



Handball star Patrick Wienczek: His goals aren't just valuable to THW Kiel

Kiel/Elmshorn, 23 October 2022 – Patrick Wienczek has been one of THW Kiel's most valuable players for many years. The 33-year-old captain has scored more than 750 goals in over 300 Bundesliga matches. These goals not only helped the club, but also benefitted the Schleswig-Holstein University Hospital (UKSH). This is because the team sponsor ORLEN Deutschland, operator of almost 600 *star* and ORLEN petrol stations nationwide, makes a €100 donation to the children's cancer ward at UKSH for every Bundesliga goal scored by the ex-national player. At today's home match between the German champions and the Rhein-Neckar Lions, an additional donation cheque of €11,111 was presented for the previous season. In a recent interview, the father of two talks about how important the player sponsorship is to him personally, and looks back on the first few weeks of the current Bundesliga season.

The season kicked off almost two months ago. How satisfied are you with the start?

Patrick Wienczek: After Kielce and Berlin, I actually have mixed feelings. We weren't able to reward ourselves for a fantastic match in Kielce, and shortly afterwards there was the clear defeat in Berlin – regardless of the circumstances. I would have liked to have scored a few more points in the two major matches, even though we've been struggling with a lot of injuries this season. But that shouldn't be an excuse, because at the end of the day, we are THW Kiel.

A battle is brewing between 4 or 5 teams at the top of the table. Which team surprised you the most in the first few weeks of the season?

None of the ones at the top, actually. I expected exactly the teams that are at the top right now to be at the top. That said, the first few weeks have shown that it could be the most exciting season we've seen in years. Besides the "usual suspects" at the top – which has long included Füchse Berlin and, once again, Rhein-Neckar Lions – two other teams, Hanover and Erlangen, are also in a very strong position right now. For outsiders, the surprise team could be the newly promoted VfL Gummersbach. As a former player of the club, I know how hard they work under coach Gudjon Valur Sigurdsson, who also played in Kiel.

Four new players joined THW during the summer break, and Yannick Fraatz, a right wing, was just added. Are the new players already fully integrated into the team?

Integrating new players is an ongoing process, which wasn't exactly made easier on the field as so many players had to miss the first few matches. But within the team, everyone has settled in. We've got a great team that we'll continue to have lots of fun with in the future.



For many years now, your Bundesliga goals have not only been valuable for THW, but every goal has also been rewarded with a €100 donation from your sponsor ORLEN star to the University Hospital Schleswig-Holstein (UKSH) Paediatric Oncology Unit. Does that double your motivation?

Of course – even if I don't think about it specifically during the match. But it's a wonderful reward at the end of a successful match to know that you've not only helped your team, but together with ORLEN, you've also helped very ill children.

In over ten years, you've helped raise almost €100,000. How important is this commitment to the young patients at UKSH to you personally?

We've made many personal contacts over the many years that we've been doing this, which has made this project a real labour of love. The idea is and remains a great one, and the commitment shown by Orlen is impressive. Of course, it's a wonderful feeling when you see what's been built at UKSH with the donated funds. To see the training areas and experience the gratitude of the people working to improve the lives of the children, is just fantastic. And to experience the children's enthusiasm when they use the equipment is simply overwhelming.

During the last Bundesliga season, you scored 103 goals for the fundraising campaign – the second-highest since the start. Do you think you'll top that again this season?

A season is long – I rarely make predictions. But that's my personal goal, and so far it's looking pretty good (*Editor's note: At the time of the interview, the total was 32 goals after seven Bundesliga matches*).

***** End of interview *****

Extension and expansion of player sponsorship

This season, the sponsor ORLEN Deutschland GmbH has once again committed to donating €100 to the Paediatric Oncology Unit of the University Hospital Schleswig-Holstein for every goal scored by Patrick Wiencek. Donations from the Elmshorn-based company, which has also been the main and jersey sponsor of THW Kiel since 2016, are used to support the University Hospital's sports and exercise programme. In the past, for example, it has financed the facilities for the fitness and equipment training rooms. The aim is to provide young patients with a playful escape – filled with mobility and activity – from everyday hospital life. Total donations over the duration of the sponsorship now amount to €93,111.

In addition, the player sponsorship will be extended to include the four new junior THW players, Ben Connar Battermann, Luca Schwormstede, Henri Pabst and Philip Saggau (goalkeeper). Their goal-scoring success for the team will also count and be rewarded with €100 each. As the official partner of the THW youth programme, ORLEN Deutschland is thus emphasising its commitment to the youth and junior player division of the Kiel-based club. The aim is to support and promote talented players on their path to professional sport.



Image (from L to R): THW Captain Patrick Wiencek and Klaus-Peter Dittrich (Manager Corporate Communications ORLEN Deutschland GmbH) hand over the donation cheque to Prof. Dr Gunnar Cario (Deputy Director of the Clinic for Paediatric and Adolescent Medicine I Department Head of the Paediatric Oncology Unit, University Hospital of Schleswig-Holstein, Kiel Campus). Right: THW mascot Hein Daddel.

Print the interview free of charge. High-resolution imagery (copyright Sascha Klahn) can be found in the [Newsroom](#).

star and ORLEN - the petrol stations of ORLEN Deutschland GmbH

ORLEN Deutschland GmbH was founded in March 2003. It is a 100% subsidiary of the Polish multi-energy corporation PKN ORLEN S.A. and part of the international ORLEN Group. The company currently operates almost 600 star and ORLEN petrol stations on the German market. ORLEN Deutschland GmbH, based in Elmshorn, is one of the ten largest petrol station operators in Germany and has been the main sponsor of German handball record champion THW Kiel since 2016.

According to the slogan "More than just cheap fuel", star and ORLEN petrol stations offer quality fuels as well as their own brand products at an attractive price-performance ratio. Customers also benefit from the B2B-fleet-card and receive additional services such as car washing and parcel services at many stations. Filling stations with 'star café' and 'stop. café' invite you to take breaks in a feel-good atmosphere and offer coffee specialities, a large selection of tasty meals and hot and cold snacks all day long.

For more information, please visit our website www.orlen-deutschland.de

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