

a) Creative brief

Under Armour is launching Antonio Rüdiger's signature soccer cleat ahead of the 2026 FIFA World Cup, with a bold campaign aimed at U.S. youth soccer players aged 4 to 18. The target splits into two core groups: the 4–12 crowd seeking fun, skill mastery, and recognition; and the 13–18 teens craving respect, identity, and gear that earns them a role on the field. While parents and coaches remain key secondary gatekeepers, the core messaging is kid-facing. The campaign's goal is threefold: make Under Armour synonymous with elite defense during the World Cup spotlight, drive first-wave sell-through of the cleat, and elevate brand salience among soccer families. Currently, UA is respected in football and basketball but lacks default credibility in soccer, especially among defenders who often feel overlooked in a goal-obsessed culture. We want to flip that narrative, positioning Under Armour as the ***defender's brand***—gritty, fast, technical—and make Rüdiger the icon of a new kind of heroism. Our ads will run across out-of-home formats in host cities—billboards, buses, fieldside signage—alongside digital video, mall DOOH, and key print placements in *USA TODAY Sports*, *Soccer America*, and youth tournament programs. The campaign centers on the message: **If you're the reason nothing gets through, this is your boot.** In both tone and design, we'll steer clear of flashy hype and lean into kinetic proof: showcasing product performance (traction, turns, blocks) in the hands and feet of real defenders. The 2026 World Cup is a once-in-a-generation spotlight; every brand will scream "score more." But we'll win by celebrating the kids who stop the show, not steal it. Rüdiger's credibility, the cleat's technical edge, and the moment's cultural heat give us a rare window to change how youth soccer sees defense—and who kids choose to be.

b) Advertising headline/tagline: Ü SHALL NOT PASS.

Sub-message: If they're leaving with nothing, you're wearing the right boot.

Print placement: Back cover of *USA TODAY Sports* World Cup special section + *Soccer America* tournament issue and US Youth Soccer Nationals program books to reach mass-market families while hitting the sport's core decision-makers in context (coaches, club directors, traveling teams).

OOH placement: Large-format billboards and DOOH near host-city fan zones, youth soccer complexes, and school corridors; citywide buses in suburban corridors with heavy club traffic to ensure repeated daily exposures.

Strategy note:

"Ü SHALL NOT PASS" flips the football cliché into a defiant, unforgettable statement of identity tied directly to Antonio Rüdiger and Under Armour's brand of technical, gritty play. It's sharp, fast, and readable from a moving car or scrolling screen, which is essential for youth-focused OOH and print. This campaign will intersect parents on the school run, kids on the way to practice, and soccer fans moving through tournament zones. Placing the Ü icon in those everyday spaces signals tribal identity: if you know, you know. This strategy aligns with the campaign's goal of repositioning Under Armour as the go-to brand for defense-first youth soccer players. Rather than copying the scoring-obsessed noise of competitors, we give kids an identity worth claiming and gear that backs it up.