

## To Be Young, in Love, and Highly Marketable

### The "Wozzilroy" combination of tennis' Caroline Wozniacki and golf's Rory McIlroy makes for an endorsement bonanza

By Karla Swatek

There's no guarantee it will last—young love has a funny way of fizzling out. And even now its

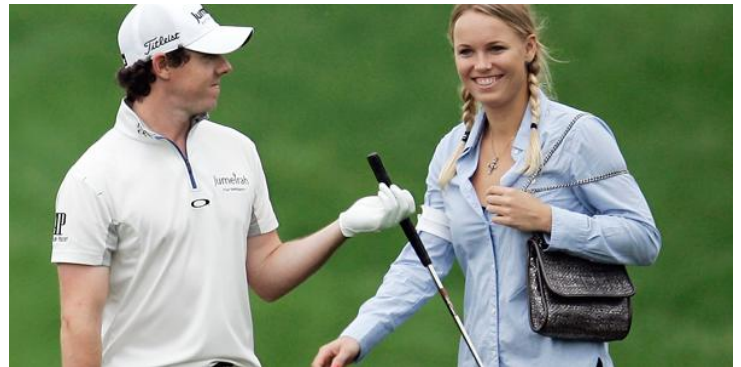
supercharged sweetness is gag-inducing for some onlookers. But one thing is clear: The romance between tennis' longtime World No. 1, [Caroline Wozniacki](#), and golf's biggest rising star, [Rory McIlroy](#), No. 3 on the official World Golf Ranking, is boosting the couple's marketability and earning power. The youthful "Wozzilroy," as McIlroy nicknamed the couple last fall, boasts combined 2011 earnings from winnings and endorsements of

close to \$30 million, according to sports marketing firm CSE, with the 22-year-old McIlroy (No. 21 on the 2012 Power 100) pulling in \$17.2 million, including endorsement deals with Jumeirah, Oakley, Audemars Piquet, and Spanish bank Santander, and 21-year-old Wozniacki (No. 40), earning \$12 million, including deals with the likes of Adidas ([ADDYY](#)), Yonex, Turkish Airlines, and Oriflame ([OFLMY](#)).

Beyond bank accounts that can well afford such gifts as the custom engraved "Wozzilroy" golf club McIlroy bestowed on Wozniacki in October, each has what the other covets. Before her Australian Open defeat, Wozniacki held the WTA Tour's No. 1 ranking for more than 66 weeks, but she has yet to win one of tennis' four Majors, an acknowledged milestone to greatness. McIlroy accomplished that goal in his own sport in 2011 when he won the U.S. Open but has yet to climb to the top of the World Golf Ranking (currently, Power 100 No. 11 Luke Donald and No. 19 Lee Westwood are ahead of him).

While they're doing quite well on their own, thank you, Gerry Philpott, chief executive of E-Poll Market Research, says that as long as Wozzilroy stay together and continue to win, they could boost the endorsement portion of their incomes by as much as 50 percent. Not only do they motivate each other—"I think we definitely spur each other on," McIlroy has said—their combined brand as a young, athletic, wholesome couple can appeal to even the most conservative of blue-chip companies. The romance is playing out well beyond the normal confines of newspaper sports and business pages. Wozniacki has become a regular in lifestyle and fashion websites and magazines, and McIlroy, drawing ever-larger galleries at the tournaments in which he competes, is more frequently joining her there. And the couple already has the biggest bellwether of modern celebrity—as they crisscross the globe attending each other's sporting events, a pack of paparazzi follows their every move.

By the Nielsen/E-Poll N-Score numbers, the attributes most associated with McIlroy are related to his talent and common-man appeal: Talented (63 percent), Approachable (32 percent), and Down-to-Earth (31 percent) are among his highest-scoring attributes, while Wozniacki brings an element of glamour as she is considered Attractive (45 percent), Stylish (30 percent), Cute (37 percent), and Beautiful (28 percent). But neither is a particularly high "Awareness" or "Appeal" athlete, so any media coverage relating to their relationship rather than their respective sports should benefit them both.



Photograph by Getty Images

Not every celebrity athlete relationship pans out—Chris Evert and Greg Norman’s fairy-tale midlife marriage lasted a mere year and five months, and do we even need to mention Kris Humphries and Kim Kardashian? But Wozzilroy has made a good start. And like any top-notch athletes, they’re fueled by competition, so this should keep them together: Former WTA Tour No. 1 Ana Ivanovic is back with her on-again, off-again golfer boyfriend Australian Adam Scott (Power 100 No. 84). Ahead of the Australian Open, Aussie bookmaker TAB Sportbet offered a Love Match Special in which bettors could wager on which of the elite tennis-golf power couples would be the first to win a major in 2012. Our money’s on Wozzilroy.

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