**Football players’ usage and self-presentation** **on Instagram during UEFA Women’s Euro 2022**

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**Objectives:** Instagram has emerged as a popular social media platform where athletes share photographs and videos, providing female athletes an opportunity to enhance their visibility, promote their personal brand, communicate with fans, and challenge gender stereotypes of women in sports. The aim of this study is to examine Norwegian elite female football players’ usage and self-representation on Instagram during UEFA Women’s Euro 2022.

**Methods:** Five female football players from the national team representing Norway in the UEFA Women’s Euro 2022 were chosen as our sample. Players were chosen based on fan popularity and skill level at the time of the tournament. To showcase how these players used Instagram during the tournament, we collected each player’s Instagram posts and stories every morning (CEST) from July 6 to July 31, 2022. A total of 64 traditional feed posts and 124 stories were obtained. Each picture, video, or other interactive post was individually analysed, as well as the comments posted by fans in reaction to them.

**Findings:** Preliminary findings suggest that the players mainly represent themselves in ‘athletic action’ on Instagram during the tournament. Following their second game (0-8 defeat to England) the whole team had a 24-hour social media blackout. After being knocked out on the group stage, most players shared more content from private life and personal marketing with sponsors.

**Discussion and conclusion:** The high number of ‘athletic action’ posts indicates that the players’ social media strategy during the tournament was controlled or guided by a strategy to focus on performance. Some players also posted activist posts related to the LGBTQ+ movement. These posts received the highest degrees of negative and hateful comments. At the conference, we will present further analysis and findings from the data.