should be decided on. (Rein, Kotler & Stoller 2005, 317-319.)

#### 4.2.1 Building of a brand and the brand strategy

One useful model that can be applied when building up any brand, let it be a consumer good, service, a person or any other is the model created by Thomas Gad. Gads model identifies a brand having four different dimensions. These four dimensions are the following, functional, psychological, ethical and social. The functional dimension refers to the benefits. The psychological dimension in turn refers to the mental support. The ethical dimension refers to responsibility. The final dimension, that is, the social dimension refers to identifying into a group. (Hertzen 2006, 99.)

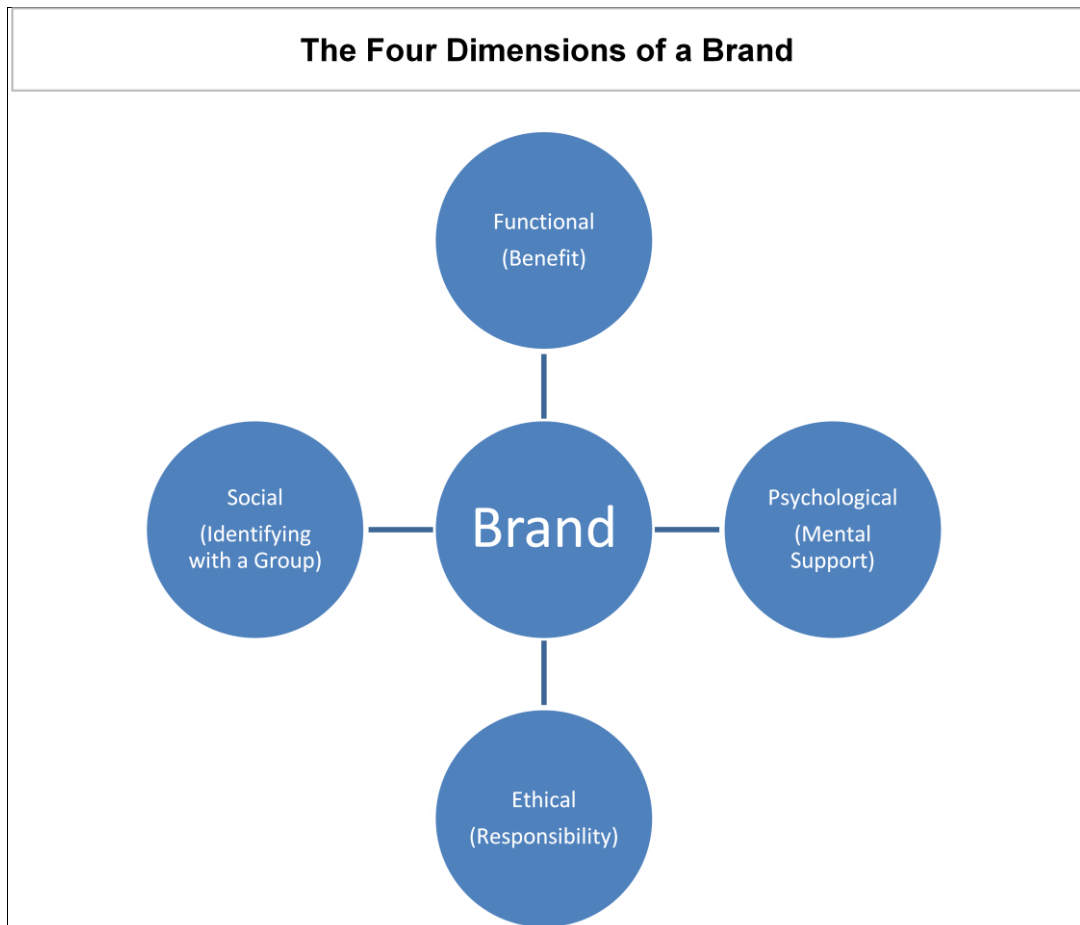


Figure 18 The four dimensions of a brand by Thomas Gad, based on Herten (2006, 99)

The building of a strong and successful sports brand is mainly accomplished through transformation that is, by reinventing and redefining the sports product into a fan centred brand as mentioned already before (Rein, Kotler & Ryan Shields 2006, 38-39). The brand strategy has an essential role to play when creating and building up any brand. In fact brand strategy can be seen as a prerequisite if the aim in mind is a strong and successful brand. It is a plan with which the brand is to become well known, interesting and distinguishable from the competition. The creation of a brand strategy starts with answering such questions as for example for whom the brand is meant for, the values it is based on, what exactly distinguishes it from the competition. Also brand strategy is an element that should change alongside the passing of time and the changing environment and conditions. (Herten 2006, 123-125, 199-202)

When building up a brand and the strategy behind the brand we can distinguish four different stages involved in this process. The four stages are the following ones, evaluating the current situation and defining of the aimed image, planning of the brand communication, the planning of both internal and external launch of the brand and implementation of the strategy. When it comes down to the first dimension of the four, that is, evaluating the current situation, a useful tool to use is the SWOT-analyse, that is, evaluating and defining the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. It might prove to be a useful idea to do the same analyze from the perspective of a few competitors. Another important well known concept when thinking about these four stages of building up a brand is positioning. Positioning means the placing of the brand on the marketplace, finding a place for the brand in the minds of the target groups in relation to the ones of the competitors. (Hertzen 2006,128-137.)

Also setting up the goals and aims in the brand strategy for the brand are important in creating a strong successful brand. When defining the aims to be reached for the brand some important questions should be answered. For example who exactly do we want to know our brand and what do we want them to know about the brand, what feelings do we want to associate into the brand, how is the target group to separate the brand from the competing ones, what personal experiences the target group should have from the brand, what actions do we want the target group to take and finally by which time the aims and goals of the brand should be fulfilled. Although it should be kept in mind that the aims are to be set realistically and be reachable with respect to both mental and financial resources. (Hertzen 2006, 138-140.)

Creating a brand requires such efforts as getting to know your brands current position and also the competitors' brands positions, also getting to know the target groups and the identity of the brand in question and the basic promise it gives. The analyzing and deciding where you want to go, deciding how exactly to get there, that is creating an action plan and schedule and creating a clear concept are all important elements when creating a brand. The aim should be at getting everybody involved committed, create creative communications, make sure that integrated

strategy is prevailing, make sure that everyone is behind the common brand effort and strategy and in general organizing and making sure that the required resources are available, carry out pre-testing when possible and install constant monitoring and measuring practises. (Andreasen & Kotler 2003, 170-177; Herten 2006, 125.)

#### 4.2.1.1 Specifics in building a sports brand out of an athlete

Anyway there are four different key factors that should be taken into account when building a sports brand, let it be out of an athlete or sports art or team or some other. These four factors are segmentation, involvement, ethos and transformation. Segmentation means the separation of people and market according to for example psychographic, need and lifestyle differences. The need for market segmentation in sports branding is due to the fact that nowadays the sports market is complex and crowded and the number of options has increased and thus people make more individualized choices. This in turn creates the need for more specific segments, market targeting, that is, prioritizing the segments on which to concentrate the marketing efforts on, and finally compatible segments for the sports brand must be chosen. The second key factor involvement refers to the relationships the sports brand has and achieves. There are many different forms of involvement that a sports brand can have, some being more obvious than others. In involvement intimacy, closeness and personalization are important but quite difficult to reach in today's impersonal sports market place. (Rein, Kotler & Ryan Shields 2006, 119-133, 143.)

The third key factor in sports branding, the ethos, means how the sports brand or product is perceived by the audience and it is a prerequisite in creating credibility and connecting with the target market. Especially in sports people need to be convinced that the brand is of integrity and trustworthy. Furthermore ethos can be seen as a tool for persuasion. A sports brand with ethos understands the needs, expectations and values of its target market and thus is able to create trust, which is of utmost importance, and receive attention and bond with the target market and be seen as showing goodwill. The ethos can show in different forms and is

based on such things as for example fair play, truthfulness, honesty, good intentions. Credibility in sports is created by meeting expectations for example through reliability, quality of play, exceeding expectations, admitting mistakes and correcting them. The truth of the matter is that a brand without ethos will not survive in the competitive environment it is faced with nowadays. Furthermore ethos is a prerequisite for the final key factor in sports marketing, transformation, that is the actual purposeful process of turning a sports product into a brand and to heighten strengths, reduce weaknesses and face competitive pressures. (Rein, Kotler & Ryan Shields 2006, 119-133, 143.)

This transformation can be divided into four different stages that are brand concept generation, brand testing, brand refinement and brand actualization. The first stage, brand concept generation, means developing and choosing concept options that have the potential to attract the target groups. Furthermore it is essential to include in the concepts attributes that differentiate from the competition. When developing these concepts it is essential to stay realistic about everything, for example about the skills and talents, assets, limitations, goal setting and situations. (Rein, Kotler & Ryan Shields 2006, 144.)

In the brand concept generation stage of the transformation and in the building of a successful sports brand we can distinguish five steps. These five steps are audit that is, evaluating the need for brand definition or redefinition, inventory that is, evaluating the assets of the brand, deciding on which assets to emphasize and highlight and finding the meaning the brand has for people, target that is, defining the target segments and groups, plan that is, deciding on the scope of the transformation, and finally build that is, building the actual brand to the target groups. The first step, audit, includes assessing the current stage for example by using the already before mentioned SWOT-analysis that is, by defining the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The audit step also includes taking a look at the competition and cultural trends that is, for example how do people receive information, time spending habits, and defining a vision for the sports brand. When creating the vision a realistic look at the assets, goals and motivation

are required. As for the second step, in this step also the values of the brand should be defined. When thinking about the values inherent commonly in sports brands these include for example, power, ritual, heritage, diligence, integrity, honour, loyalty, protection and perseverance. Values are important as these will define what the brand will represent, convey, and stand for and what it has to offer. (Rein, Kotler & Ryan Shields 2006, 146-156.)

When the vision and goals are set it is time to define the proper target segments or groups. For sports products this means taking into account market characteristics such as for example size, demographics and values, marketing requirements for the target group, profitability of the target segment and resource availability that is that sufficient resources to target the planned segment actually exist. It should be kept in mind that it is a prerequisite that the vision, brand and target segment all fit in together. After all these steps have been taken it is time for the actual building of the sports brand and connecting all the issues handled in the previous steps into a coherent whole under the brand. The sports product is given identity, texture, shape and context, so that the target group can identify and relate to it. For example an athlete as a brand can represent such types as a hero, or natural, or tough guy, or love goddess. Selecting some type for the sports brand is a prerequisite if it wishes to be competitive. (Rein, Kotler & Ryan Shields 2006, 146-166.)

Although it should be kept in mind that selecting the general type for the brand is not enough. The type needs to be developed and build with character that makes it unique and actually distinguishes from the competition. There are nine important points that should be thought of when building the character into the sport brand type. The first point is particularity that is the brand should possess differentiated traits. Secondly is interest that is, the core traits of the brand should attract attention. The brand should not seem planned or scripted that is, it should have autonomy and give the illusion of life. The fourth important point is roundness that is, the sport brand should display different dimensions and traits, and not be dominated by one single trait. Development that is, the fifth point states that as the time passes on the brand should evolve and reveal new traits. Interiority, the sixth point



states that it is not enough to communicate the brand message and values through verbal communication that is, also the non-verbal communication such as behaviour should convey the same consistent message and values. As for the seventh point, motivation it means that the behaviour should be based on some rationale and not come out as irrational or something. Discrete identity is the eighth point and it refers to the fact that the brand should be developed with a separate identity from its main role. Last but not at least is consistency that is, despite the many dimensions the brand should have and despite the changes taking place in the environment the brand should nonetheless display a predictable set of behaviours. (Rein, Kotler & Ryan Shields 2006, 167-168.)

It should be kept in mind that it is a prerequisite that the sports brand has the same characteristics and benefits that everybody else in the market have and in addition highlighted characteristics that will make the target group to select the brand over the other brands on the market, that is differentiate from the competitors. The athlete or sports brand should have so called star power within them. This star power can show in different forms but the main thing behind it is that there exist qualities or traits that differentiate from the competition. (Rein, Kotler & Ryan Shields 2006, 170-172.)

When the brand concepts have been created it is time for testing them for feasibility. Related to this there are some basic questions that need to be asked and answered. Does the brand have a consistent and identifiable image? Is the brand consistent with the target groups? Does the brand differentiate from the competing ones? Does the brand cause involvement? Is it fan-centred and has it ethos? There are different methods available in finding the answers to the previously mentioned questions and testing the brand concept, for example such as focus groups and interviews, surveys, test markets, informal observations such as scanning the environment, field research. (Rein, Kotler & Ryan Shields 2006, 175-176.)

After brand testing it is time for brand refinement. In refinement the sports brands core attributes that is, name, appearance, material and behaviour, are made consistent with the brand identity. In a way we can talk about the

actual constructing of the sports brand. The name of the sports brand is a sign that conveys brand images and is displayed everywhere and as such the name is of high importance. The name should be recognizable, attract attention and be memorable. The brand name should be consistent with the brands type and character and even reinforce them. Finally the name of the brand should contrast and differentiate from the competition. Then there is the appearance which is the visual side of the brand and should as such symbolize and reinforce the brand concept and all in all appearance should be consistent with all the other elements of the brand. A sports brand appearance refinement can be divided into three different categories, which are personal, organizational and structural appearance refinement. Personal appearance refinement refers to for example clothing, hairstyle and body type of people for example the athlete in question. Organizational appearance refinement refers to for example logos, colours, uniforms. Structural appearance refinement refers to the environmental communication and interaction of the sports brands facilities. (Rein, Kotler & Ryan Shields 2006, 186-203.)

As for the aspect of material sports brand refinement this can for example refer to the athlete's specific style of playing or competing. The material refinement in fact refers to all the elements of the actual performance, both formal and informal performance is included. In addition it refers to all the messages, press conferences, and websites. Also here differentiation from the competition is important. The final aspect in sports brand refinement, behaviour is the most difficult one to control. Behaviour that is for example the actions of an athlete influences directly on how the brand is perceived. Behaviour should be consistent with and reinforce the promise, ethos and cues of the sports brand. Behaviour has the power to either build the brand or destroy it. (Rein, Kotler & Ryan Shields 2006, 186-203.)

As the brand refinement should be completed it is time for brand actualization. The aim of actualization is to gather and implement all the elements of the sports brand into a seamlessly functioning whole. Setting up quality control and an actualization plan are important to this phase. The actualization of the transformation can be implemented for example by

behaviour modification, mentoring, role modelling or calculated risk transformation. Calculated risk transformation refers to a situation where the transformation is forced. (Rein, Kotler & Ryan Shields 2006, 204-205, 210.)

#### 4.2.2 The brand story and communicating the story

For a brand to become strong and successful it should have and tell its own unique story. The unique story should be such that it again distinguishes the brand from the competition. The story of the brand should give answers to such questions as for example how the brand has come to existence, why it exists, what it holds within, for whom it is meant for and what it is aiming at. The story should tell how the values of the brand are implemented in everyday practice. The story gives the brand both a background and a humane substance, and these in turn will lead to an understandable content that will have both feeling and sense. (Hertzen 2006, 123-125, 199-202.)

How do people hear and learn the unique story the brand has to tell, so that the desired brand image is conveyed and accomplished in their minds. There are three different ways in which this can happen. First of all they can have direct experience of the brand themselves. Secondly they can hear and learn about the brand through all kinds of marketing activities, or other commercial information sources and even through word of mouth. Thirdly from the beliefs the brand information recipient holds and the associations they make based on the associations they hold towards previously existing brands and brand knowledge. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 180.)

Marketing messages, in this case about the brand and the story it has to tell, are usually faced with disturbance and thus the message can easily get distorted. Thus good communications, operations, that is actually fulfilling the brand promise, and substance are a prerequisite in conveying the desired and intended brand image and message. Often good communications aims at conveying the image of reliability, desirability and uniqueness. The brand identity is a result of hard work and the image is the result that is formed in the recipients own mind. The long strategic process of brand building requires good substance, determination and intelligence. Also

a consistent, coherent and persistent brand strategy is a prerequisite. (Moilanen & Rainisto 2009, 12-14) All communication should ensure a consistent brand message and image for example. Otherwise the result might be in a way having multiple different unintended brands that are all conveying a different image. Pre-testing the brand and all the elements of it and the brand strategy itself should not be neglected since in a matter of fact the brand is at the end of the day created in the recipients own mind. (Hertzen 2006, 39-42, 118-120)

So we can conclude that when creating and building a brand communication has an important role to play in the whole branding strategy. Thus it is important to decide what kind of a message we want to convey and communicate and also what we do not want to communicate, that is, decide the things that the brand will not be associated with in any circumstances what so ever. Communication is also a good way to distinguish from the competition. Thus naturally communication should be concentrated on communicating about the aspects of the brand that actually make it unique and separate from the competition. Through communication the brand should be tried to be made visible and noticed and remembered by the targeted audience in the information abundant environment. (Hertzen 2006, 115-117.)

#### 4.2.3 Building blocks for successful brands

When it comes down to the success of the brand it should be kept in mind that as it is always with success, it is defined by the goals and evaluation criteria set for the brand. Success is always defined according to the situation and context. Nonetheless it is evident that in order to build a successful brand, sufficient resources are required, so that the brand is able to obtain the goals set for it and to obtain the wanted position, so that the brand is able to fulfil all the required rationale, emotional needs and expectations of the targeted perceivers. Generally speaking a successful brand should possess unique features or characteristics and satisfy needs in a unique way, so that the brand offers added value compared to the competitors. In here we are more interested in the branding of an actual

person, an athlete, and this of course means that it is much more complicated than for example let us say the branding of a physical product. For one the branding process of a product and the brand and the product itself is much easier to control. (Moilanen & Rainisto 2009, 13-19) Nonetheless the aims when creating and building a brand are the same, that is, to build an appealing, useful, functioning and long-lasting brand (Hertzen 2006, 67-68).

In addition it should not be forgotten that when creating a brand the personnel involved have a significant role to play. This is due to the fact that the image of the brand is also affected by the personnel. As these are the people that the customers and buyers are dealing with in one way or another. But probably the one with most influence with regards to this issue is the one actually selling and marketing the brand to the customer. Thus such a person should know everything about the brand in question, know his or hers own field of business and also the customers, should also possess contacts, negotiation skills and of course be good at customer relationships. (Hertzen 2006, 44-49.)

When building up a brand the meaning of values should not be neglected. The values of the brand conveyed to the targeted audience should go hand in hand with the reality, that is, the values should be real, and also the values should go hand in hand with the values perceived and experienced by the targeted audience. One other aspect of brands that might seem a bit insignificant compared to the importance of values is the logo of the brand. Although it might be seen as only a minor part of a brand it is yet the way in which the brand in question can be visually separated from the competition and other brands, and it also has an effect on how the whole brand is conceived, thus it and the meaning of it should not be neglected just like that. Especially when dealing with situations where the brand is crossing cultures it should be kept in mind that shapes, pictures and colours have different meanings and form different associations in different cultures. So the logo should be carefully planned so that it conveys positive associations and a planned image instead of negative associations and an unintended image. Also careful planning of all the other visual aspects of the brand are a

prerequisite in attaining the desired brand image and conveying the brand strategy. Most brands also have a slogan or slogans that in a matter of fact give a promise of something, and it is of course essential that the promise given is fulfilled by the brand. (Hertzen 2006, 99-100, 110-115.)

For a sports brand to be truly successful and appealing they should be fan centred. Being a fan centred brand means encouraging and enabling the target group to identify and become involved with the brand. To accomplish this requires accessibility, interactivity and responsiveness that is, listening and changing according to feedback when reasonable, from the sports brand with regards to its target group. There are three different sports brand communicators which are the sports brand participants, media and sponsors and all of these can be used in communication in order to become a fan centred brand and to connect with the target group. Careful consideration on how to reach the desired audience with a message that appeals to them is required. When thinking of an athlete as a successful brand it is of outmost importance to build the brand in such a way that it identifies and connects with a specific target group or groups. (Rein, Kotler & Ryan Shields 2006, 215-224, 242, 280.)

#### 4.3 Maintaining the sport brand in the changing environment and conditions

As we are living in a competitive world and environment this implies that the environment where brands exist goes through constant changes sometimes rapid ones. This in turn means that in order to maintain a brand and its position and success constant monitoring is a prerequisite. (Andreasen & Kotler 2003, 177) For example when considering the case of a sport brand it is important to take into account the changes in fans preferences and demands (Rein, Kotler & Ryan Shields 2006, 39, 248). It is also good to keep in mind that the history of the brand can both be a good or a bad thing depending on the situation and the environment. This of course again highlights the importance of monitoring and maintaining the brand in the changing environment and conditions. For example changes in the market and competitive environment or changes in the values of the targeted audience might require a change to be made also in the brand strategy. Also

the way of communication and the content of the messages sent might require changes to be made in them in order for the communication to be more present day, relevant and to take into account new perspectives. Nonetheless it should be kept in mind that the very basic elements of the brand should not be changed or modified lightly that is, there should be heavy reason for doing so. This is due to the fact that the brand has been built with hard work and effort and to go and totally reform the brand would mean throwing all this hard work and effort into the trashcan. (Hertzen 2006, 94-95, 224-225)

When thinking about maintaining our brand in a constantly changing environment the existence of the ultimate customer/user/audience of our brand should not be forgotten. Although we might be selling/offering our brand to a business or some other intermediary the ultimate consumer has the ultimate power. Thus if the ultimate consumer is not interested in the brand then the customer of the sponsee most likely will not be interested in the brand either. Another indirect aspect or factor that affects the maintaining of the created brand is media. Media is good for making the brand known and conveying the image and also reminding about the existence of the brand. (Hertzen 2006, 59, 63-65.)

It should also be kept in mind that maintaining a brand requires constant communication. At this point the possibilities and importance of trade and other disciplinary fairs should be looked at. Fairs are both relevant and useful when creating a brand and also when trying to maintain one. Trade fairs can be found all over the world and dealing with different fields. One of the most important aspects of these trade fairs is that they utilize the possibility of making direct contact simultaneously with all the important people in the field in question under the same roof. By attending these fair yourself you can market your own brand, make it more widely and better known, and gain promises on further contact after the fair. Trade fairs provide a useful insight of the marketplace on the field in question and about the competition. In addition the press is usually present at trade fairs so this should be also taken into account by for example preparing own material and press releases to the press. But as it is with everything nowadays also

fairs and taking part in them provide their own set of challenges, for example it might be hard to distinguish oneself from the others, that is the competitors, also taking part in the fair and thus might be also hard to arouse the interest of the targeted audience. But with hard work and preparation and planning taking part in fairs is usually worth it. (Hertzen 2006, 168-171.)

Nonetheless regardless the fact that the brand needs to adjust to the changing environment in order to maintain its strong position there are some quite stable factors behind some successful brands. These factors can include for example some of the following, long-established existence, success and growth, tradition, consistency, respect, quality and reliability and in Finland Finnish origin. Also the skilful and versatile use of marketing and communication. (Hertzen 2006, 230-231) There exist certain common rules that are good to apply when maintaining the sports brand. First of all a sports brand with strong connections with its target groups is better equipped to survive in the fragmented and frequently changing competitive environment. Secondly the core markets of the sports brand should be carefully maintained and prioritized and not taken for granted. It is important to understand the expectations of the target groups and be consistent in meeting those expectations and needs and in making promises. It does not hurt to actually exceed the expectations of the target groups. In addition it is important to maintain the brands fundamental values and core attributes and control any change process that might occur. Also the sports brand needs to understand the continuously changing environment and be proactive with regards to new opportunities. Finally sports brands should work out a balance with using the well established best practices in the market and in finding new innovative solutions and practices. (Rein, Kotler & Ryan Shields 2006, 268-270)

#### 4.4 Transferring the positive image of the sports brand to the image of the sponsoring businesses brand image

Through sponsorship co-operation the image of the sponsee' and the emotions related to them are transferred to be associated with the image of the sponsor and to the sponsor. This phenomenon is sometimes referred to



as the halo-effect. (D'Alessandro & Owens 2001, 90-92) As always with all communication also behind this sort of image transfer there are a large variety of factors at play, as sited in figure 19 below. The point is that the image of the brand of the business and the business itself can be associated to the image of an athlete or sports through sponsorship activities. Thus the image perceived by the targeted audience, the target group can be moulded and affected. The attributes, benefits and attitudes experienced by the target group towards the endorser, the sponsee' are associated also to apply to the sponsor and their brand (D'Alessandro & Owens 2001, 90-92). Fans of individual athletes or sport teams usually want support them whenever possible and they perceive the sponsorship businesses supporting them as well just like they themselves and thus the fans may experience that by for example buying the sponsors brand they support the athlete or team. By buying the sponsor businesses products or services they support the business which in turn supports the athlete or team. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 173-175, 177)

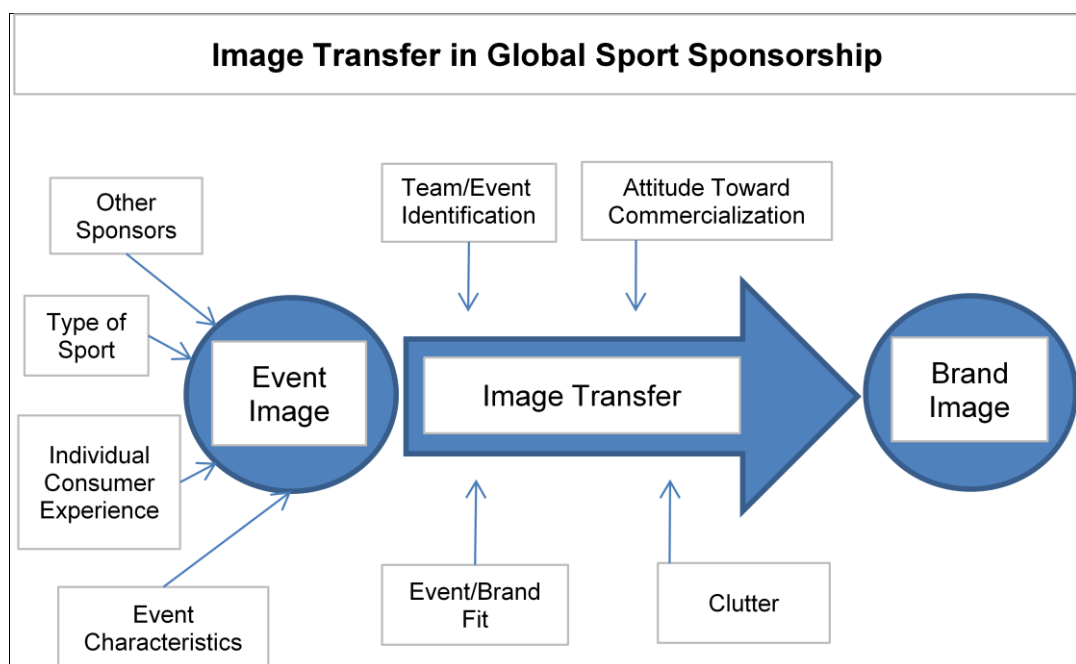


Figure 19 Image transfer in global sport sponsorship, based on Amis & Cornwell (2005, 174)

When thinking about the transfer of image from one brand to another brand, in this case the brand image of an athlete into the brand image of the

sponsor business, it is of utmost importance that the two brands fit in together well. This is due to the fact that this affects the successful transfer of the wanted image of course. The connection or similarity between the two brands should be logical. This connection or similarity can either be function based or image based. When the connection exists between the two brands the image transfer should be more successful. On the other hand it should be kept in mind that images are dependent on their targeted audience that is, it all depends on how the images of the brands are perceived. One other thing that might affect the image transfer is sponsorship clutter that is, for example there might be so many sponsors present that the sponsorship in question is not spotted or perceived by the targeted audience, so there is not enough visibility nor exposure for the actual image transfer to take place. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 180-183.)

A further notion that is good to keep in mind when thinking about brands and the transfer of brand images is that it is not only the image of the sponsee's brand that is transferred but also the image of the sponsors brand will be most likely transferred, at least to some extent, to the sponsee' and their brand. Thus both brands will be affected by the image of the other brand at varying levels depending on the situation and sponsorship co-operation relationship in question. The image transfer may be equal among the brands or the image transferred from the other brand to the other may be greater than vice-versa. Most likely the one that has created a stronger brand image and position will be the one whose image will be transferred more to the weaker brand image. Also if the business is in sponsorship co-operation relationships with multiple sponsee's or the sponsee has multiple businesses as sponsors it should be ascertained that all of the brands in question fit in with the images of the other brands. (Amis & Cornwell 2005, 183-184.)

#### 4.5 An example case of a successfully branded athlete; Maria Sharapova

Maria Sharapova became a star when she was 17 years old and won the Wimbledon. But nonetheless Sharapova needed to go through an extensive process of mentoring on tennis and in addition brand development and investment by her agency IMG. After early struggling of self-financing for a

few years Sharapova was finally granted a scholarship and received mentoring from some of the world's best tennis coaches, and by the age of 11 she was signed by IMG, and this can be seen as being a development strategy as this led to her getting a sponsorship relationship deal with Nike at an early stage, which granted her with the tools, such as training clothes and shoes, to develop her skills. Sharapova started getting more sponsorship co-operation offers but was turning them down in order to focus on improving her tennis skills and become a commercial attraction slowly. (Rein, Kotler & Ryan Shields 2006, 280-282.)

In 2004 as a result of all the hard work Maria Sharapova won the Wimbledon and the branded athlete was developed and born as a result from this. Sharapova was tall, smooth and attractive tennis player. Yet as a brand she was positioned more similarly than Tiger Woods for example instead of for example Anna Kournikova. After the winning of the Wimbledon the commercial activity around her and her brand blossomed and within a year she had taken up ten new sponsorship co-operation contracts of high value. So it is safe to state that Sharapova had become a successful strong brand and was making more money through sponsorship co-operation than any other female athlete. Sharapovas attractiveness and story is compatible of that of a film star and in addition she displays the competitiveness and concentration of a successful athlete. In addition Sharapova can be compared to the Hollywood film stars in that respect that also she is followed by the paparazzi, can be found in magazine covers and television commercials. (Rein, Kotler & Ryan Shields 2006, 280-282.)

Although Sharapova is clearly good and talented at what she does that is, at playing tennis and in addition is young and attractive these traits alone would have not been alone enough to make her into the successful brand she is today. The truth of the matter is that Sharapova was purposefully and strategically created as to become a brand she is today. Her talents and skills were developed and her attributes as well with a goal of transforming her into this tennis superstar brand she is today. The brand Sharapova has been developed and launched and now to sustain and maintain this brand

sufficient wins are required from her. (Rein, Kotler & Ryan Shields 2006, 280-282.)

The brand Maria Sharapova is an international brand and is a combination of skilful tennis playing and intelligence and glamour. As for the transformation of her brand, she evolved systematically from a young tennis player into a real tennis star who is an endorser of many famous and well known product brands. As for the involvement aspect of the brand Maria Sharapova, first of all there exists many access points to reach the brand and furthermore she is appealing to a huge number of fans due to her skills, Hollywood film star likeness and glamour. Finally the ethos side of the Sharapova brand, as it goes without saying that people respond well to the brand. This is mainly due to the fact that they are familiar with and can see her work ethic clearly. And of course her skills and appearance are a great combination in reaching the younger people. In order to maintain the brand Maria Sharapova she needs to focus on her tennis skills and performance. (Rein, Kotler & Ryan Shields 2006, 280-282.)

## 5 CARINA KETONEN AND SPONSORSHIP CO-OPERATION RELATIONSHIPS

In this chapter a more practical look at sponsorship co-operation relationships and an athlete as a brand is taken. This empirical part mainly consists of in depth interviews of Keittiömaailma and Fietsen Goeman and their sponsorship co-operation relationship activities and insights, thoughts and experiences in general about sponsorship co-operation and about the co-operation with Carina Ketonen. In addition an interview from Carina Ketonen and her thoughts from the perspective of an athlete is included. Furthermore some field work experiences are covered in this part carried out in the GoExpo fair 2009 in Helsinki Fair centre and in The European Championships in MTB (mountain biking) in 2009 in Zoetermeer Netherlands.

## 5.1 Keittiömaailma

I interviewed Antti Heiskanen from Keittiömaailma. He and his wife, Anne Heiskanen established Keittiömaailma in Kouvola a couple of years ago. The outlet is located at the outskirts of Kouvola in a concentration centre of furniture shops and a like. In addition to the Heiskanen's outlet in Kouvola there are Keittiömaailma outlets in Espoo, Helsinki, Jyväskylä, Kuopio, Lahti, Oulu, Pori, Rovaniemi, Tampere, Turku and Vantaa. (Keittiömaailma 2009a) But all of these outlets are independent entrepreneurs and as such make their own decisions for example on issues concerning sponsorship co-operation relationships as part of their business activities. Whether to engage in such activities or not, and if yes, with whom.

Keittiömaailma is a part of Novart Oy, established already about 60 years ago and the leading Finnish manufacturer of kitchen and bathroom appliances, which in turn is a part of Nobia concern, the leading European manufacturer of kitchen and bathroom appliances. Novart Oy has factories both in Nastola and Forssa. (Keittiömaailma 2009d) Keittiömaailma sells a variety of brands of kitchenware such as for example A la Carte and Parma, and provides all the necessary services one might need for the kitchen, that is, designing, furniture, domestic appliances, taps, counters, installation and construction or the whole renovation process if needed. (Keittiömaailma 2009b; Keittiömaailma 2009c) Although it should be mentioned that at least the Keittiömaailma outlet in Kouvola has outsourced the services, that is it buys the services of installation from other businesses that are providers of such services. Antti Heiskanen said that at the time being they have four different suppliers they use for to provide these services.

As for the Keittiömaailma in Kouvola all in all they employ six employees, the entrepreneurs themselves, Antti and Anne Heiskanen, and four hired workers. The turnover of the Kouvola Keittiömaailma outlet is around three to four hundred thousand. This might seem a bit small amount but it should be kept in mind that the goods they sell they do not take possession of them at any point that is, they do not actually buy them for themselves in stock they only act as an intermediary in selling them. Obviously the turnover

would be a lot bigger in amount if they actually bought the goods in their own name and sold them forward.

#### 5.1.1 Keittiömaailmas sponsorship co-operation relationship activities

The current situation at the Keittiömaailma outlet in Kouvola is that they have only two different sponsorship co-operation partners, both in the fields of sports. There is Carina Ketonen and then there is sponsorship co-operation also with Kouvolan Edustuskiekko ry that is, KooKoo, a local ice hockey team in Kouvola (Kouvolan Edustuskiekko Ry 2009a; Kouvolan Edustuskiekko Ry 2009b; Ketonen 2009). The co-operation with KooKoo started in year 2008, whereas the co-operation with Carina Ketonen started during the current year that is, year 2009. So we can conclude that both sponsorship co-operation relationships Keittiömaailma has are quite recently established, but on the other hand so is the business itself as well. Furthermore it should be kept in mind these co-operation relationships concern only the Keittiömaailma outlet in Kouvola not the other outlets in the Keittiömaailma chain nor Novart Oy and its parent company Nobia. So for example if the sponsorship co-operation relationship with Carina Ketonen were to be extended to the whole Keittiömaailma then it should be negotiated and agreed on with each of the outlets individually as they are, when such decisions are concerned, independent of each other. (Heiskanen A. 2009)

Both of the sponsorship co-operation relationships got started in quite a similar way. In both cases the sponsees took initiative and contacted Antti Heiskanen at Keittiömaailma. Antti Heiskanen actually stated that he was not even really looking for establishing sponsorship co-operation relationships with anyone at this point nor had even really thought or considered the whole opportunity of sponsorship co-operation for Keittiömaailma as part of business activities. Nonetheless as these opportunities and sponsorship co-operation offers came about Antti Heiskanen decided to take them up. In the case of KooKoo they just contacted Keittiömaailma and Antti Heiskanen without having any previous contacts or relationship between themselves. The proposal KooKoo made was so appealing and well formed and the

personal chemistries between the parties involved went so well together that the negotiations led to a sponsorship co-operation relationship being formed. (Heiskanen A. 2009)

As for the sponsorship co-operation relationship concerning Carina Ketonen and Keittiömaailma, it came about at the initiative of Merja Naroma that is, Carina Ketonen's manager who is responsible for all the marketing partnership and marketing aspects in general. In Carina Ketonen's case Merja Naroma was already a customer at Keittiömaailma when she took the initiative on the possibility of establishing a sponsorship co-operation relationship. First they just discussed about the possibility and then Merja Naroma made a concrete offer to Keittiömaailma and to the Heiskanens. The proposal and contract made, again was so appealing and well formed and also again personal chemistries between the parties were so good that after negotiations the actual contract on the sponsorship co-operation relationship was signed. (Heiskanen A. 2009)

In both of these cases the actual contracts on the sponsorship co-operation relationships were drafted by the sponsees side but were still the result of mutual understanding and negotiations in good spirit. As for the duration of the sponsorship co-operation relationship contracts, as Antti Heiskanen told that sponsorship co-operation relationship contracts vary a lot in duration depending on the case in question. As for the contract between Keittiömaailma and KooKoo it is based on the duration of the hockey season. So as to this date they have signed two contracts so far. As for the contract between Keittiömaailma and Carina Ketonen, the duration of the contract is based on a project. The project is the Mountain Bike marathon Finnish championships arranged in Kouvola in September 2009. But Antti Heiskanen said that the sponsorship co-operation between them and Carina Ketonen and Merja Naroma will most likely be continuing also after this project has ended. Anyway as conclusion it can be stated that all the terms, on the contracts were a result of discussion, negotiation and mutual understanding and respect and a common goal in mind for the relationship. (Heiskanen A. 2009)

### 5.1.2 Rationale and reasons behind the decision to engage in sponsorship co-operation relationship activities

Of course Keittiömaailma needed to have some solid rationale and reasons why to engage in these sponsorship co-operation relationships. First of all both KooKoo and Merja Naroma managed to make their sponsorship co-operation relationship proposals truly appealing and of course present these proposals in a good way and with preparation. In addition Antti Heiskanen told that both sponsees had had a good timing when they approached him with their co-operation proposals that is, the business that is, Keittiömaailma was in a good place and situation to take up these sponsorship co-operation relationships. At least for Antti Heiskanen it is extremely important that the personal chemistries go well together when engaging in sponsorship co-operation relationship with someone. When thinking about the criteria that need to be there for a co-operation relationship to be formed then of course there needs to be the economic and business rationale that is, believe that from the business perspective it is profitable and feasible to engage in these activities, but also the personality and person must be right. If either one of these is in fact lacking then there is no deal. In addition it is a prerequisite that there exists trust between the parties involved in the relationship. (Heiskanen A. 2009)

Antti Heiskanen stated also that at least they at Keittiömaailma are interested in establishing only wide ranging co-operation relationship that is, the simple exchange of money and a logo somewhere in turn is not enough and he does not see any business potential or true benefits in such sponsorship practises. They are more interested in establishing sponsorship co-operation relationships where they in fact work together in order for both parties to get the best out of the relationship, so it should truly be a relationship of mutual benefit. The parties involved should put an effort in improving the relationship and in finding new innovative solutions to exploit the relationship. The sponsorship co-operation relationship should be a constantly developing and evolving process. What is more the sponsorship co-operation relationships should be formed from the start so that the aim is to form a long lasting relationship, as Antti Heiskala for one believes that



these kind of relationships will only achieve their full potential in the long run and are not build just like that in one instant. (Heiskanen A. 2009)

Antti Heiskanen believes that with both of its current co-operation partners that is, Carina Ketonen and KooKoo these requirements have become a reality and they have a tight close relationship of mutual benefit and both parties due their best that they will both get the best they can out of the co-operation relationship. Both of these sponsees made clear already when making their proposals that they were looking for establishing such relationships with Keittiömaailma. In addition Antti Heiskala stated how important it is for the sponsee to have the necessary skills and desire to develop such relationships, and in his opinion both of Keittiömaailmas sponsees posses these skills and desire. (Heiskanen A. 2009)

A business like Keittiömaailma is of course more interested on the local visibility and reputation when thinking about engaging in sponsorship co-operation relationships. Thus both Carina Ketonen and KooKoo are good options for co-operation partners in this aspect. Of course both sponsees have visibility on offer also elsewhere, even abroad, but for Keittiömaailma whose customer base mainly consists of locals the local visibility and other local opportunities provided by the sponsorship co-operation relationships is what matters. Because for example a person living abroad is highly unlikely to come to Kouvola and do business with Keittiömaailma when they decide to renovate their kitchen. (Heiskanen A. 2009)

When considering whether to engage in these sponsorship co-operation relationships with Carina Ketonen and KooKoo Antti Heiskanen thought it was relevant who else was in sponsorship co-operation with them currently. First of all in his opinion it is not good if for example two competitors share a sponsee. Secondly Antti Heiskanen thinks that also the reputations and images among the sponsoring businesses will be associated with each other. If one of these businesses had a bad reputation or image this could be harmful for the other businesses. On the other hand the positive reputations and associations should act in a similar way. (Heiskanen A. 2009)

### 5.1.3 The perceived benefits received from sponsorship co-operation relationships

The benefits Keittiömaailma gains and is seeking to gain from these sponsorship co-operation relationships with Carina Ketonen and KooKoo, first of all there is the already mentioned visibility, local visibility to be more exact. Visibility Keittiömaailma gains for example the simple placing of their logo on KooKoo's billboards or in Carina Ketonen's homepages or shirt. Antti Heiskanen believes that this kind of local visibility is good for Keittiömaailma as they are quite a new business in Kouvola and in addition as already mentioned located at the outskirts of town. All this means that not everyone necessarily even know about their existence and it is not like people just happen to pass by their outlet just like that as in addition to being located at the outskirts of town they are also located in the "inner yard" of the building they are in. In this respect the simple placing of their logo is good for Keittiömaailma as it reminds and lets people know about their existence. (Heiskanen A. 2009)

In addition to be associated with the local ice hockey team KooKoo and also with Carina Ketonen is good for Keittiömaailma's reputation and creates goodwill towards Keittiömaailma among the people, especially among the locals of Kouvola. KooKoo and Carina Ketonen both have their fans and these fans of course show positive and goodwill towards them and Antti Heiskanen thinks that when they see that in a way Keittiömaailma also supports them and is a sort of fan of them as well then the positive and goodwill will extend to the feelings experienced towards Keittiömaailma. For example a fan thinking about renovating their kitchen might remember for example seeing the logo and name of Keittiömaailma at a KooKoo game, and stop by there to see if Keittiömaailma could provide the services and goods needed for the kitchen renovation. Or a fan of Carina Ketonen might as well remember Keittiömaailma in a similar way of association. (Heiskanen A. 2009)

Furthermore Antti Heiskanen also stated that he in a way believes in the word of mouth method that is for example people, fans, will spread the good reputation of Keittiömaailma through and among their own personal

networks. The goodwill and reputation and good feelings will not only grasp the fan base that is in addition other people that do not have direct contact with the sponsorship co-operation means will still be reached in this way. And in general Antti Heiskanen thinks that do to these sponsorship co-operation activities and relationship the general opinion towards Keittiömaailma will be enhanced. The local people of Kouvola might for example think that Keittiömaailma probably is a good business as it supports does co-operation with the local athletes and sports teams. In away Keittiömaailma is seen as being good for the whole Kouvola and for the people living in Kouvola. Antti Heiskala thinks that these sponsorship co-operation relationships will appeal to the emotional side of people. He also states that it truly great for him as well and for example if Carina Ketonen will in fact go to the Olympics then the feeling of having been part of that will be even greater. (Heiskanen A. 2009)

Through sponsorship co-operation it is possible for example to take loyal good customers to see a game, so the relationship provides hospitality opportunities. Antti Heiskanen also remembers that when he was working in Musta Pörssi before establishing Keittiömaailma that through sponsorship co-operation relationship totally unexpected benefits might arise. For example there was one time back in the times of Musta Pörssi when they were moving their business premises and everything needed to be backed up and transferred to the new premises within a short time and members of a sport team they were in sponsorship co-operation relationship with offered to help in the move. Clearly this was outside the official sponsorship co-operation relationship duties but from examples like this it can be seen how sponsorship co-operation is much more than just the exchange of money and logo, it is all about building a real relationship of mutual benefit and goodwill. (Heiskanen A. 2009)

Nonetheless it is good to keep in mind that as Antti Heiskanen stated, it is extremely difficult if not even impossible to grasp or measure all the benefits that are produced by these sponsorship co-operation relationships. Since the sales are most likely increased as a result of these relationships but there is no real way to estimate the exact amounts. (Heiskanen A. 2009)

#### 5.1.4 Future prospective for sponsorship co-operation relationships

All in all Antti Heiskanen thinks that both of these sponsorship co-operation relationships have great potential, otherwise Keittiömaailma would have not invested the thousands of euro's and time it has invested in these relationships so far. So far Antti Heiskanen has only had good experiences regarding these sponsorship co-operation relationships. But he also thinks that the full potential these relationships have is yet to be realized, and he sees sponsorship co-operation relationships as being continuously changing. By this Antti Heiskanen means that new opportunities for the relationships arise all the time and in addition new innovative ideas are created continuously. The relationships transform and modify according to the situations at hand. Thus it goes without saying that flexibility from both parties involved and the sponsorship co-operation relationships themselves is required. Yet at the same time it is important that everything is well planned and implemented. This of course requires continuous and active contact and communication between the parties involved. Antti Heiskala believes and prefers more informal contact keeping as he thinks this gives the required flexibility. For example if the other party comes up with a new idea or something it is easy to just approach the other party and share the idea and brainstorm the idea more together. All in all when thinking about business and sponsorship activities Antti Heiskala thinks that personal relationships and networks are extremely important and can be proved to be useful. (Heiskanen A. 2009)

Although Antti Heiskala and Keittiömaailma are extremely satisfied with the current sponsorship co-operation relationships they are not looking for establishing new sponsorship co-operation relationships right now. He says that they will rather concentrate on the current ones with Carina Ketonen and KooKoo in order to really develop those relationships and get the best out of them. Having too many co-operation partners right now, for a quite newly established and small business would not be wise as the resources are not adequate for that. It makes more sense to concentrate on the current relationships and building them than to spread the limited resources on too many places, as this would probably only end up eating away from the total

benefits gained from sponsorship co-operation activities. Antti Heiskanen for one believes that one will learn all the time with experience. (Heiskanen A. 2009)

#### 5.1.5 Additional thoughts and insights on sponsorship co-operation relationships

As for the personnel at Keittiömaailma responsible for the sponsorship co-operation activities, the entrepreneurs that is, Antti and Anne Heiskala are the ones responsible. They have no specific department or staff handling sponsorship co-operation relationships and activities, but this of course is quite understandable as we are dealing with quite a small private business and in addition sponsorship co-operation was not what you would call a planned activity in Keittiömaailma case. As this is the case there is no fore planned budget for sponsorship co-operation activities. Although Antti Heiskanen admits that it could prove to be useful to have one. For example when he was working in Musta Pörssi they did not originally have a budget and so things got a bit out of hand. They ended up taking up too many sponsorship activities from all of which some did not really make any business or economic sense and in some cases basically they were just doing a friend a favour. After they grasped the situation they created a budget for sponsorship co-operation activities and thus it became more business like activity and was easier to keep under control and make more sensible. (Heiskanen A. 2009)

As for Antti Heiskanen's thoughts generally about sponsorship co-operation relationships, he thinks they are good for any business when handled and developed properly. In addition he thinks they can have a lot of still uncovered potential and opportunities and thus should as a field be studied and developed further. Anyone involved in such activities should work to try and find new innovative approaches and solutions and improve sponsorship co-operation relationship activities. Also sharing of experiences among businesses would not hurt, for example businesses and sponsees in the area of Kouvola could have a forum of some sort, which would give a scene to share information and learn from others. (Heiskanen A. 2009)

## 5.2 Fietsen Goeman

Jan Goeman is the owner of Fietsen Goeman. (Fietsen Goeman 2009) The company Fietsen Goeman is a bicycle shop in Everberg, located between Brussels and Leuven, Belgium. Fietsen Goeman is a retailer of bicycles and related accessories and equipment, of a variety of different brands. The shop provides also bike services and repairs. It is a small shop as such as it employs only one employee. But on the other hand although it is a small shop Jan Goeman, the owner of Fietsen Goeman is a well known mechanic for several World Champions and Olympic Winners. Jan Goeman and his company Fietsen Goeman are actively engaged in sponsorship co-operation activities with mountain bikers. The parties involved in these sponsorship co-operation relationship activities, Fietsen Goeman and the mountain bike riders, have a common base that is, both are based on and evolved around the activity of biking. Whereas for example in the previous case of Keittiömaailma they and their field of business had no such connection with biking or even sports. (Goeman J. 2009)

### 5.2.1 Fietsen Goemans sponsorship co-operation relationship activities

Jan Goeman and his company Fietsen Goeman have been engaging in sponsorship co-operation activities since 2006, so for three years altogether. For Fietsen Goeman sponsorship co-operation activities became a part of the business and its operations with careful planning and consideration. It was a planned business activity. Nonetheless also with the case of Fietsen Goeman, or to be more exact with the case of the entrepreneur Jan Goeman himself, we are dealing with the emotional side of things as well that is, not only with the business rationale. Since although the sponsorship co-operation relationships as part of business activities was planned, the reason behind all this that is, why Jan Goeman was interested in establishing sponsorship co-operation in the first place was that bikes and racing and all that are for him a hobby and a great passion. Jan Goeman has in fact made his hobby also his work and profession. As Jan Goeman in Zoetemeer mentioned, although sponsorship co-operation is a planned and rational business activity for Fietsen Goeman it would still probably be even

more profitable and feasible for the shop if the money invested, and also other investments made, in these sponsorship co-operation activities were in fact invested in something else, let us say in simple advertising for example. (Goeman J. 2009)

As the sponsorship co-operation activities are a planned activity for Fietsen Goeman, it goes without saying that also the operation of these activities are more structured as is the case for all the other business activities as well. The way in which sponsorship co-operation relationships by Fietsen Goeman are handled is by having a team of mountain bikers that is, individual athletes or cyclists or mountain bike riders to be more exact, forming a team. This team consists of eleven mountain bike riders altogether. The situation currently is such that Fietsen Goeman engages in sponsorship co-operation relationships only with mountain bike riders. As for the organizing, planning and implementation of sponsorship co-operation activities by Fietsen Goeman it is done by Jan Goeman himself, an accountant and a secretary, thus we can state that there is a specified staff for these activities, which goes to show that it is in fact a planned business activity. As we are dealing with a planned business activity there is also a budget for these activities. According to Jan Goeman having a fore planned budget for the sponsorship co-operation relationships and activities is of utmost importance for the whole business. Because although for Jan Goeman this is a hobby and a passion for the business, the shop Fietsen Goeman, there needs to be economic feasibility. (Goeman J. 2009)

As for the eleven sponsorship co-operation relationships Fietsen Goeman currently has, according to Jan Goeman all of these relationships have come about on the company's initiative that is Jan Goeman has made a proposal to the sponsees in the name of Fietsen Goeman. These co-operation relationships are formed so that Fietsen Goeman is the main sponsor for these mountain bike riders. Whereas the main reason behind the decision to make these proposals of engaging in the sponsorship co-operation relationships in question and in creating the mountain bike team was and is to give the athletes in question better chances in succeeding and exercising

the sport field of mountain biking, which is so close to Jan Goemans heart. (Goeman J. 2009)

### 5.2.2 The Fietsen Goeman mountain bike team

The mountain bike team consists of eleven athletes that is, mountain bike riders. The selection criteria used to select these eleven riders include such essential features as showing having great potential and skills in mountain biking. The mountain bike riders must be actively racing and being willing to compete in a number of different races. The mountain bike riders must also be willing and agree to wear and use the clothes and equipment selected by the given sponsors. (Goeman J. 2009)

In this context it is good to explain how the mountain bike team and the sponsorship co-operation relationships in question function in practise. The mountain bike riders in question are in a sponsorship co-operation relationship with Jan Goeman and his company Fietsen Goeman. But as for the actual equipment, all are provided to Fietsen Goeman by the companies whose brands Jan Goeman has in his shop. These equipment and other material manufacturers are indirectly acting as sponsors and are in sponsorship co-operation with Jan Goeman and the Fietsen Goeman mountain bike team. All in all the mountain bike riders are provided with the total package for racing. That is they gain the necessary equipment, clothes and in addition any bike services and repairs that might be needed. In the selected races they also have free on spot bike maintenance and repair, free accommodation and food. All that the mountain bike races need to take care of in the actual races is the racing and competing itself that is everything else is taken care of for them. In return for all this the mountain bike riders are expected to participate in certain races in such a way that it can be seen that they are doing their very best in succeeding in these races. (Goeman J. 2009)

As it is for so far Jan Goeman states that he has had only good experience from sponsorship co-operation relationships and from leading the mountain bike team. Jan Goeman says that he is very satisfied with this mountain bike



team as it consists of a well mixed variety of athletes. The team ranges from promising beginners to already well trained and experienced highly promising mountain bikers. All of the sponsees that is, the mountain bike riders have been fulfilling their end of the sponsorship co-operation relationship and acted according to what they are expected to under the sponsorship co-operation relationship contracts. (Goeman J. 2009)

In relation to the upcoming year 2010, Jan Goemans mountain bike team will become a UCI (Union Cyclists International) team called Goeman Scott Cycling Team. For this transformation into a UCI team certain criteria need to be met. First of all it is a prerequisite to establish a company with all the necessary aspects and functions such as a CEO (Corporate Executive Officer) and accounting. In addition establishing a UCI team requires a doctor, massager, physiotherapist, two mechanics and two team managers. In fact Merja Naroma has been chosen to be the other one of the two team managers, making her the first Finnish UCI team manager. After all of the previously mentioned factors and criteria are met UCI will evaluate the quality of all the activities and the UCI team must pay quite a lot of money for this position as a UCI team. On the other hand in return this means among other things for the athletes in the UCI team that their international commercial value will be growing. (Goeman J. 2009)

### 5.2.3 The selection of the members of the Fietsen Goeman mountain bike team and drafting of the contracts

The actual sponsorship co-operation relationship proposals and contracts are made and drafted by Jan Goeman but he still states that it goes both ways. Also he and his company Fietsen Goeman are approached by sponsees with suggestions and inquiries of the possibilities of forming sponsorship co-operation relationships. But at the end of the day it is Jan Goeman who set out the terms of the contract. As for the actual selection of sponsorship co-operation partners, it is based on the fact whether there are any vacancies in the team for the mountain biker. In the selection the capabilities and personality of the prospective sponsee are of outmost importance. The selection criteria and the taking up of a sponsee are

affected by the current situation in the market and what is available on the market that is, which kind of mountain bikers there are available. Jan Goeman also mentions that it is actually quite difficult to find suitable sponsorship co-operation partners that is, there are not so many good and promising mountain bikers available that fit into the criteria he has and who fit in with the team and the other team members. (Goeman J. 2009)

For Jan Goeman and his shop Fietsen Goeman sponsorship co-operation is a planned and structured part of the business operations, and of course as such the sponsorship co-operation relationships like any other business relationships are based on, already before mentioned, written and signed contracts. These written sponsorship co-operation relationship contracts between Fietsen Goeman and each of the individual sponsees that is, mountain bike riders are made for one year periods at a time. These would seem to be more short-term than long-term contracts. We are dealing with short term contracts and for this reason there are no real clauses in the contracts in case of events such as illness or injuries. (Goeman J. 2009)

Jan Goeman states that he is the one that determines all the essential terms and conditions of the contract and if the sponsee is not willing to accept these terms of contract in question then there is no sponsorship co-operation relationship. Thus it can be stated that the main terms and conditions of the contract are non-negotiable for Fietsen Goeman and not complying with these terms is reason enough for Fietsen Goeman to reject a sponsorship co-operation relationship even if everything else would be in order. On the other hand Jan Goeman states that each of the individual contracts is drafted separately. This means of course that the differences in the situations and the mountain bike athletes in question are taken into account of. Nonetheless each of the sponsees are expected to commit to a one year contract and under that contract they are expected to participate in a number of selected races for them and in addition to show respect to the articles received from the sponsors and use them accordingly and in good and appropriate manner. (Goeman J. 2009)

#### 5.2.4 The efforts and inputs made for the operation of the Fietsen Goeman mountain bike team

For Jan Goeman the reason for the creation of the team in the first place was that it is close to his heart although at the same time taking into consideration the business rationale. In a way for Jan Goeman sponsorship co-operation relationships and activities are not only a minor addition and part to the actual business operations that is, the Fietsen Goeman shop, it is a much more important element than that for him and his business. In a way it is possible to divide the business operations of Jan Goeman and Fietsen Goeman into three operation categories that is, the retailing and shop itself, repair and mechanical services and the mountain bike team. For Jan Goeman to be able to follow his dream and do all this, the business itself must be kept feasible and profitable operated. Also the economic feasibility is of outmost importance in sponsorship co-operation relationships also for Jan Goeman and Fietsen Goeman. (Goeman J. 2009)

While taking into consideration the business side of things in sponsorship co-operation activities and the Fietsen Goeman mountain bike team, Jan Goeman hopes to help the mountain bike riders in exercising their field of sports. Jan Goeman says that he puts an active effort in each of the individual sponsorship co-operation relationships and to the operation of the whole team. This requires keeping of constant contact with the sponsees and seeking of ways to maximise, develop and improve the existing sponsorship co-operation relationships. This is the only way to get the best out of the sponsorship co-operation relationships with respect to all parties involved. So in addition to the resources and money invested in the name of the company Fietsen Goeman, Jan Goeman is personally investing a lot of time and energy in the Fietsen Goeman mountain bike team. (Goeman J. 2009)

Fietsen Goeman has a fore planned budget for sponsorship co-operation relationships and according to this budget they invest a certain amount of money to the mountain bike team and to its operation. In addition Jan Goeman himself invests his time and effort also as the mechanic for the

team and also as the leader and organiser of the mountain bike team. One of the additional reasons why Jan Goeman sees these sponsorship co-operation relationships as being worth the investments made is that he is hoping to be making an investment that will help more people to enjoy the sport art of mountain biking. Also from this it is easy to detect and conclude that although Jan Goeman is making a great deal of personal investments in the sponsorship co-operation relationship activities and the Fietsen Goeman mountain bike team it is not as such a sacrifice he is making since this form of sport art and things related to it are a hobby of his and close to his heart. In addition it should be kept in mind that all of the material things, such as bikes, equipment and clothes are coming from the actual manufacturers of the brands in question. (Goeman J. 2009)

#### 5.2.5 The sponsorship co-operation relationship between Fietsen Goeman and Carina Ketonen

The newest member of the Fietsen Goeman mountain bike team as of 2009 is Carina Ketonen. The sponsorship co-operation relationship between Carina Ketonen and Jan Goeman and the Fietsen Goeman mountain bike team was finalised and agreed on in the European Championships 2009 in MTB in Zoetemeer Netherlands, although it should be noted that the negotiations on this sponsorship co-operation relationship had started already before. The reason why Jan Goeman was interested in taking up Carina Ketonen into his mountain bike team was that she fulfils all the necessary criteria for entering the team. First of all there is currently a vacancy in the Fietsen Goeman mountain bike team in the category of a female elite mountain bike rider. In addition Jan Goeman thinks that Carina Ketonen is a really good mountain bike rider and sees in her great potential. In Jan Goemans opinion Carina Ketonen has the required capabilities, passion for the sports art and personality to succeed and gain high accomplishments in the mountain biking field of sports. Although Jan Goeman recognizes that as it is with all the other sponsees of the mountain bike team there are risks involved. Carina Ketonen might get ill or injured as well as any other mountain bike rider might. But risks like this are impossible

to totally escape as in this and other fields of sport they always exist. (Goeman J. 2009)

Jan Goeman expects Carina Ketonen to compete in a number of selected races. Mainly in for example the Benelux and some world cups. When Carina Ketonen will be participating in these races she will get all the necessary clothing, equipment, and services and assistance needed for the racing. In addition she will enjoy the free accommodation, food. In addition Jan Goeman mentions that it is of outmost importance that Carina Ketonen as well as the other members of the mountain bike team will keep the promises made in the actual contract, be courteous with regard to the other members of the team, have a clear plan well in advance and be open and honest in all situations. All in all as we are dealing with a team there is the prerequisite of trust and respect among the members of the team. (Goeman J. 2009)

When thinking about this sponsorship co-operation relationship between Carina Ketonen and Jan Goeman and Fietsen Goeman from the perspective of Carina Ketonen it is an excellent one. Mainly this is due to the fact that the main aim for Carina Ketonen currently is to be taking part in the London Olympics in 2012 and in order for this to become a reality she will need to compete and succeed in a number of ranking competitions and World Cups held around Europe. Being part of the Fietsen Goeman mountain bike team means that this will be much easier for Carina Ketonen to do than what it would be otherwise. Due to this sponsorship co-operation relationship with Jan Goeman and his company Fietsen Goeman Carina Ketonen will get all the necessary support and maintenance for participating in the races. In addition Jan Goeman will take care of the selection of the right races that Carina Ketonen should compete in, so she does not need to worry about that herself either. (Goeman J. 2009)

The amount of races Carina Ketonen will be able to participate in now should increase as the result of the co-operation relationship with Fietsen Goeman as all she will be required to do is to travel to the sites where the races are held and compete. Everything else will be taken care of on her

behalf. On the site and race in question there will be all the necessary equipment, team, services all ready in place for her and the other Fietsen Goeman team members taking part in the race in question. This means for Carina Ketonen that she can really focus all her energy in competing and succeeding in the races. The Fietsen Goeman team will be transforming into a UCI team in the upcoming year 2010 and for Carina Ketonen this will mean increased commercial value, at least on the international level. In addition Carina Ketonen will be able to create valuable contacts into the well known equipment manufacturers. (Goeman J. 2009)

### 5.3 Carina Ketonens thoughts on sponsorship co-operation relationships from the perspective of a sponsee

From Carina Ketonen we can get some insights on sponsorship co-operation relationships and the issues involved from the perspective of an athlete. First of all Carina states that athletes rarely have the time to handle the business side of things, sponsorship co-operation relationships included, themselves and that is why she for example has a manager, Merja Naroma. Managers usually have the necessary skills, resources and contacts to market the athlete in question. As for the sponsorship co-operation relationships themselves in Carina Ketonens opinion they more often start from the initiative of the athlete themselves. For a business to suggest co-operation both the athlete and the sports art in question must show high market potential and value. Carina Ketonen herself has at the moment being ten different sponsorship co-operation partners. (Ketonen C. 2009)

The benefits Carina Ketonen gets from sponsorship co-operation relationships mainly include equipment. In return to the businesses Carina provides visibility both inside and outside the sports field in question, for example in clothing. In addition has provided different kinds of public relations activities and services. Mostly these include participating in fairs. Carina Ketonen has also for example taken part in bike shows, equipment presentations and in the activating of people. Carina Ketonen also points out that it is sometimes difficult to fit in together these events and activities with training and competing schedules. In such situations the meaning of the

sponsorship co-operation relationship needs to be carefully evaluated. She states also that sometimes sponsorship co-operation relationship partners can put pressure on the athlete to succeed as success is sometimes the same thing as money. (Ketonen C. 2009)

When it comes down to the duration of the sponsorship co-operation relationships from the perspective of the athlete Carina Ketonen states that longer period contracts are more preferred, as then the athlete can better concentrate to their own profession. This is due to the fact that starting a new relationship consumes a lot of time and energy, where as maintaining an existing one does not to the same extent. As for what the actual sponsorship co-operation relationship withholds is dependent on the relationship in question, on the partners' goals and wishes and so on. (Ketonen C. 2009)

#### 5.4 Field research on issues related to sponsorship co-operation relationships and activities

In addition to carrying out in depth interviews with Antti Heiskanen, Jan Goeman and Carina Ketonen on their thoughts and experiences on sponsorship co-operation relationships and activities I carried out some field work and observations on sponsorship co-operation issues. This I did mainly by taking part in the GoExpo fair in Helsinki Fair centre 2009 and the European Championships in MTB (mountain biking) 2009 in Zoetermeer Netherlands. In the following sections these events and issues related to sponsorship co-operation relationships are dealt with.

##### 5.4.1 The GoExpo fair in Helsinki Fair centre 2009

A perfect place for creating new contacts in the field, any specific field basically is fairs of the field in question. I myself visited the GoExpo fair in Helsinki Fair centre, which was arranged on 13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> of March. In this fair there were six different fields, all having their own space of the Fair centre premises. The six different fields were the following cycling, fitness, golf, outing/camping, fishing and hunting. So as can be seen all somehow related

activities in a way. In our case the department of cycling as such was of most interest in the fair, but as stated all of these departments were related to one another so thus for example the manufacturers and resellers of athletic drinks and nutrition were relevant to all these departments.

Anyone can easily find loads of marketing books stating how trade fairs and fairs on the field in question are a great place for reaching all the important people under the same roof and create new contacts. As I visited the cycling fair I came to this same conclusion. Everyone important was there from the equipment producers to the magazines of the field, also there were for example representatives of the clubs and unions and athletes themselves. In my opinion this is a perfect place to work on ones sponsorship co-operation activities and make new contacts that will hopefully lead to new satisfying co-operation and other benefits. In addition it is of course important to have contacts in the magazines and press operating on the field to gain positive visibility in the media for example. Visibility in the media usually means the increasing awareness of the athlete brand and as businesses notice someone having visibility in the media this of course makes them a more appealing option for sponsorship co-operation relationship. Taken of course that the visibility and publicity are positive and not negative.

As it goes for us and this fair we met a lot of new important people on the field and as common sense should say this is not the place where actual contracts and agreements are made, but instead contact info are exchanged and so the door for further discussions and negotiations are opened. Also for example as in our case Carina Ketonen herself was approach with new offers for co-operation. It is safe to state that fairs are a great place to start when looking for creating new sponsorship co-operation relationship partners and forming contacts in general. This is also a good example how a sponsorship co-operation relationship with an athlete can be exploited. Carina was there to make her appearance, she actually stood there basically the whole day, on Authors stand. Author is a business that provides Carina Ketonen with her bike and other necessary equipment for cycling. So Author is a bicycle brand and manufacturer and is engaged in sponsorship co-operation relationship with Carina Ketonen.



#### 5.4.2 The European Championships in MTB (mountain biking) 2009 in Zoetermeer Netherlands

The European Championships in MTB (mountain biking), which I visited, in 2009 were held in Zoetermeer Netherlands. In here one could clearly see the effects of sponsorship co-operation, both between the businesses and the cyclists and the businesses and the event itself. The cyclists themselves covered with logos and images and the equipment themselves being a product of sponsorship co-operation. The event place carrying its sponsorship co-operation partners marks and logos in such places as for example in the side of the cycling ring fence and flags. Although it should be kept in mind that as we are dealing with the European Championships in MTB the competitors are expected and required to wear the national competition outfits when they are participating in the actual race. Nonetheless the surroundings, the whole environment was so filled with sponsorship marks such as a logo that for a single sponsor it is clearly a huge challenge to be the one that gets noticed in the jungle of all the other sponsors present. So clearly when thinking about the concept and possibilities provided by sponsorship co-operation relationships there is much more to be gained with more innovative solutions that go beyond the exploitation of the relationship as mere advertising space.

For a producer of bicycles and related equipment this kind of events as the European Championships in MTB are truly a great place to reach the target groups and markets. In other word the gained visibility is truly remarkable if they manage to actually attract the attention of these target groups and markets in this kind of a demanding environment. To the athletes themselves these kind of high prestige races as the European Championships are a great place to get their own brand seen and noticed, and of course show what they have to offer. All in all races like these are a great place to market their brand, arouse the interest of potential sponsorship co-operation partners. Nonetheless these competitions like the European Championships in MTB are also filled with skilled athletes, cyclists, so it is of utmost important to stand out from the competition, these other cyclists in this case. Being good or better compared to the others does

not hurt but most likely it is not enough to get really noticed. There needs to be some element to the branded athlete that will make it stand out and one of a kind in the eyes of the targeted audience.

## 6 CONCLUSIONS

The original research questions that this thesis aimed at answering are “How to create successful wide-ranging sponsorship co-operation between athletes and businesses, which will benefit all parties involved and how to create a strong brand of an athlete and how to make a successful amateur cyclist Carina Ketonen into a well known attractive brand with whom businesses want to establish co-operation with? “. To answer these questions a theoretical look at the development of sponsorship co-operation as part of business activities and sponsorship co-operation relationships as strategic alliances and how successful co-operation relationships are build also taking into account some of the international aspects. The world is turning out to be a global playground in a figure of speech and as such businesses cannot escape this reality and also as sports have a commercial side in them they as well are faced with the global operating plain. Although as shown throughout the thesis there are still environments where the global village effects are not experienced so strongly or directly. Actually as for the sports commercial side it is better to state that they in fact are a million dollar business themselves nowadays, crossing national borders continuously either directly or indirectly via media for example.

As the meaning of sports in the commercial and business environment is growing so is the amounts of investments and resources moving around sponsorship co-operation relationships. As of course it goes without saying that businesses and other commercial entities are also getting more interested in getting their own shares out of this cake. And as the meaning of sponsorship co-operation relationships is growing also the nature of the relationships is evolving continuously. Currently they are seen as strategic alliances that are used to accomplish competitive advantage. One major element in these alliances is sponsorship co-operation as a marketing

communication tool. As such the nature of these sponsorship co-operation relationships and alliances is dependent on the case in question. Some being more wide ranging and some more limited and narrow in extent. But all this depends on the aims of the relationship that is what is the actual goal to be reached.

As the theory goes to show it would seem that nowadays in order to actually create a successful sponsorship co-operation relationship that is equally beneficial to all the parties involved these relationships should be treated as forming strategic alliances with a trustworthy partner. There is no room for unmeaning full relationships where the mere exchange of money and a display of a logo or something take place, as these as such in today's world have no commercial worth or meaning, thus more drastic and innovative methods are required, ones that will separate from the competition and make one stand out. As it is shown by the theoretical framework the environment is increasingly competitive for everyone involved and furthermore the consumers and public are more demanding than ever before. To build up a successful and commercially feasible sponsorship co-operation relationship one must build up a close working relationship and alliance and not to be afraid of making innovative solutions, as these are required in order to actually survive in the competitive environment.

Also the empirical part of this thesis goes to show that rarely nowadays are businesses interested in forming sponsorship co-operation relationships where only the exchange of money and advertising space take place. At least the case is such with Keittiömaailma and Fietsen Goeman. Businesses would seem to be more interested in creating these long-lasting trustworthy sponsorship co-operation relationship alliances. And as it was cited in the theory long-term relationships are better than short-term in that that they make it possible to truly experience all the potential benefits produced. And as Carina Ketonen stated as well long-term arrangements are more preferable also for athletes. The sponsorship co-operation relationship is seen as a partnership where liaison between the parties involved takes place. There exists mutual respect, goals and aims. And to reach these

mutually beneficial aims and goals of the sponsorship co-operation relationship both parties put an effort and work together.

As for the more concrete side of building up these strategic sponsorship co-operation relationships and alliances, as mentioned in the theory of this thesis there are some good clear guidelines and steps one can apply and follow but yet the reality of these relationships is that each of these are their own individual cases and will require their own methods to be applied accordingly to reach the desired results. To further complicate the matter the desired results and what is expected from the relationship also vary according to the situation at hand. As the case on Keittiömaailma for example shows all the sponsorship co-operation activities can start by an accident, so in such instances it is safe to say that no one has really been following or moving according to certain plan. Yet of course this does not mean that one could not and should not create such a plan in the future.

Creating a clear plan with clear guidelines for a business is feasible, but it should be individually created according to the situation at hand and according to the requirements. As is shown by the case Fietsen Goeman although the actual motives behind the sponsorship co-operation activities would not be based on the needs of the business, still the actual sponsorship co-operation activity needs to make also sense with respect to the actual business activity and thus the need for a plan arises. In situations like Fietsen Goeman the action plan is probably even more important to have to ensure the economic feasibility of the sponsorship co-operation activities for the business. Equally important it should be for a sponsee to have clear plans and objectives and action plans for sponsorship co-operation relationships.

As both the theoretical and empirical part go to show although business is business always nowadays and sponsorship co-operation is part of this, yet personal relationships and networks will not hurt and can prove to be beneficial. Thus it goes of course without saying that personalities and social skills have a role to play as well when building up sponsorship co-operation relationships. As it comes down to the exploitation of already existing

personal relationships and networks one should not be afraid to use these. The truth is that we are living in a network society and thus it is to large extent all about personal relationships and networks and obviously nowadays no one, not even businesses can totally avoid and ignore this fact. One great place to get started with creating sponsorship co-operation relationships and important networks would seem to be fairs. Especially it would seem that in sports sponsorship co-operation activities personal relationships, networks, personalities and social skills play a large role. This is due to the feeling based nature of sports with a great deal of passions, sharing experiences and risks involved. In other words in sports commercial activities gain feelings and emotions.

All in all the answer to the research question “How to create successful wide-ranging sponsorship co-operation between athletes and businesses, which will benefit all parties involved?” is that there is no one answer that can be applied to all sponsorship co-operation relationships and situations. It will all come down to the individual sponsorship co-operation relationship in question and to the goals set for it. This of course does not mean that the theoretical frameworks should be ignored; it just means that some aspects of the theories and studies dealing with the creation of successful sponsorship co-operation relationships are applicable and helpful to some sponsorship co-operation relationships where as for some they may not be, as said sponsorship co-operation has multiple different roles and dimensions it can play. And as for the basic elements and aspects for successful sponsorship co-operation relationship building such as for example mutual aims and goals for the co-operation, collaboration, trust and understanding, treating of the relationship in a wider context as a strategic alliance should be applicable to every sponsorship co-operation relationship. Unless of course the actual agreed aim or goal on both of the parties behalf is only for example the mere exchange of money and advertising space, then after this transaction is concluded and the “goal” achieved then the sponsorship co-operation relationship has in fact been successful. On the other hand this is more of a mere transaction of selling and buying advertising space and as such we cannot really talk about sponsorship co-operation relationship nor yet alone a strategic alliance.

As for the answer to the research question “How to create a strong brand of an athlete and how to make a successful amateur cyclist Carina Ketonen into a well known attractive brand with whom businesses want to establish co-operation with? “, again there exists no one single answer to a question like this. Again the concrete answer will be dependent on the actual situation at hand. But one thing is clear a lot of hard work and effort are required when one wishes to successfully brand an athlete. It is not something that is created over night and without careful planning. As shown by the likes of such successful athlete brands as David Beckham and Maria Sharapova the benefits to be gained from successful branding are enormous. Nonetheless it should be kept in mind that one should stay realistic about one self's skills, recourses and also goals. As for example here with the case of successfully branding Carina Ketonen the goals and aims are quite different and not aiming at making her a megastar brand as Beckham or some other of the kind. The goal is more to make her an attractive brand and option for businesses to do co-operation with on her own field of sports. To do this in a way that she has all the necessary resources for competing and cycling and so that the ultimate goal of competing in the London Olympics in 2012 is achieved.

And as a benefit and in favour of Carina Ketonen are acting such forces as for example the interest of businesses in engaging in sponsorship co-operation relationships with national athlete heroes and also the interest of businesses in having a presence and association to the Olympics and the interest of exploiting the commercial benefits provided by the Olympics. Furthermore action sports are experiencing increased popularity and MTB is categorized as belonging into this field of action sports and in addition female athletes are seen as a prevailing trend, and what they represent desirable. So as for creating a successful and strong brand out of Carina Ketonen it can be stated she has a lot going on for her and on her side. In addition it must be mentioned that the co-operation relationship with Fietsen Goeman will most likely be of meaning and importance to Carina Ketonen and her goal in competing in the London Olympics in 2012.

## 6.1 Suggestions for future actions and studies

As it goes for my suggestions for future studies, when taking a look at previous studies for this thesis I soon noticed how little there is information and knowledge on how individual athletes have actually struggled with the issues related with sponsorship co-operation relationships and branding themselves. There was practically no data available from the athlete's perspective. There was all the theoretical frameworks and such on issues as for example what are the logical steps to be taken when creating sponsorship co-operation but no real life athlete examples on how they in fact have gone about it. In my opinion this is something worth future investigation, as many athletes and sport marketers are most likely struggling with these issues and would most likely appreciate and find useful info like this. As we are dealing with a field that is constantly developing and where innovative solutions are sought also these new developments and innovative solutions in sponsorship co-operation relationships should be monitored, researched and reported. Also in my opinion it would be useful to actually study and research sponsorship co-operation relationships that have gone wrong or where the actual relationship has not even been established at the end for one reason or another. These should provide valuable info on what to do better and what not to do, how to prevent failures.

As for the sports art itself, biking and mountain biking that is, it is clearly more popular and visible elsewhere than in Finland. In Finland mountain biking is not really that popular yet among the population. One reason behind this is probably that it is not that audience friendly and entertaining as the sport arts where the competitors are visible to the audience all the time or most of the time. The first thing that should be done is to increase the popularity of mountain biking as a whole in Finland as this should be beneficial to the individual cyclists and athletes themselves. Since, at least I think that, businesses are more interested in popular and visible sport arts when thinking about engaging in sponsorship co-operation relationships.

As it comes down to Carina Ketonen and her aim at participating in the London Olympics in 2012, as already stated she has a lot going for her. This

is especially true now when she has Jan Goeman and the team behind her. Anyway she is good and successful at what she does. For example the four Finnish Championships (road, XCO and XCM) won only during this year go to show this. In addition the 17<sup>th</sup> place in Zoetermeer in the European Championships in XCO goes to show this. At the moment being I would say that she should keep on concentrating on her cycling and developing her skills in order to stay on the top of her game. Furthermore she should concentrate and exploit all the possibilities and benefits provided by the sponsorship co-operation relationship with Fietsen Goeman and as to be competing in the Olympics requires points from world cups then Carina should obviously take part and compete in as many of these as possible.



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## APPENDIX 1 INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR KEITTIÖMAAILMA

### INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (for Keittiömaailma, Kouvola and Antti Heiskanen)

**1. The company Keittiömaailma itself;** What is your field of business? What do you do? What is your company form? How many employees? Where are you located?

**2. The current state of sponsorship co-operation relationships at Keittiömaailma;** How many co-operation partners? Who? What kind, only athletes or other kind as well? How has the co-operation relationships come about, on your own initiative or the targets? Why have you selected/started the co-operation relationship with your current partners, any specific features or accomplishments for example? Are you the main sponsor for your co-operation partners? When selecting/starting co-operation do you have any absolute, non-negotiable criteria, for example about the duration of the contract and the actual co-operation relationship, that are to be met by the other party before agreeing to sign the contract? What do you give and get in return from the relationships, for example money, marketing? What are the results gained from the co-operation relationships? How do you measure the results (if measured)? Are you satisfied or unsatisfied with the co-operation relationships, why? Any bad or extraordinary good experiences or success stories from sponsoring co-operation relationships you can recall?

**3. Sponsoring co-operation relationships as part of the businesses activities;** When and why did you first engage in sponsoring co-operation, how did it come part of your business activities? Why is sponsoring co-operation part of your company's activities, the reasons why you engage in sponsoring co-operation? Do you have special staff or department designated for handling that is, planning, organizing and implementing sponsoring co-operation? Do you have a specific fore planned budget for sponsoring co-operation activities?

**4. Looking for and choosing sponsorship co-operation partners;** Do you actively look for co-operation partners or do you wait for them to

approach you with co-operation offers? How do you select your partners? What are the main criteria involved in choosing a co-operation partner? Is it difficult to find suitable partners and how do you find them? Any definite reasons why you would reject a co-operation?

**5. The nature of the sponsoring co-operation relationship contracts;**

What kind of contracts do you have with your sponsoring co-operation partners, long-term or short-term or both, depending on the partner in question? Do you draft your contracts single minded or do you give room for manoeuvre for the partner to influence the drafting of the contract and the terms of the contract? Do you use the same contract form and terms for all or individual contract forms or terms for each partner? What are the most relevant and essential terms etc. included in the contract, for example duration, obligations of the parties involved in the contract etc.?

**6. The criteria and features required from the co-operation partner;**

Which are the important features of the target you are looking for with regards to sponsoring co-operation, for example success, active racing, personality, popularity, local visibility?

**7. Expectations for sponsoring co-operation relationships and functioning of the relationship;**

What do you expect from sponsoring co-operation? Whom do you hope to reach with the visibility provided by the co-operation, which interest groups? Do you actively work and put an effort to each co-operation relationship? Do you keep in contact with the target? Do you seek ways to maximise and improve the co-operation and its results? Sponsoring co-operation is risky, e.g. an athlete can get injured etc., how do you prepare for such events, do you have for example in the contract special clauses for such events and also do you prepare yourself otherwise as well?

**8. The investments and efforts made for sponsoring co-operation;**

Do you have a specific fore planned budget for co-operation investments? How much do you invest in sponsoring co-operation, for example a percentage and/or possibly the amount? In addition to money what other investments

are made, for example services, equipment, time? Why do you see sponsoring co-operation relationships worth the investments?

**9. How did you become interested in establishing co-operation with Carina and why and did you have any doubts?**

**10. Are you satisfied or not with the co-operation relationship with Carina, why?**

**11. Any recommendations you might have;** Do you have any suggestions for improvements in sponsoring co-operation processes and activities? Do you have any recommendations for targets, especially athletes, looking for co-operation partners or already in co-operation? What should they do and how could they improve their activities and so on?

**12. Any other remarks or comments you might have in mind and would like to share...**



## APPENDIX 2 INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR FIETSEN GOEMAN

### INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

**1. The company Fietsen Goeman itself (company introduction);** What is your field of business? What do you do? What is your company form? How many employees? Where are you located?

**2. The current state of sponsorship co-operation relationships at Fietsen Goeman;** How many co-operation partners? Who? What kind, only cyclists or other kind as well? How has the co-operation relationships come about, on your own initiative or the other parties? Why have you selected/started the co-operation relationship with your current partners, any specific features or accomplishments for example? Are you the main sponsor for your co-operation partners? When selecting/starting co-operation do you have any absolute, non-negotiable criteria, for example about being the main sponsor, the duration of the contract and the actual co-operation relationship, that are to be met by the other party before agreeing to sign the contract? What do you give and get in return from the relationships, for example money, equipment, services, marketing? What are the results gained from the co-operation relationships? How do you measure the results (if measured)? Are you satisfied or unsatisfied with the co-operation relationships, why? Any bad or extraordinary good experiences or success stories from sponsorship co-operation relationships you can recall?

**3. Sponsorship co-operation relationships as part of the businesses activities;** When and why did you first engage in sponsorship co-operation, how did it come part of your business activities? Why is sponsorship co-operation part of your company's activities, the reasons why you engage in sponsorship co-operation? Do you have special staff or department designated for handling that is, planning, organizing and implementing sponsorship co-operation? Do you have a specific fore planned budget for sponsorship co-operation activities?

**4. Looking for and choosing sponsorship co-operation partners;** Do you actively look for co-operation partners or do you wait for them to approach you with co-operation offers? How do you select your partners? What are the main criteria involved in choosing a co-operation partner? Is it difficult to find suitable partners and how do you find them? Any definite reasons why you would reject a co-operation?

**5. The nature of the sponsorship co-operation relationship contracts;** What kind of contracts do you have with your sponsorship co-operation partners, long-term or short-term or both, depending on the partner in question? Do you draft your contracts single minded or do you give room for manoeuvre for the partner to influence the drafting of the contract and the terms of the contract? Do you use the same contract form and terms for all or individual contract forms or terms for each partner? What are the most relevant and essential terms etc. included in the contract, for example duration, obligations of the parties involved in the contract etc.?

**6. The criteria and features required from the co-operation partner;** Which are the important features of the partner you are looking for with regards to sponsorship co-operation, for example success, accomplishments, active racing, personality, popularity?

**7. Expectations for sponsorship co-operation relationships and functioning of the relationship;** What do you expect from sponsorship co-operation? Whom do you hope to reach with the visibility provided by the co-operation, only the ones operating on the field in question or other interest groups as well? Do you actively work and put an effort to each co-operation relationship? Do you keep in constant contact with the other party? Do you seek ways to maximise, develop and improve the co-operation and its results? Sponsorship co-operation is risky, e.g. an athlete can get injured etc., how do you prepare for such events, do you have for example in the contract special clauses for such events and also do you prepare yourself otherwise as well?

**8. The investments and efforts made for sponsorship co-operation;** Do you have a specific fore planned budget for co-operation investments? How much do you invest in sponsorship co-operation, for example a percentage and/or possibly the amount? In addition to money what other investments are made, for example services, equipment, time? Why do you see sponsorship co-operation relationships worth the investments?

**9. Why are you interested in establishing co-operation with Carina Ketonen?** For example does she have some special features you value and look for in co-operation partners? Why did you get interested in co-operation with Carina? What are the special features and aspects in Carina that separate her from other cyclists? Are there any downsides or risks you can think of in establishing co-operation with Carina or only good ones? What do you expect from this specific co-operation relationship? What do you expect from Carina and what do you hope to gain? What kind of investments you are planning to make with regards to Carina?

**10. Any recommendations you might have;** Do you have any suggestions for improvements in sponsorship co-operation processes and activities? Do you have any recommendations for sponsorship co-operation partners, especially athletes, looking for co-operation partners or already in co-operation? What should they do and how could they improve their activities and so on?

**11. Any other remarks or comments you might have in mind and would like to share...**

## APPENDIX 3 INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR CARINA KETONEN

### INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (for Carina Ketonen)

**1. How did the relationship between Merja Naroma and you come about i.e. how did your relationship got started?** Need for a marketing manager in order to get the support needed to concentrate on competing? Who was the one to take the initiative you or Merja or someone else? Etc.

**2. How did the idea for engaging in sponsorship co-operation relationships come about in the first place?** Need for finance and equipment for example? Do these relationships usually evolve on your own or the other parties' initiative? Any specific reason why you would say no to a co-operation proposal? Etc.

**3. Reasons behind taking up a sponsorship co-operation relationship, why?** What do you gain? What are the benefits? Etc.

**4. What do you give in return to sponsorship co-operation partners?** Public relationship activities and other appearances? Carry a logo or something on your outfit? Etc.

**5. The current state and experiences from sponsorship co-operation activities so far?** How many co-operation partners, who? What have you had to do? What have you gained? In general your experiences and thoughts about the functioning of the co-operation relationships? What kind of sponsorship co-operation offers have you received? Have you taken them or rejected them? Why? Etc.

**6. Are there any down sides in sponsorship co-operation relationships?** Pressure on you to for example to succeed and also other pressure imposed by the co-operation partners? Other downsides? Etc.

**7. What is your ideal situation for a sponsorship co-operation relationship?** What it should include? The ideal duration for the co-

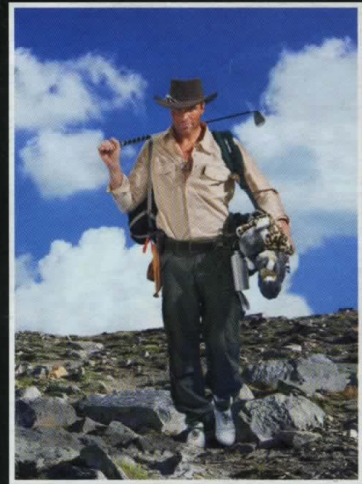
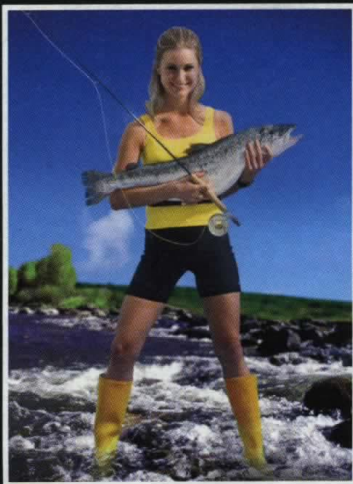
operation relationship and contract, long-term or short-term contracts? What are the things you are ready and willing to offer in return to your co-operation partners? Etc.

**8. Any other remarks or comments you might have and make?**

**MESSUOPAS 2009**

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## APPENDIX 5 PRESS RELEASE ON CARINA KETONEN

TIEDOTE

14.7.2009

Julkaisuvapaa heti

Carina Ketonen belgialaiseen mtb-talliin

Carina Ketosen XCO EM-kisaviikonloppu Hollannin Zoetermeerissä oli antoisa ja täynnä hyviä uutisia tuloksen ja myös sopimusten osalta. Naisten Eliten 17. sija ylitti tulostavoitteen ja UCI pisteiden myötä paremmalta lähtöpaikalta sijoitusten voi odottaa parantuvan reippaasti seuraavalla kaudella.

Työ tavoitteiden saavuttamiseksi helpottuu merkittävästi ensi vuoden alusta, kun Carina liittyy belgialaiseen mtb- tiimiin seuraavaksi kolmeksi vuodeksi. Carinan oli helppo hyväksyä tallin tarjouspitkäjänteiselle yhteistyölle, joka sisältää huippukaluston lisäksi tärkeinä tekijöinä erittäin arvostetun mekaanikon täyden tuen. Jan Goeman tunnetaan useiden olympiavoittajien ja maailmanmestareiden mekaanikkona. Sopimuksen ansiosta Carina saa myös kilpailemiseen liittyvän tuen ja huollon, kilpailujen valinnasta lähtien.

- Kilpaileminen Keski-Euroopan ranking-kisoissa helpottuu ja kilpailujen määrää voidaan lisätä, kun kalusto ja luotettava tiimi ovat valmiina paikalla ja reissuun lähtemiseen tarvitaan vain passi ja hammasharja, Carina iloitsee. – Olen tutustunut osaan tiimiläisistä jo keväällä Houffalizen maailmancupin kisassa ja odotan kovasti tulevaa yhteistyötä! Tiimiläiset kannustivat kovasti minua Zoetermeerissä, joten porukkaan on helppo hypätä mukaan.

Tiimiin kuuluu 15 kuskia, joista osa on keskittynyt marathoniin sekä ylipitkille matkoille, osalla pääalajina on XCO. Tiimiin kuuluu myös Belgian maajoukkueurheilijoita, joten kovatasoista sparrausta löytyy omasta tallista. Zoetermeerissä tallin kuskeista oli mukana U-23 sarjassa Belgian maajoukkueessa ajava Olivier Labie.

Lisätietoja antavat

Merja Naroma  
Team Carina Ketonen  
Kumppanisuhteet ja viestintä  
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tai

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*Carina Ketonen on 33-vuotias kouvolaalainen maastopyöräilijä, jonka päälaji on tällä hetkellä XCO. Uran parhaita saavutuksia ovat toistaiseksi XCM maailman cup kokonaissijoitus 6. vuodelta 2008 ja XCM EM-sijoitus 7. vuodelta 2007. Carinalla on yhteensä 20 SM-mitalia, joista 14 on kultaista. Viimeisin mitalisijoitus on sivulajista maantieajon kotimainen mestaruus 2009. Carina edustaa kotimaassa kouvolaista maastopyöräilyn erikoisseuraa Riverside Cycling Clubia*



URHEILU

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# Ketosen EM-tavoite täyttyi, kaupan päälle tallisopimus

RCC:n kuntoihme nousi cross countryn EM-kisoissa heikoimmalta lähtöpaikalta 17:nneksi. Kolme seuraavaa vuotta Ketonen saa kaivattua varuste- ja huoltotukea kovalta beljalaisista.

MARKKU LINTULA

**KOUVOLA.** Carina Ketosen kisareissu cross countryn EM-pyöräilyihin Hollantiin meni jokskeenkin nappiin. Naisten eliittisarjan suurimmalla lähtönumerolla 52 takarivistä matkaan ampaissut kouvolalainen ohitti määssä ja vaativassa kelissä jokskeenkin kaikki ne kilpasiskot, jotka olivat viedenohitettavissa. Sijaluvuksi tuli Euroopan valtioiden joukossa 17:s, joten parhaat kansainväliset sijoituksensa maastopyöräilyssä maratonin puolella

ottaneen Ketosen Lontoon olympiaprojekti otti oletettavasti ison askeleen eteenpäin – tätä tukee varmasti kisapaikalla syntyneet kolmen vuoden tallisopimus.

– Etukäteen ajattelin, että jos olen lähellä 20:n joukkoa, olen tyytyväinen. Vaikka parantamisen varaa toki jäikin, tavoite ylittyi ja olen todella tyytyväinen, Riverside Cycling Clubin Ketonen tunnelmoi maanantain palauttelun lomassa.

Täysillä alusta asti matkaan lähteneelle Ketoselle kolme ensimmäistä kierrosta olivat yhtä kilpakumppaneiden ohittelua. Päästyään taidokkailta sisäkaarrekuittauksilla kahdenkin tuntumaan alkoi letka jo tasaantua ja ohitukset tulivat koko ajan vaikeammiksi, eli jyvät olivat pitkälti erotuneet akanoista.

**EM-MAASTOSSA** taisteltiin Hollannin Zoetermeerissä, jonka radan Ketonen tiesi etukäteen itselleen hieman turhan

vauhdikkaaksi. Viime vuosina kokemansa huonon tuurin vastapainoksi Ketosella oli kuitenkin tällä kertaa myös onnea, sillä kisojen aikana oli vesikelijoka sopii Ketoselle.

– Se sopi minulle varmasti hyvin, sillä rata pehmeni ja hidastui merkittävästi. Se meni jopa niin huonoon kuntoon, että järjestäjät pudottivat kisasta yhden 5,3 kilometrin kierroksen pois. Sekin sopi minulle hyvin, sillä lopussa voimavaroja ei enää ollut kummempaan, parhaimmillaan 16:näntena ajanut kouvolalainen tunnusti.

Vaikka Ketonen tunsii olonsa lopussa melko tyhjäksi, maratonin puolelta haettu peruskunto osoitti parantuneensa entisestään. Maraton on ollut Ketosen päälaji, mutta juuri EM-kisoissa poljettu cross country on Lontoon olympialaisissa mukana, joten RCC:n ykköskuski panostaa nyt lujaa myös siihen.

**HOLLANNISTA KETOSELLE**

ei jäänyt tuliaisiksi: ainoastaan uran parasta XC-sijoista arvokisoissa, vaan mukana tuli myös toinen erittäin hyvä uutinen, josta on iloa pitkäksi aikaa. Ketonen teki vuodet 2010–2012 kattavan tallisopimuksen beljalaisen Jan Goemanin ammattilaistallin kanssa. Kultasormeksi tituleerataan Goemanin tallissa on 14 miestä ja Ketonen, johon beljalainen kiinnitti huomionsa jo kevään maastokisassa. Siinä Ketonen jätti taakseen nimenomaan Belgian ykkösnaisen.

– Puhetta sopimuksesta oli ollut jo hieman etukäteen, joten sekin antoi minulle kilpailussa lisäpotkua, kun halusin näyttää olevani tallipaikan arvoinen, Carina Ketonen sanoi. Maastokisoissa tallipaikka ei tuo ajajalle palkkaa ja lennot Ketonen kustantaa edelleen itse. Kaikki muu tulee kuitenkin tallin puolelta, mikä ei ole aivan vähäinen kädenojennus.

Tulevana kalustona on huipputumerkki Scott, eikä omaa

pyörää siis tarvitse jatkossa raahtaa lentokoneella mukaan.

– Se vapauttaa keskittymään kisoihin aivan eri tavalla, kun ei tarvitse huolehtia pyörästä, sen kasauksesta ja säädöistä. Saaan oman huippumeikaani, ja lisäksi Goeman katsoo pitkillä kokemuksella kilpailukalenterista sellaisia kisoja, joissa hän ajotyylini nähtyään arvelee olevan parhaat mahdollisuudet pistetiini kartuttamiseen, Ketonen hehkutti.

**JOS HALUUS** Ketonen näyttää osaamistaan Goemanille, belgalaisellakin taiti olla jo selvä käsitys siitä, että hän haluaa myllykoskelaisen tallinsa. Goeman oli käynyt ennen kisapäivää tiedustelemassa Ketosen huolto- ja varaosatilannetta. Havaittuaan sen omasta mielestään köykäiseksi, kovien maantiopyöräilijöiden mekaanikkona mainetta nauttanut Goeman oli ajanut rajan yli Belgaan hakemaan autollisen työkaluja ja tarvikkeita.

MERJA NAROMA



**Carina Ketonen** taisteli Hollannin kuraisella radalla EM-kisojen sijalle 17. Takarivin lähtöpaikka tiesi jo etukäteen sitä, että mitaleille on turha yrittää, sillä rata oli paikka paikoin kapea.

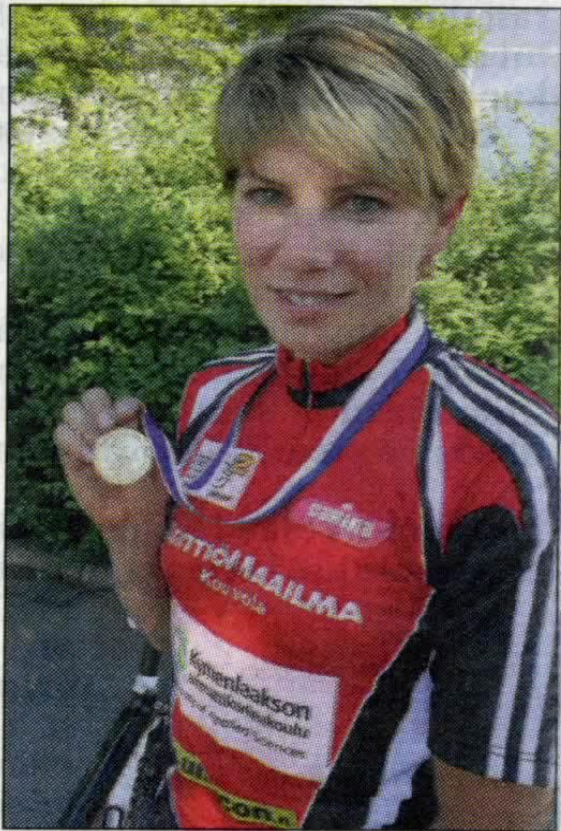
SOURCE: Kouvola Sanomat 14.7.2009, p 11

## Ketosen ylivoimaa myös maantiellä

**KUUSAMO.** Kotimaisia maastopyöräkisoja mielin määrin hallitseva kouvolaalainen **Carina Ketonen** ajaa lujaa myös sileällä. Ketonen voitti Kuusamon SM-kisoissa naisten 84 kilometrin maantiepyöräilyn lähes kahden ja puolen minuutin erolla toiseksi tulleeseen **Merja Kivirantaan**.

– Reitillä oli niin paljon nousua, että se suosi maastoajajia, Hollannin EM-kisoihin valmistautuva Ketonen tunnusti.

**Sivu 13**



**Carina Ketoselle** SM-kulta oli maantieltä ensimmäinen, mutta jo 20:s SM-mitali.

## SIVU SIVULTA

Mielipiteet.....	4	Urheilu.....	12-15
Uutiset.....	5-9	Sarjakuvat.....	16
Ulkomaat.....	10	Tv ja radio.....	17-18
Menot ja ihmiset.....	11		

# Ketonen oitis omille teilleen

- ♦ RCC:n polkija ratkaisi maantiepyöräilyn SM-kilpailun jo alkuvaiheessa. Vauhdinpito yksinkin palveli heinäkuun toisen viikonlopun EM-maastokisan valmistautumista. Paavo Paajanen ajoi mestariksi ja Mikko Paajanen hopealle.

MARKKU LINTULA

**KOUVOLA.** RCC:n monipuolisen Carina Ketosen kenraaliharjoitus Hollannin EM-maastoihin oli erittäin lupaava, vaikka pyörä ja alusta olivat aivan eri maata. Ketonen voitti lauantaina Kuusamossa uransa ensimmäisen maantiepyöräilyn SM-kullan kukistamalla IK-32:n Merja Kivirannan 2.23 minuutilla ja muut sitäkin isommalla marginaalilla.

- Hollannin EM-maastoa on kuvattu kovapohjaiseksi, eikä kovinkaan tekniseksi. Tästä syystä valitsin maantiepyöräilyn SM-kisan enkä vaikealla radalla ajettua Tahkon maastokisaa. Hollannissa pitää löytyä vauhtia, ja siihen Kuusamon kilpailu palveli oikein hyvin, Ketonen laskeskelee.

Naisten elite-luokka ajoi Kuusamon jylhissä maisemissa 84 kilometriä, joista Ketonen ajoi yksikseen noin 70 kilometriä. Paljon nousuja sisältänyt reitti ja mahdollisesti myös helteinen keli suosivat joukossa maastopyöräilijää, ja Ketosen aikaiseen irtiottoon muilla ei ollut paukkuja vastata.

- Iskin toisessa mäessä ja se riitti. Myöhemmin ajoin vii-

si minuuttia aiemmin reitille lähteneet P18-sarjalaiset kiinni ja menin ohi, mikä aiheutti jonkin verran kuhinaa poikien huoltojoukoissa, Ketonen nauhahtaa.

**KUUSAMON SM-KULTA** oli Carina Ketoselle uran 20:s SM-mitali ja siis ensimmäinen maantiekulta. Rovaniemellä Ketonen on lisäksi polkenut kertaalleen hopealle, joten pohjoisen mäkiiset maastot sopivat selvästi hänelle.

Seuraavassa kilpailussa ei taistella SM-mitaleista, vaan kauden päätavoitteena jo pitkään ollut Hollannin cross-country-kilpailu on luunkova EM-koitos.

- Minulla on pisteitä koossa niin vähän, että joudun lähдösä takariviin. Se tarkoittaa sitä, että urku auki on painettava alusta loppuun, Ketonen huokaa.

Riverside Cycling Clubin kuntoihmeellä on kuitenkin erinomaiset mahdollisuudet survoa 35-36 kilometrin lenkki kaasu pohjassa.

- Valmentajan vaihdoksen jälkeen kunnan ajoitus on parantunut. Keväällä kulki hieman nihkeämmin, mutta kauden päätavoitteen lähetessä tunnen olevani paremmassa vedossa kuin vuosi sitten, vaikka kunto ei silloinkaan ollut huono. Olen aina ollut hieman sellainen diesel, mutta Tom Antbackan opeilla ajoon on saatu myös jo jonkinlaista iskuja, Ketonen maistelee.

Ketosella on Hollannissa alla uudenkarhea tshekkiläinen Author, joka on edeltäjänsä vielä noin 700 grammaa kevyempi. Aivan sokkona RCC:n menijä ei sentään uudella pyörällä kilpaile, koska alla on jo yhdet kisat ja melkoinen määrä harjoituslenkkejä.

- Mitään ihmeitä tässä ei

enää ennen Hollantia tehdä. Ensinnäkin harjoitellaan normaalisti ja sitten herkistellään. Pääasia, ettei hyvää kuntoa onnistu ainakaan mitenkään pilaamaan, Ketonen painottaa.

**KUUSAMOSSA** miesten elite-luokan voitti Turun Toni Liias, joka löi kirikkamppailussa muun muassa TWD-Länkenin Kjell Carlströmin.

Ketosen mitali ei ollut ainoa Kouvolaan tullut, sillä Lahden TWD-Länkeniä edustavat Paajanen veljekset nappasivat kultaa ja hopeaa.

Mestariksi ajoi 23-vuotiaissa Ranskassa jo ammattilaisena hyvän aikaa ajanut Paavo Paajanen, joka voitti ylivoimaisesti seuratoverinsa Sami Tiaisen noin neljän minuutin erolla.

Lauantaina polkeneessa 18-vuotiaisten sarjassa Mikko Paajanen tuli maaliin samalla ajalla kuin kolme muuta kilpailijaa, mutta kiritistelussa Akilleksen Joonas Henttala merkittiin nopeimmaksi. Korson Samuel Halme oli kolmas.

**Carina Ketonen** piiskasi Kuusamossa noin 7-kiloisen Authorinsa sellaiseen vauhtiin, että kilpakumppanit jäivät suosiolla jo toisessa isossa nousussa. Lopulta eroa Merja Kivirantaan kertyi lähes kaksi ja puoli minuuttia, mikä on 84 kilometrin matkalla paljon.



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SOURCE: Kouvola Sanomat 29.6.2009, p 13

APPENDIX 7 EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS MTB 2009, ZOETERMEER,  
NETHERLANDS

*Merja*

INVITATION & INFORMATION  
EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP  
MTB & TRIAL 2009 ZOETERMEER  
THE NETHERLANDS

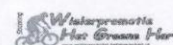


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PROMOTIE  
ZOETERMEER









## APPENDIX 8 CARINA KETONEN INTRODUCTION

# TERVETULOA MUKAAN KYMJOELTA THAMESILLE ELI PROJEKTINA CARINA LONTOOSEEN 2012!



### Henkilökuva Carina Ketonen

Anjalankoskelainen tai nykyisin kouvolaalainen, 32-vuotias amatööripyöräilijä Carina Ketonen innostui pyöräilystä veljensä, BMW:n enduron moottoripyöräammattilaisena ajavan Simo Kirssin kautta ollessaan mukana Simon huoltojoukoissa EM-maastopyöräilykilpailuissa Italiassa 1996.

Vuoden harjoittelun jälkeen vuonna 2001 Carina Ketonen osallistui ensimmäisiin kilpailuihinsa Kouvolan Mielakassa.

Ketosella on useita Suomenmestaruusmitaleja maasto- ja maantiepyöräilystä.

Parina viimeisenä kesänä Carina on testannut vauhtiaan ranskalaisessa maantiepyöräilyn amatööritallissa; Team Lot et Garonnessa.

Kilpaileminen maantiepyöräilyssä on toiminut hänelle hyvänä harjoitteluna tavoitteiden ollessa Olympialajina olevan maastopyöräily Maratonin menestystä haettaessa.

### Menestys 2008

Nyt kun takana on vajaa kymmenvuotinen ura, on parhain menestys tullut maastopyöräilyn Maratonin Maailman Cupista, jonka kokonaiskilpailussa Ketonen sijoittui 2008 kuudennelle (6.) sijalle.

Paras arvokilpailusijoitus saavutettiin Maratonin Euroopan-mestaruuskilpailuissa Saksan Wendelissä 2007, jossa Ketonen oli lopulta seitsemäs (7.).

### Tavoitteena Lontoon Olympialaiset 2012

Työn ja harjoittelun ohella lasten- ja kodinhoito on osa arkea. Ketosen perheen arki on järjestetty pitkälti urheilun ehdoilla, ja aviomies Kaitsulla on suuri ja merkittävä rooli.

Tulevaisuudessa tavoitteenani on parantaa aiempia Olympialajin- eli Cross Countryn EM- ja MM-kilpailujen sekä Maailman Cupin sijoituksia sekä tietenkin menestyä SM-kilpailuissa.

Päätavoitteikseen Ketonen on asettanut ammattilaisuuden maastopyöräilyssä ja kilpailemisen vuoden 2012 Olympialaisissa Lontoossa.

### Kumppanit mukaan matkalle Olympialaisiin!

Carinan tiimiä on vahvistettu vuoden 2009 alusta uudella valmentajalla sekä managerilla, jotka mahdollistavat Carinan täysipainoisen keskittymisen urheiluun.

Tärkeintä tässä vaiheessa neljän vuoden hienoa ja haastavaa Olympiaprojektia on mahdollistaa Carinan talvikauden leiritys pyöräillen ja alkukauden kilpailut – kotimaan talviset olosuhteet antavat liikaa etumatkaa kilpakumppaneille!

Kilpailukalenterin tulee sisältää kaikki Olympialajina olevan Cross Countryn Maailmancupin osakilpailut vähintäänkin Euroopassa, joissa mitataan työn tulokset oikeassa seurassa ja jaetaan viralliset edustuspaikat.

### Toivomme teidän lähtevän mukaan Carinan matkalle Olympialaisiin jo nyt!

Tukenne vastineeksi Carina tiimeineen tarjoaa teille mahdollisuuden osallistua kansainvälisen huippupyöräilyn pyörteisiin mm. järjestämällä yrityksellenne

- osallistumiselämyksiä virkistyspäiväohjelmissa, näytöksissä, koulutuksissa, messuilla, yritystilaisuuksissa, juhlissa
- mahdollisuuden lähteä mukaan kilpailumatkalle huoltajaksi
- Edustavan aikuisen naisurheilijan yrityksenne tai tuotteenne kuvaksi markkinointikäyttöön projektin ajaksi
- Käyntikorttina Carina näkymään kansainvälisesti tiimin väline- ja viestintämateriaalissa, kuten autot, vaatetus, muu välinemateriaali
- Muu yhdessä sovittava yhteistyö

**Tervetuloa mukaan Kymijoelta Thamesille Carinan kyydissä!**

## Kilpailukalenteri kevät 2009

### Helmikuu

Leiritys 2-3vk

22 Cyprus Sunshine Cup - Tochni-Kalavassos (Cyp) 1 XCP

27 - 1 Cyprus Sunshine Cup - Afxentia 2009, Macheras Mountains (Cyp) S1 XCO

### Maaliskuu

8 Cyprus Sunshine Cup-Amathous-Agios Tychon (Cyp) 2 XCO

### Huhtikuu

11 - 12 UCI World Cup XCO 1, Pietermaritzburg (RSa) CDM XCO

19 Bundesliga XCO, Münsingen (Ger) XCO

25 - 26 UCI World Cup XCO 2, Offenburg (Ger) CDM XCO

### Toukokuu

2 - 3 UCI World Cup XCO 3, Houffalize (Bel) CDM XCO

17 Bundesliga XCO - Bike the Rock, Heubach (Ger) XCO

23 - 24 UCI World Cup XCO 4, Madrid (Spa) CDM XCO

### Carina Ketonen

[carina.ketonen@elisane.fi](mailto:carina.ketonen@elisane.fi)

GSM +358 44 2645 485

[www.carinaketonen.net](http://www.carinaketonen.net)

[www.riversidecyclingclub.com](http://www.riversidecyclingclub.com)

Ota yhteyttä!

### Merja Naroma

[merja.naroma@rosefactory.fi](mailto:merja.naroma@rosefactory.fi)

GSM +358 40 734 1010



# CARINA KETONEN

**Nimi** - Carina Ketonen  
**Lempinimi** - Carssu  
**Syntymäaika** - 01.08.1976  
**Paikkakunta** - Kouvola  
**Seura** - Riverside Cycling Club ry, Kouvola  
**Perhe** - aviomies Kaj ja kaksostytöt Ciia ja Kira



## KUINKA KAIKKI ALKOI?

Carina Ketonen innostui pyöräilystä veljensä, BMW:n enduron moottoripyöräammattilaisena ajavan Simo Kirssin kautta ollessaan mukana Simon huoltojoukoissa EM-maastopyöräilykilpailuissa Italiassa 1996.

Ensimmäisiin kilpailuihinsa Carina osallistui 2001 Kouvossa. Ketosella on useita Suomenmestaruusmitaleja maasto- ja maantiepyöräilystä. Carina on testannut vauhtiaan myös ranskalaisessa maantiepyöräilyn amatööritallissa; Team Lot et Garonnessa.

## menestystä

Parhain menestys tullut toistaiseksi maastopyöräilyn Marathonin Maailman Cupista, jonka kokonaiskilpailussa Ketonen sijoittui 2008 kuudennelle (6.) sijalle.

Paras arvokilpailusijoitus saavutettiin Maratonin Euroopan-mestaruuskilpailuissa Saksassa 2007, jossa Ketonen oli seitsemäs (7.).

## Kymijoelta Thamesille - Carina Lontooseen 2012!

### Tavoitteena Lontoon OLYMPIALAISET 2012

Työn ja harjoittelun ohella lasten- ja kodinhoito on osa arkea. Ketosen perheen arki on järjestetty pitkälti urheilun ehdoilla ja aviomies Kaitsulla on suuri ja merkittävä rooli. Pää tavoitteikseen Ketonen on asettanut ammattilaisuuden maastopyöräilyssä ja kilpailemisen vuoden 2012 Olympialaisissa Lontoossa.

**Carina Ketonen**  
carina.ketonen@elisanet.fi  
GSM +358 44 2645 485  
www.carinaketonen.net  
www.riversidecyclingclub.com



# HYVÄ URHEILUN YSTÄVÄ!

**Carina Ketonen** on kouvolaalainen maastopyöräilijä, yksi maailman huipuista äärimmäistä kestävyyttä ja tekniikkaa vaativassa lajissa.

Carinan viimeisimmät meriitit ovat viime vuodelta; Maastopyöräilyn Marathonin World Cup kokonaissijoitus 6.! Paras yksittäisen arvokilpailun sijoitus viime vuodelta on Marathonin EM-kilpailujen 7. sija!

Suuren urheilijan tulee tähdätä korkealle!  
Huippu-urheilija on tärkeä esikuva meille kaikille.  
Oman paikkakunnan huippu nostaa me-henkeä ja kaikkien itsetuntoa, tunnemme ylpeyttä urheilijan lisäksi asuinpaikasta ja työpaikastamme! Yhdessä koettu ilo kertaantuu!

Huippu-urheilijan ura vaatii urheilijan panostuksen lisäksi taloudellisia resursseja.  
Carinan menestyksen tueksi on käynnistetty neljän vuoden projekti Kymijoelta Thamesille – Carina Lontooseen 2012!  
– eli Olympiaprojekti.

**Carinan valmistautumista Olympialaisiin voi tukea esimerkiksi Carina-nallen avulla.**

Pieni Carina – nalle Carinan logolla sekä yrityksen omalla logolla yrityksen käyttöön seuraavasti:  
50 kpl x 25 euroa = 1250 euroa, 0% alv.  
25 kpl x 25 euroa = 625 euroa, 0% alv.

Iso Carina – nalle Carinan logolla sekä yrityksen omalla logolla yrityksen käyttöön seuraavasti:  
30 kpl x 35 euroa = 1050 euroa, 0% alv.  
15 kpl x 35 euroa = 525 euroa, 0% alv.

Toimitusaika tilauksesta 2-4 viikkoa,  
Laskutus toimituksen yhteydessä, maksuaika 7 päivää netto.

Muita kumppanuusmahdollisuuksia!

- Tyhy- ja virkistyspäivä maastopyöräilyohjelmalla Carinan opastuksella!
- Koe huippu-urheilun jännitys Carinan mukana kilpailun
- huoltojoukoissa!

Ota yhteyttä: Team Carina Ketonen, Merja Naroma,  
[merja.naroma@rosefactory.fi](mailto:merja.naroma@rosefactory.fi), GSM 040 734 1010



Riverside Cycling Club ry  
Kouvolassa ylpeänä esittää:



**MAASTOPYÖRÄILYN  
MARATHON  
SM 2009**  
12.-13.9. KOUVOLA

## Maastopyöräily on

- voimakkaasti kasvava liikunta- ja ulkoilumuoto kaikille vauvasta vaariin!
- luontoystävällinen!
- maailmalla supersuosittua – tulossa vihdoin Suomeen!
- Kisoissa mukana omat maailman parhaimmiston kuuluvat supertähtemme Carina Ketonen ja ampumahiihtäjä Marko Mänttari!

Rakennamme kilpailun oheistapahtumineen eurooppalaisen mallin mukaisesti puistotapahtumaksi, odotettavissa hieno viikonloppu yritykselle näkyä luontoystävällisen, positiivisen urheilun hengessä Kouvolassa vaikkapa kutsuen mukaan omia kumppaneita!

## Tehdään yhdessä Kouvolan 1-vuotissynttäreille kaikkien aikojen SM-kilpailut yhdessä!

**Yrityskumppani näkyy:**

- Tapahtumailmoittelussa Kouvolan Sanomissa
- Suurissa kumppanitauluissa kisapaikalla + seremoniat ja mediatausta
- Verkkoviestinnässä ja sähköisessä mediassa
- Yrityksen omaan viestintäkäyttöön kisalogo ja muuta materiaalia
- SM-kumppanituote muistoksi osallistumisesta
- Mahdollisuus hankkia Carina-nalle erikoishintaan Carinan logolla sekä yrityksen omalla logolla – positiivinen yrityslahja moneen käyttöön!

Yhteistyön hinta vain 200 euroa netto, 0 % alv.

Laskutus sopimuksen allekirjoittamisen jälkeen, maksuehto 14 vrk netto

---

**Tulemme mukaan tekemään kaikkien aikojen parasta SM-pyöräilytapahtumaa!**

Yrityksen nimi

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Laskutusosoite

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Yhteyshenkilö yrityksessä ja puhelinnumero/email

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Allekirjoitukset  
RCC edustaja

Yrityksen edustaja

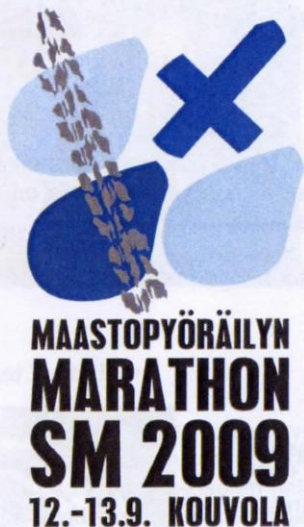
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Nimen selvennys ja puhelinnumero

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Nimen selvennys

LÄMPIMÄSTI TERVETULOAA KOUVOLAAN!



#### Aikataulu

##### Lauantai 12.9.2009

Klo 11.00 Kisa-areena avataan  
Opastusta, haastatteluja, neuvontaa, arvontoja, tuotemyyntiä!  
Klo 12.00 Startit Mini Marathon alle 16-vuotiaille ja  
Keittiömaailma kunto Marathon ihan kaikille  
Klo 13.00 Australialainen takaa-ajo – haastekisa  
Klo 14.00 Aselajien välinen maastopyöräilyn joukkuekisa  
Tasatuntien välissä paljon ohjelmaa  
Kisa-areena palvelee klo 16.00 asti  
Hiukopalaa Sudet ry:n puffetista  
Päivän juontaa YleX:n toimittaja Mikko "Peltsi" Peltola!

##### Sunnuntai 13.9.2009

Klo 11.00 Kisa-areena avataan  
Klo 12.00-16.00 Sigma Marathon Cup no 5, harrasteluokat ja  
Marathon SM-kilpailu  
Seuraa kisa arenalla tai maastossa  
Kisa-areena palvelee klo 16.00 asti

Tiedotustilaisuus on sunnuntaina heti palkintojenjaon jälkeen.



4.9.2009

Hyvät Maastopyöräilyn Marathonin SM-kilpailujen osanottajat

Vuoden 2009 alussa syntynyt uusi Kouvolan kaupunki on ollut jo urheilun MM- ja PM -kilpailujen ja monien muiden valtakunnallisten tapahtumien kotipaikkana. Nyt saamme yhteistyössä Riverside Cycling Clubin kanssa tarjota mielenkiintoisen tapahtuman.

Maastopyöräilyn Marathonin SM-kilpailujen tukikohtana on Kasarminmäki. Paikka on mainio esimerkki varuskunta-alueen uusista käyttötarkoituksista. Kilpailut vahvistavat osaltaan Kouvolan mainetta pyöräilykaupunkina, jossa on hyvä pyörätieverkosto ja vaihteleva maasto.

Uusi Kouvola on Suomen kymmenenneksi suurin kaupunki. Meillä on hyvät palvelut, turvallinen asuinympäristö, elävä maaseutu, upea luonto, yrittäjyyteen kannustava ilmapiiri ja erinomaiset harrastusmahdollisuudet. Kaupungin strategiassa nämä vahvuudet tiivistetään kolmeen ydinviestiin: Kodikas Kouvola, Ketterä kumppani ja Kiehtova kaupunki.

Toivotan kilpailijoille mitä parhainta menestystä

Lauri Lamminmäki  
kaupunginjohtaja

KOUVOLA





RIVERSIDE CYCLING CLUB



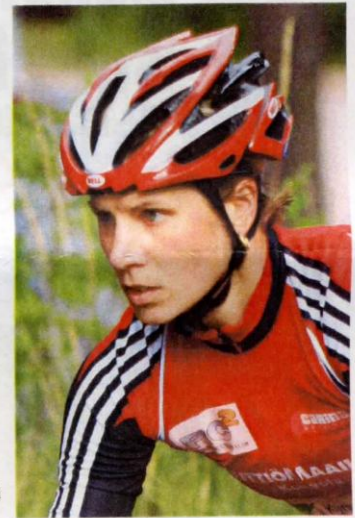
Sinnikkyys, raikkaus ja nuorekkuus ovat pyöräilyseura Riverside Cycling Clubin tuntomerkit. RCC on uudenlainen seura, joka haluaa keskittyä kasvavaan lajiin. Seuran tavoitteena on saada jäseniksi maamme huippumaastopyöräilijöitä ja luoda heille parhaat mahdolliset edellytykset tavoitteidensa saavuttamiseksi. Tämänhetkinen keulakuva on Carina Ketonen, joka tähtää Lontoon olympialaisiin 2012.

### Carina Ketonen

"Innostuin maastopyöräilystä veljeni, BMW:n enduron moottoripyöräammattilaisena ajavan Simo Kirssin mukana ollessani Simon huoltojoukoissa EM-maastopyöräilykilpailuissa Italiassa 1996. Liikuntaharrastukselle oli selvä tilaus, sillä perheeni kaksostytöt olivat pieniä ja lastenhoidon vastapainoksi sain omaa aikaa sekä kunnan kohennusta pitkällä maastopyörälenkeillä Kymijoen maisemissa."

Carinan parhain menestys on tähän asti tullut maastopyöräilyn Marathonin Maailman cupissa, jonka kokonaiskilpailussa hän sijoittui kuudennelle (6.) sijalle vuonna 2008. Parhaan arvokilpailusijoituksen hän saavutti ollessaan seitsemäs Marathonin Euroopan mestaruuskilpailussa Saksassa 2007. Carinalla on yhteensä 21 SM-mitalia, joista 15 on kultaista.

Tältä vuodelta Carinan kaulassa on jo kaksi mestaruutta, toinen maantiepyöräilystä ja toinen olympialaji Cross Country. EM-kilpailuista Hollannista tuomisina oli hieno 17.sija sekä kolmivuotinen tallisopimus belgialaisen maastopyörätallin kanssa. SM-kisojen jälkeen Carinan kausi jatkuu marathonin EM-kilpailuissa Virossa.



Lisätietoja Carinasta löydät helposti myös [www.carinaketonen.net](http://www.carinaketonen.net) – kotisivuilta!



### Tommi Nieminen

Tommi on kilpaillut niin maastossa kuin maantiepuolella, viimeiset vuodet kuitenkin enemmän maastossa.

Tommin tärkeimpiä saavutuksia ovat Marathon Cup -06 miesten kokonaiskilpailun 3. sija, Tahko MTB 120 km 2.sija vuonna 2008, kolmas sija 2009 sekä uusimpana meriittinä M-30 sarjan Cross Countryn mestaruus tältä vuodelta.



### Jarno Sarmalahti

22-vuotias kuusankoskelainen Jarno opiskelee pyöräilyn ohella lentokonemekaanikoksi. Jarnon pyöräilylajit ovat Cross country (XCO) ja marathon (XCM).

Lahjakkaan nuoren ajajan tämän kauden parhaita tuloksia on mm. Nissan Finlandia marathonin 70 km kilpasarjan 12. sija muutaman viikon takaa.

Hienoja uutisia tuli juuri ennen omia kisoja eli Jarno sai kutsun pukea päälleen Suomen maajoukkuepaidan viikon kulutta marathonin EM-kilpailuissa Virossa.

### Jani Turtiainen

Vantaalta Kouvolan maastopyöräilyä edustamaan siirtynyt Jani aloitti kilpailemisen vuonna 2005 ja vuonna 2008 Jani oli cross countryn SM-kisojen neljäs.

Tältä vuodelta parhaita sijoituksia on mm. Tahkon vaativan mtb-kilpailun 5.sija.



### Maastopyöräilyn lajiesittely

Maastopyöräily kasvattaa koko ajan suosiotaan, sillä se on paikasta riippumaton laji. 1970-luvulla syntynyt maastopyöräily on eriytynyt eri alalajeihin etenkin 2000-luvulla tekniikan kehityksen myötä.

Maastopyörällä on kilpailtu jo 1980-luvulla, mutta ensimmäiset viralliset MM- ja SM -kilpailut pidettiin vuonna 1990. Maastopyörät ovat kehittyneet alkuaajoista merkittävästi. Uusien pyörien ajoasennoltaan pystymät runkogeometriat, kevyemmät materiaalit, komponentit ja jousitusratkaisut ovat muuttaneet pyörällä ajamista helpommaksi ja turvallisemmaksi.

Cross Country- eli maastopyöräily (XCO) – maastorata, jota ajetaan useampi kierros. Rata testaa ajajan aerobista kuntoa sekä ajotekniikkaa.

Maastopyöräilymarathon (XCM) – Usein reitti, jonka pituus on 60–120 km. Rata on usein teknisesti helpompi kuin XCO rata, mutta vastaavasti pitkä matka vaatii ajajalta hyvää keskittymistä, sinnikkyyttä ja erinomaista fyysistä kestävyyttä.

Maantiepyöräily – kilpailut ajetaan reittikilpailuna tai etappikisana, jossa matkan pituus ja reittiprofiili vaihtelevat eri päivinä.

Cyclo-cross – Maantiepyörän kaltaisella pyörällä ajettava kilpailu. Radalla on esteitä, joiden kohdalla joutuu jalkautumaan ja yleensä kantamaan polkupyörää. Ajetaan yleensä puisto- ja nurmialueilla. Cyclo-crossissa korostuvat ajajan pyöränhallintataidot.

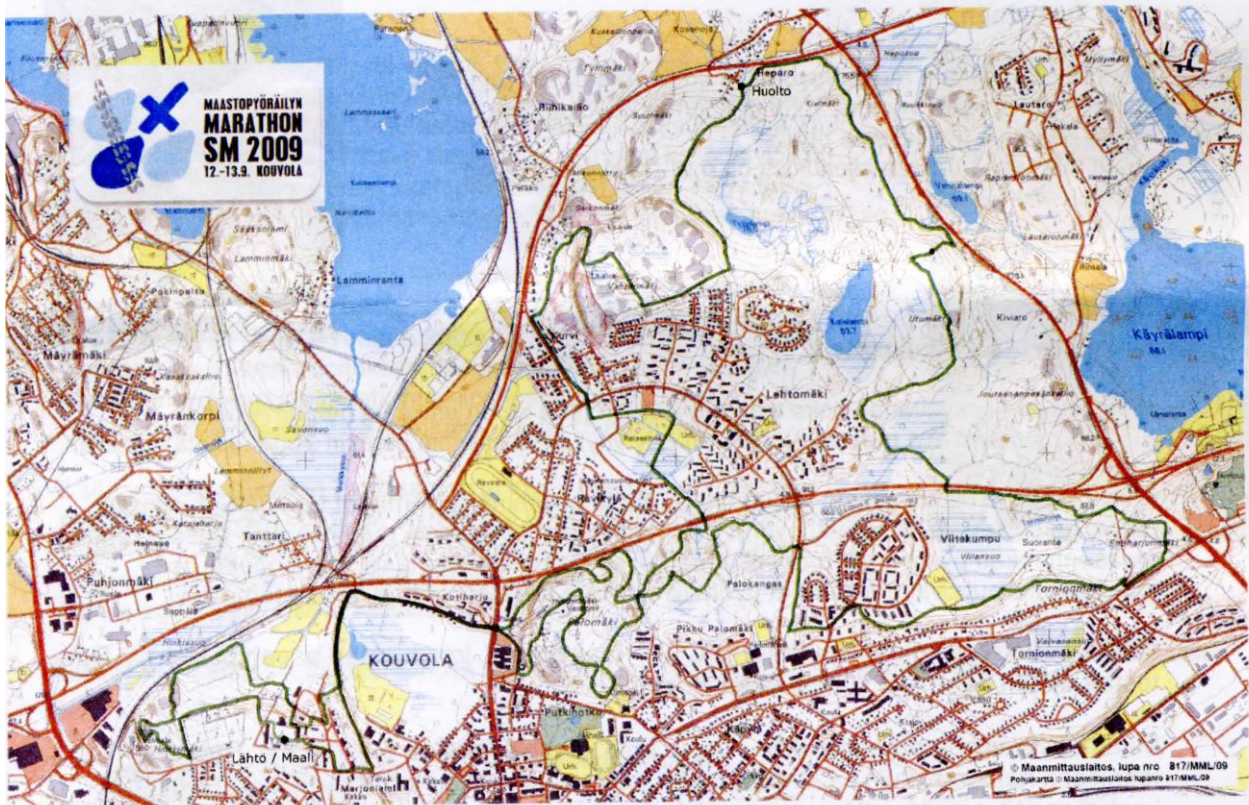


Kiitämme kumppaneitamme yhteistyöstä ja toivotamme kaikille osallistujille onnistunutta ja elämysrikasta SM-maastopyöräilytapahtumaa!

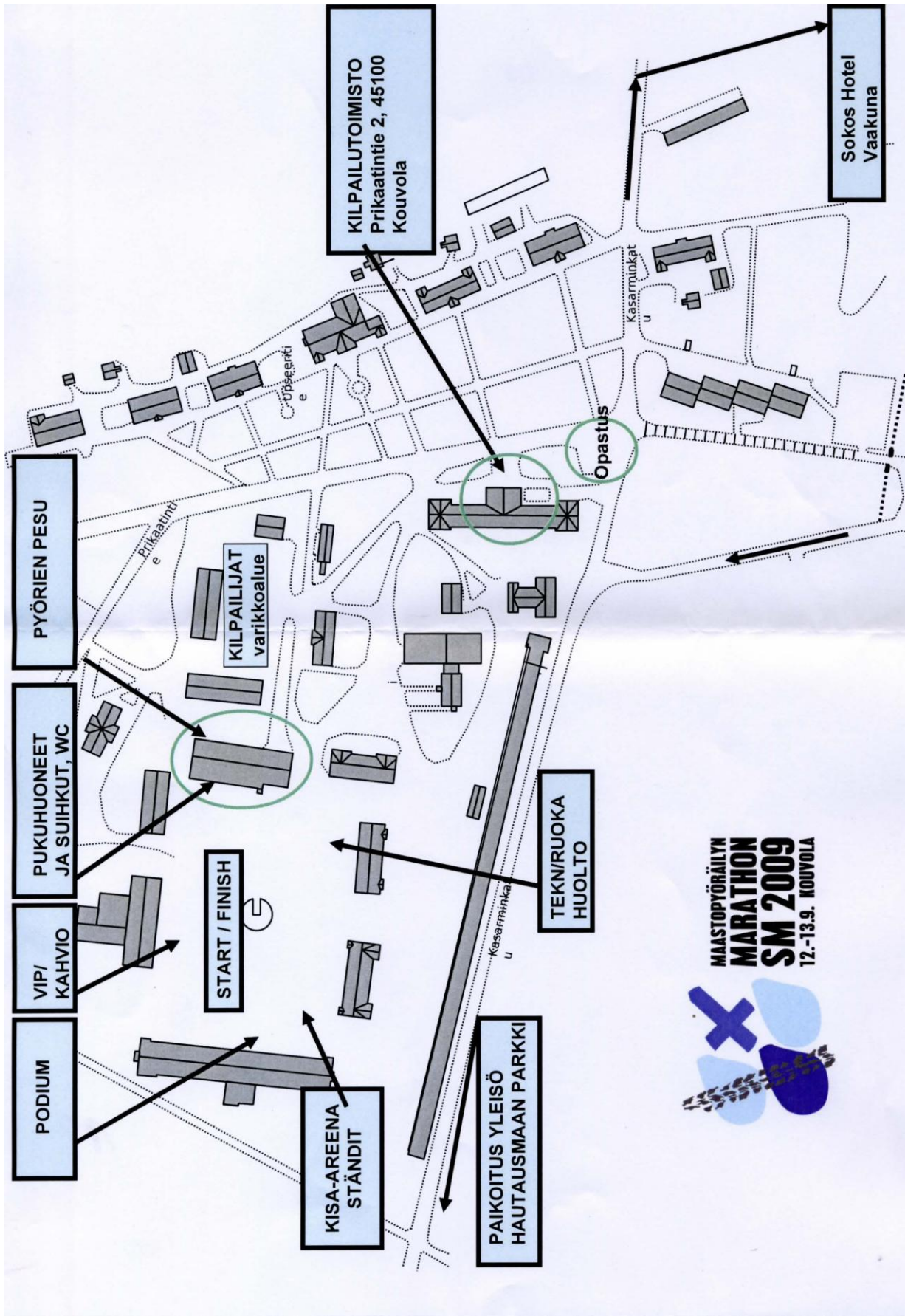
Tervetuloa Kouvolaan!

**RC<sup>2</sup>**  
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Kilpailureitti kartassa vihreällä värillä  
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Käsiohjelman kuvat: Anette Naroma /Anskun.net





[www.riversidecyclingclub.com](http://www.riversidecyclingclub.com)

## Kitpailuluokat

Lauantaina klo 12-16

Mini Marathon

Keittiömaailma Kunto Marathon  
Kaikille avoin - Osallistu!

Sunnuntaina klo 12-16

Harrasteluokat

Sigma Marathon Cup

SM-Marathon

Kisa-aukiolla paljon vauhdikasta  
oheishjelmaa klo 11-16: näytöksiä,  
haastekisoja, esittelyjä, opastusta...

1909-2009

KOUVOLA  
KYMENLAAKSON KAUPUNKI



Osallistu!

Vapaa pääsy!

**MAASTOPYÖRÄILYN  
MARATHON  
SM 2009  
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Kasarminmäki**