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Inside Pitch: Natalie Gulbis Is Ready For Year Two

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Gulbis Succeeding Off The Course Also

With a powerful game coupled with undeniable sex appeal, the LPGA Tour's Natalie Gulbis has caught the eye of corporate marketers. THE DAILY recently caught up with Gulbis' agent, Imani Sports President Chris Murray, to discuss the Natalie Gulbis brand. The 20-year-old entered the LPGA with high expectations after an all-American season at the Univ. of AZ, and Murray said the first step was to sign deals for equipment, apparel, footwear and ball. Enter TaylorMade, adidas and Maxfli, which joined the ranks for Gulbis' rookie year in the equipment, apparel and footwear, and ball categories, respectively. Gulbis is also a physical fitness and nutrition enthusiast, so she also pitches products for MET-Rx and GenSoy. Murray said Gulbis' appearances in fitness publications such as Oxygen and Muscle & Fitness Hers "has given MET-Rx an opportunity to parallel that with their

products." Later this month, MET-Rx is doing a photo shoot with Gulbis for promotional use. Below is a list of Gulbis' sponsors.

SPONSOR	CATEGORY
adidas	Apparel & Footwear
GenSoy	Soy Products
Maxfli	Ball
MET-Rx	Sports Nutrition
TaylorMade	Equipment

COVER GIRL: In addition to the fitness publications, Gulbis has been profiled in People magazine and has made an [appearance](#) on NBC's "Today." A new media element this year is a comprehensive Web site, www.nataliegulbis.com, which was launched Tuesday. Murray said the objective of the Web site is to give sponsors a presence on the Web and to offer fans a chance to interact with Gulbis. Murray: "One reason we did the project is because we received information from a third party that gave us three or four months worth of research that indicated that Natalie was the second most searched for LPGA player, behind Annika Sorenstam." Murray pointed out that in the first day of the site's launch, about 2,500 visitors requested information and offered feedback. For as much as the site offers, it's still a work in progress, as Murray said it is "about 60% complete."

FOUNDATION FOR SUCCESS: Another project in the works is a foundation. In high school, Gulbis competed on the boys' golf team due to the lack of a girl's squad, and Murray said, "The plan is for the foundation to support young females in the game and high schools that can't afford either women's programs or have very low funding for that program to be very solid." Murray added there are plans for a Gulbis calendar and poster deal, which will probably be formalized in the next month. Both products are to be distributed at retail.

FOR ALL THE WORLD: Murray would also like for Gulbis to attain int'l appeal, which starts with her participation in tournaments overseas. Murray said the goal is to make her more of a global player than a domestic one. This season, Gulbis will join Sorenstam in the Nichirei Cup, May 5-8 in Japan. Last year, Gulbis did some promotional activities in Japan, and the feedback has been positive, and Murray noted, "There is demand for her over there." Murray said going forward, "The next step is getting corporate involvement, which might be name-and-likeness deals, or logo affiliation." Murray thinks the watch, cosmetics, hotel and automobile categories are appropriate fits for Gulbis (*THE DAILY*).
