

INTERNET

Land Rover touts equestrian champions in video series

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By JOE MCCARTHY

Land Rover United Kingdom is honoring equestrian show jumping champion Ben Maher and dressage champion Laura Tomlinson with videos that illustrate how both brand ambassadors train for and achieve success.

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Luxury Daily

The "Equestrian: Pursuit of Excellence" videos are found on the brand's Facebook page and explore what it takes to be a champion in equestrian sports. Land Rover is likely to engage consumers more by adding digital content to go along with the selection of the new brand ambassadors.

"Actually, I think they made a very good choice in sponsor equestrian sports," said Al Ries, founder and chairman of [Ries & Ries](#), a Roswell, GA-based marketing strategy consultancy.

"Not only do they appeal to high-end consumers, but the people who participate in the sport are very good prospects for the vehicles that Land Rover produces," he said.

"At equestrian events you see a lot of SUVs because participants usually carry a lot of equipment to the events."

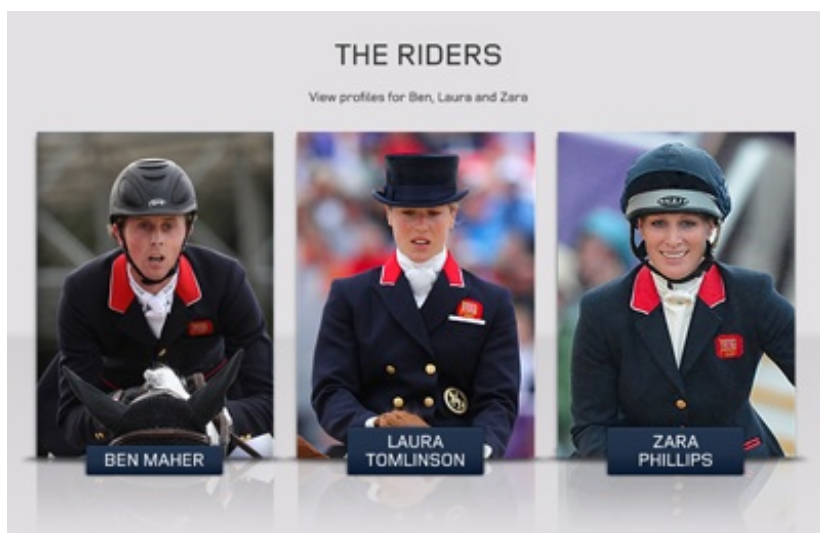
Mr. Ries is not affiliated with Land Rover, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Land Rover UK did not respond by press deadline.

Working toward perfection

Land Rover has supported equestrian sports for more than 30 years, both through individual riders and event sponsorships.

The brand's endorsement of Mr. Maher and Ms. Tomlinson joins its ongoing support of eventing champion Zara Phillips.

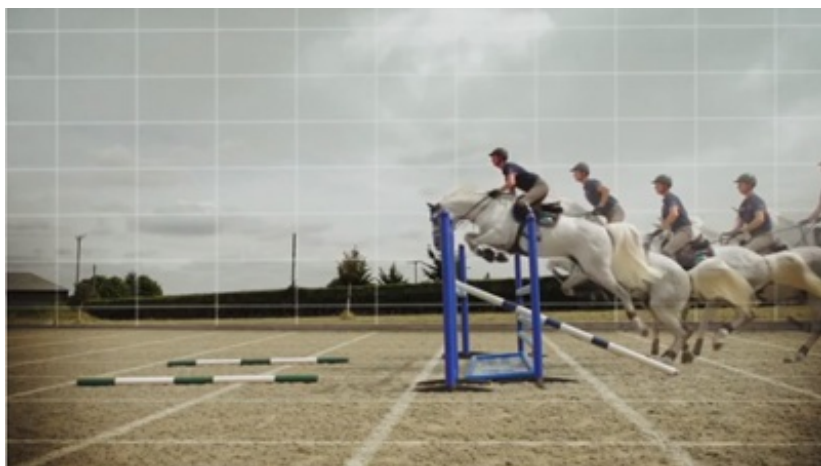


Land Rover's equestrian brand ambassadors

The videos give fans a glimpse into each rider's training regimens, aspirations and insights from trainers and support teams.

Mr. Maher is ranked No. 1 in the Fédération Equestre Internationale world rankings for show jumping, recently winning a gold and silver medal at the 2013 FEI championships.

In his "Excelling under Pressure" video, Mr. Maher describes the rigorous demands of show jumping. To prepare the horse for the competition stress, his training team places a heavy burden on its capacity to feed, work-out and rest the horse.



Video still

He explains how the most challenging aspect of show jumping is approaching the jump.

The video then depicts various jumping arrangements.

Embedded Video: [//www.youtube.com/embed/-1a8AdZvKvs](https://www.youtube.com/embed/-1a8AdZvKvs)

"Excelling Under Pressure" video

Furthermore, Ms. Tomlinson is a long-time member of the British dressage team and has won several team and individual medals. Her current aim is to train younger horses to championship caliber.

The "Pursuit of Perfection" video describes the years of mundane dedication needed to compete in dressage. We learn that Ms. Tomlinson grew up around horses.



Video still

Every detail and step needs to be accounted for when competing at the highest level of dressage and Ms. Tomlinson goes to sleep envisioning the textures and dimensions of courses she intends to compete in.

Embedded Video: [//www.youtube.com/embed/-EFVMBUDYG8](https://www.youtube.com/embed/-EFVMBUDYG8)

Land Rover's "Pursuit of Perfection" video

Ms. Phillips will also be featured in a video that airs Sept. 24.

The brand encourages fans to follow the riders on competition day.

Not all athleticism

Luxury automotive brands generally limit their endorsements to athletes in affluent sports.

For instance, Mercedes-Benz USA is extending its partnership with the Professional Golfers' Association of America through 2017 to elevate its position as the official vehicle and patron of events that are rife with current and potential customers.

The German automaker will provide players, consumers and attendants with activities and promotions while educating interested fans about model features and technologies. Enacting a multi-year partnership gives the brand many chances to reach out to consumers ([see story](#)).

Also, continuing a tradition spawned in 2007, Toyota Corp.'s Lexus joined the United

States Golf Association as the exclusive automotive partner of the 113th U.S. Open Championship June 10-16 at the Merion Golf Course in Ardmore, PA.

Lexus expanded its presence beyond the golf course into the surrounding area for the first time since the partnership began. With this move, Lexus provided both U.S. Open attendees and golf fans unable to attend an engaging, golf-centered experience ([see story](#)).

"Land Rover is a very small brand, selling only 43,664 vehicles in the United States last year," Mr. Ries said.

"That made it the 30th largest-selling automobile brand," he said. "So Land Rover can't really afford sponsor mass-market sports like football and baseball."

"Also, an expensive brand needs to focus on sports that appeal to affluent customers. But even golf is way too expensive for Land Rover."

Final take

Joe McCarthy, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

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