

Press Release

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World Cup 2014: Luck is the only thing we can't make stick

Team Spirit or Individual Class? Adhesive Also Has a Bearing on the Game!

In less than two weeks, all eyes will once again be on Messi, Ronaldo, Rooney & Co. But who is destined to make the history books as the star of the 2014 World Cup? Both the boots and the ball may have a say – even though they rarely get the limelight.

Football – soccer – today is faster and more dynamic than ever. Aside from the athletic prowess of the players, developments in boots and balls have also played their part. Thanks to innovative technology, they help top professionals like Messi stick in goal-scoring chances with ever increasing accuracy.

And talking of sticking: Thanks to modern adhesives, football boots today are significantly lighter than they were in Pelé's era. High-end models such as those Messi wears weigh less than 100 grams. That makes the players faster, helps conserve energy and improves stamina. Today's ultra-light models are also remarkably sturdy because they are no longer sewn, being made instead from advanced materials held together by high-performance adhesives.

Henkel is a leading solution provider of specialty adhesives for the global manufacturer brands. Tongues, eyelets, toecaps, heel reinforcements and various foam inlay materials – nowadays they are all adhesive-bonded into place. The sole, too, can consist of several parts that each have to be joined to the uppers. And again, this requires high-performance adhesives. One of the latest developments from Henkel is a polyurethane adhesive that firmly bonds the upper with the sole in one operation with a single smear. For manufacturers, that means lower adhesive consumption and improved production sustainability.

High-quality tournament balls, too, are no longer made of leather. This has been replaced by advanced plastics, with needle and thread sewing techniques now a thing of the past. The panels are simply bonded together. The seamless surface produced gives the ball maximum wear resistance, improves its flight characteristics and reduces water absorption on wet match days.

So the World Cup this year is being held under the best of technical conditions. All the fans can do now is cross their fingers, cross their toes and hope luck and their team find some way of bonding together.

Henkel operates worldwide with leading brands and technologies in three business areas: Laundry & Home Care, Beauty Care and Adhesive Technologies. Founded in 1876, Henkel holds globally leading market positions both in the consumer and industrial businesses with well-known brands such as Persil, Schwarzkopf and Loctite. Henkel employs about 47,000 people and reported sales of 16.4 billion euros and adjusted operating profit of 2.5 billion euros in fiscal 2013. Henkel's preferred shares are listed in the German stock index DAX.

Photo material is available at <http://www.henkel.com/press>

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