



Companies of Schwarz Group and Handball-Bundesliga Launch Partnership

- **Lidl has secured naming rights for the DHB Cup “Final4” tournament and will also be the Fresh Food and Water Partner.**
- **The cooperation will benefit from the expertise that PreZero delivers in the context of the circular economy, conserving resources and waste management.**
- **Schwarz Digits facilitates the digital sovereignty and cybersecurity for the league.**

Neckarsulm, October 23rd, 2024 – The companies of Schwarz Group will be entering into a long-term strategic partnership with the Handball-Bundesliga (HBL) as of 2025. The cooperation covers a range of areas, such as healthy and conscious nutrition, digital sovereignty, cybersecurity, cloud services as well as the circular economy and sustainability. The aim of the partnership is to work together and set new standards for digital infrastructure and waste management in the league, focusing on innovation, digitalization and sustainability.

“The companies of Schwarz Group form a unique ecosystem and generate a diverse range of synergies for the sport. As such, we are pursuing a holistic approach – moving toward long-term sporting partnerships rather than just pure sponsoring. We want to deliver convincing content for the HBL, the strongest handball league in the world, and provide real impetus,” explains Marc Hohenberg, Sports Marketing Vice President at Schwarz Group.

“We are very proud of the fact that Lidl, PreZero and Schwarz Digits are clearly declaring their support for our Handball Bundesliga, and thus significantly strengthening and expanding their handball sponsoring activities. This is an unequivocal indication that professional handball is becoming ever more important, not just for one of the leading international retail groups, but also in sports marketing in general. It is certainly the case that the values and the sustainable orientation of the companies of Schwarz Group and the Handball-Bundesliga are a very good match, as we also represent quality, performance, growth, and customer focus, both inside Germany and beyond. These are excellent prerequisites for a sustainable, successful partnership. I am particularly looking forward to the ‘Lidl Final4’ in the DHB Cup. We will fascinate millions of viewers in more than 60 countries during the highlight of the season. Alongside title sponsor Lidl, we are aiming to use the wide appeal of this event to offer a unique experience to the fans,” emphasizes HBL CEO Frank Bohmann.

Lidl: Perfect Partner for Fresh Food

As “Official Fresh Food Partner”, Lidl provides the HBL and all HBL events with fruit and vegetables. The fresh food discounter is also the “Official Water Partner” of the handball professionals. This underlines how Lidl is making a commitment to balanced nutrition and exercise. Together with the

HBL, the food retailer is aiming to inspire handball fans to adopt an active, conscious lifestyle. Moreover, Lidl private label “Saskia” mineral water will also be provided by the Schwarz Produktion beverage network in closed-loop bottles.

The partnership means that the DHB Cup “Final4” tournament will be named the “Lidl Final4” in future. This represents another significant landmark in the cooperation, strengthening the presence of Lidl as a handball partner. The cooperation also enables Lidl to extend its long-term commitment to handball. Lidl has been a partner of the DHB men’s teams ever since 2016. The retail division has been involved in men’s World and European Championships since 2017, and in women’s World and European Championships since 2022.

PreZero: Champion of the Circular Economy

The environmental division PreZero will become the official Circular Economy partner of the HBL, supporting the transformation of professional handball in Germany toward more waste prevention and conservation of resources, as well as more efficient management of recyclable materials. Handball venues are an ideal location for tackling sustainable visions, realizing these collectively and increasing public awareness of waste separation and recycling. As such, the “Lidl Final4” season highlight is set to become a characteristic flagship when executing sustainable, large-scale sporting events. The partnership will also focus on agreeing collective master conditions to continuously reduce the level of non-recyclable waste.

Schwarz Digits: Stable Block for Digital Sovereignty

Schwarz Digits with XM Cyber will be the “Official Cyber Security Partner” of the HBL, while Schwarz Digits with STACKIT will be the “Official Cloud Service Partner” of the HBL. The division will contribute to the digital sovereignty of the league with digital products and solutions that meet the exacting data protection standards in Germany. Services from STACKIT and XM Cyber will be deployed at HBL events as well as at the league offices. As IT and Digital Partner of the HBL, Schwarz Digits will also be developing collective digitalization projects in the areas of communication, data security, and cybersecurity in future.

About Schwarz Group

Schwarz Group is an international leader in the retail industry with about 13,900 stores and 575,000 employees in 32 countries. In the 2023 fiscal year, the companies of Schwarz Group generated a total sales volume of 167.2 billion euros. Their unique ecosystem lets them cover the full value cycle: from production and retail to recycling and digitalization. They create solutions that make the lives of billions of people safer, healthier and more sustainable, both right now and in the future – they act ahead.

Lidl and Kaufland form the pillars of the food retail market and are an integral part of their 7.2 billion customers’ daily lives. Many of the own-brand products and much of the sustainable packaging on their shelves come directly from Schwarz Produktion. Through its recycling management solutions, the environmental service provider PreZero promotes a functional circular economy and is investing in a clean future. The IT and digital division, Schwarz Digits, provides compelling digital products and services that meet the high

German data protection standards, thus ensuring the maximum degree of digital sovereignty. As a partner service provider, Schwarz Corporate Solutions assists the companies of Schwarz Group with all matters related to administration, HR, operational activities and everything in between.

Additional Information

For further information on the Schwarz Group, see www.gruppe.schwarz/en/press.

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About Handball-Bundesliga GmbH (HBL):

Handball-Bundesliga GmbH is responsible for the organization, licensing and marketing of the 1st and 2nd Bundesliga. It organizes the fixtures and handles the organizational side of player transfers. In addition to the 612 matches of the season, the HBL is responsible for the Handball Super Cup and all Cup fixtures as well as the organization of the DHB Cup Final4 tournament, which will be known as the Lidl Final4 as of next year. The HBL is responsible for the centralized marketing of the naming rights and media rights in Germany and abroad. The media partnership concluded with the Dyn Media streaming platform will give the DAIKIN Handball-Bundesliga an unprecedented media presence.

Additional Information

For further information see www.daikin-hbl.de.

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