

Press Release

Lothar Matthäus Supports Soccer Camp for Children with Hearing Loss

Phonak and Simon Ollert Recruit Soccer Legend and Sports Brand PUMA as Supporters for their Successful Event



Stäfa, Switzerland, May 29 2018 – Between Lothar Matthäus sending video greetings, PUMA sponsoring the team kit, and the invitation to participate being sent worldwide, the third annual soccer camp for children with hearing loss is primed for success—right in time for World Cup summer. The sporting event is organized by Phonak, the leading provider of hearing solutions, and Simon Ollert, who, despite his profound hearing loss, has already played Bundesliga-level soccer. The aim of the event is to give encouragement to children with hearing loss and to make a positive impact

on their lives through soccer. Up to 35 boys and girls with hearing loss from Germany and other countries were invited to join the training camp with Simon Ollert in Ettal, Upper Bavaria, from May 30 through June 3.

“The soccer camp for children with hearing loss is now one of our regular fixtures,” says Martin Grieder, Group Vice President Hearing Instruments Marketing at Sonova. “We are absolutely delighted to continue our successful project in what is now its third year, with the support of Simon Ollert. “It’s fantastic that PUMA and Lothar Matthäus are also supporting us. Together, we can make an active contribution to improving the quality of life of children with hearing loss.”

Lothar Matthäus, a former international soccer player, national player and trainer, has lent his support in the form of a motivational video message: “I am truly amazed by the success of your camp; it is really impressive that you are now in your third year already, with participants from various countries. This indeed was a great joint initiative from Simon and Phonak. I am very glad that Puma has now joined your cause as an equipment supplier and provides valuable support to you. I truly wish I had been there myself and hope I will manage to sometime in the future,” says the high-profile player.

The international invitation to join the camp is being organized in partnership with pediatric audiologists and Phonak’s national companies. The camp is aimed at soccer-crazed girls and boys with hearing loss ages ten to 14. An innovation this year was the option to apply by video. A short clip, recorded using a smartphone, gave kids an opportunity to introduce themselves and demonstrate some of their soccer skills. In this way, Phonak and Simon Ollert, along with his team of trainers, can get to know the children in advance, choose the optimal place for them according to their skills, and encourage their development in a more effective and targeted way.

Previous participants in the soccer camp are enthusiastic about its quality. "It was fantastic to see how the children developed while they were there," commented the mother of one of last year's participants. "The support the children are given is very personal, individual and loving."

The training sessions during the five-day event are professionally delivered by Simon Ollert and his team of trainers. They teach soccer skills and nurture a feel for the ball. Fair play and team spirit are very much in evidence. Through enjoyment of the game, the kids learn how to build their self-confidence, measure themselves against their peers, and grow in terms of both their sporting ability and their personality. The entire training program takes place at various soccer pitches in Ettal, against the picturesque backdrop of the Ammergau Alps.

In terms of equipment for the team, partner PUMA leaves no wish unfulfilled. The international sports brand is providing soccer balls, jerseys and kit bags. The kids are kitted out in cooperation with the regionally based sales partner STS Sport & Travel Service from Murnau. The professional outfits create the perfect conditions for training and support a sense of "team spirit" on the pitch. "We're delighted to be supporting Phonak in its quest to enrich the lives of children with hearing loss through the unique power of sport and play. Phonak shares our values of breaking down barriers through sport and creating a sense of community," says Matthias Bäumer, Managing Director of PUMA Germany, Austria and Switzerland (DACH).

Even during the events that take place alongside the camp, such as outdoor activities and other surprises, the emphasis is on team spirit. There are plenty of opportunities to talk to Simon Ollert about his life as a soccer pro and his experience wearing hearing aids.

Advice and tips on living with hearing aids at school and during sports and leisure activities will be provided by experts from Phonak, who will be on hand throughout the event. Phonak has been developing hearing solutions for over 70 years and has decades of experience in providing pediatric hearing aids. Phonak offers state-of-the-art hearing and radio solutions, with sizes, colors, shapes, and technology that are perfectly tuned to the everyday needs of kids and young people.

For Simon Ollert, the soccer camp is a project that is very close to his heart. "My own story shows what you can really achieve, despite hearing loss. It's amazing that Phonak is helping me to put this unique sporting event together. It allows us to inspire kids and young people and to encourage them to pursue their own goals in life." The short, multi-award-winning movie (in German) about Simon Ollert's path to professional soccer can be found here: **[Lights, Camera, Action!](#)**

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About Phonak

In 2017, Phonak, a member of the Sonova Group, proudly celebrated its 70th anniversary.

Headquartered near Zurich, Switzerland, Phonak, a member of the Sonova Group was created in 1947 out of a passion for taking on the most difficult hearing challenges. Seventy years later, this passion remains. As the industry's leading provider, we offer the broadest portfolio of life-changing hearing solutions. From pediatric to profound hearing loss, we remain committed to creating hearing solutions that change people's lives to thrive socially and emotionally. We believe in creating a world where 'Life is on' for everyone.

At Phonak, we believe that hearing well is essential to living life to the fullest. For 70 years, we've remained true to our mission, creating life-changing hearing solutions to help people thrive socially and emotionally.

Life is on.

About PUMA

PUMA is one of the world's leading Sports Brands, designing, developing, selling and marketing footwear, apparel and accessories. For over 65 years, PUMA has established a history of making fast product designs for the fastest athletes on the planet. PUMA offers performance and sport-inspired lifestyle products in categories such as Football, Running and Training, Golf, and Motorsports. It engages in exciting collaborations with renowned design brands to bring innovative and fast designs to the sports world. The PUMA Group owns the brands PUMA, Cobra Golf and Dobotex. The company distributes its products in more than 120 countries, employs more than 11,000 people worldwide, and is headquartered in Herzogenaurach/Germany. For more information, please visit <http://www.puma.com>