



uefa.direct

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Trophy season



# In this issue

## Under-21 final round in Denmark

4

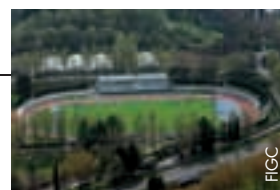
From 11 to 25 June, Denmark will be welcoming the teams that have qualified for the final round of the 2009–11 European Under-21 Championship. The hosts are joined by Belarus, the Czech Republic, England, Iceland, Spain, Switzerland and Ukraine. All eight will be competing for the title held by Germany, who were knocked out at the qualifying stage.



## Women's Under-19 final round in Italy

6

The European Women's Under-19 Championship title will be decided in Italy, where the final round takes place from 30 May to 11 June.



## UEFA Regions' Cup final round heads to Portugal

7

On 11 May, the eight teams that have qualified for the final round of the current UEFA Regions' Cup in Portugal in June were drawn into two groups.



## Montesilvano win the UEFA Futsal Cup

8

ASD Città di Montesilvano C/5 have pulled off the amazing feat of winning the UEFA Futsal Cup at their first attempt, beating Sporting Clube de Portugal in the final in Almaty.



## News from member associations

16

## Supplement

As Europe celebrates UEFA Grassroots Day on 25 May, the Grassroots Newsletter reports on the grassroots workshop attended by specialists from UEFA's member associations in Noordwijk in the Netherlands.



## Cover

By knocking out SL Benfica in the semi-finals of the UEFA Europa League, SC Braga qualified for their first UEFA club competition final and the first ever all-Portuguese final.

Photo: AFP

## WE CARE ABOUT FOOTBALL



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# Let football remain a game

In the May 2009 issue of *uefadirect*, we presented the 11 values that UEFA undertakes to abide by and promote. I would like to single out one in particular in this editorial, and that is respect.

Although it is easy to profess respect for opponents, referees, the crowd and the game in the calm light of day, it is often a different matter in the heat of the action, when emotions can become extremely explosive and this courtesy often flies into oblivion.

This is especially evident at the end of a football season, when national and supranational competitions reach their climax. The pressure brought to bear to get the right result, to balance the books and to please the fans exposes invisible flaws, and when anger erupts, some participants at times stoop to performances that let themselves and the rest of us down.

It is precisely at such times that we expect to see strength of character, a virtue that makes great players and great clubs that do not drown in a flood of emotion but steer through it with calmness and dignity. The

approaching summer break is, I think, a good time to reflect on these aspects of our game, so that it retains its companionable, universal side.

UEFA can promote respect on and off the pitch. It can also set an example. But for it to really gain momentum, the message has to be carried by the whole football family. The word respect should not just be printed on players' shirts; it should be etched permanently at the front of our minds.



Gianni Infantino  
UEFA General Secretary





# A very demanding competition

The seven sides that have progressed through the qualifying round to reach the 2011 European Under-21 Championship finals in Denmark already have reason to reflect on quite an achievement.



For the first time, all 53 UEFA member associations have taken part in the competition and it is a measure of just how demanding it was that holders Germany and five-time champions Italy fell by the wayside. Just three of the countries that contested the 2009

finals in Sweden – Belarus, England and Spain – are back to vie for the trophy again. Only England have reached the finals for a third time in a row.

The qualifiers for the 2011 finals kicked off on 27 March 2009 – three months before Germany beat England 4-0 in the final of the 2007-09 competition in Malmö – and 234 matches were played before the final line-up was determined nearly 19 months later. Sure of their place in the finals, hosts Denmark looked on as England, Belarus, Spain, Ukraine, Iceland, the Czech Republic and Switzerland battled their way through the group stage before winning in the play-offs to book their tickets to the finals. For Switzerland, Denmark is something of a happy hunting ground. They won the 2002 European Under-17 Championship in Farum the last time Denmark hosted a UEFA final round.

## Four sites

This time the finals take place in the west of the country, on the Jutland peninsula, with games to be staged in Aarhus, Aalborg, Viborg and Herning. Aarhus is the biggest city in Jutland and, with a population of 311,000, is Denmark's second largest city. With its theatres and university, it is also a thriving cultural centre. Aalborg, a bustling town of nearly 200,000 people, boasts the longest street in Denmark for nightlife, the Jomfru Ane Gade, and is sure to be a popular destination for fans at the finals. Viborg is famed for its cathedral and historic centre, while Herning is a market town known as the capital of the Central Jutland moor.

Local interest in the finals is taking hold, with nearly 1,000 people having volunteered to give up their time in a variety of roles to make sure the event is a success. Anticipation will go up another notch on 1 June when the final squads are announced and the build-up begins in earnest.

Denmark will be determined to make home advantage tell. Certainly in recent years home support has

provided the host nation with real momentum. Cheered on by a sea of orange, the Netherlands became only the third nation (after England and Italy) to defend the trophy successfully when they triumphed on home soil in 2007. Then, in 2009, Sweden thrilled a nation with their attacking, exuberant football before losing out to England in heartbreaking style on penalties in the semi-finals.

Having witnessed at first hand the excitement generated by the hosts in Sweden two years ago, Denmark coach Keld Bordinggaard is confident his side will also put on a show. *"We need that extra thing the crowd can give us,"* he said. *"It is no coincidence that hosting countries have done a good job in previous years. We expect and hope to do the same. We hope to give Denmark a great performance. We saw what Sweden did and we want to try and do the same here."* With a side likely to feature full internationals of the calibre of Christian Eriksen, Simon Kjær and Mathias Zanka Jørgensen, Denmark could indeed go far.

## Kick-off on 11 June

Denmark meet Switzerland, Iceland and Belarus in Group A, while Group B pits beaten 2009 finalists England against the Czech Republic, Ukraine and Spain. The tournament kicks off on 11 June when Denmark face Switzerland and Belarus take on Iceland, and the final will be held a fortnight later, on 25 June, in Aarhus, which has the largest of the four stadiums.

Of the eight finalists, only England (twice), Spain (twice) and the Czech Republic (once) have won the title before, while Iceland have reached





England (Connor Wickham, in white) and Iceland (Finnur Orri Margeirsson), who met in a friendly match in March, are both taking part in the final round

Getty Images

the finals for the first time. Eyjólfur Sverrisson's side stunned holders Germany in the group stage, winning 4-1 at home and drawing 2-2 away, and will not be taken lightly in Denmark. With seven likely starters having already featured in the senior team, they have plenty of experience and confidence to match, having finished the qualifying round as the leading scorers, with 33 goals.

Individual scoring honours in the qualifying round went to Tomáš Pekhart, whose nine goals for the Czech Republic helped them advance to the finals as the only undefeated side. Having combined with Iceland to knock out Germany in Group 5, they have every reason to set their sights on lifting the trophy for the first time since 2002.

The group stage threw up its share of surprises and the play-offs proved equally compelling. Belarus pulled off the shock of the round as they battled back from a two-goal first-leg deficit to knock out Italy after extra time, while Ukraine held off a stirring comeback from 2006 and 2007 champions the Netherlands to advance on the away-goals rule, in a repeat of the 2006 final. Spain, the Czech Republic and Switzerland all scored five times over the two legs, with the Swiss proving too strong for 2009 semi-finalists Sweden. England were pushed to the limit by Romania before securing their third straight finals appearance, while Iceland beat Scotland twice to confirm they will not be cowed by the big occasion.

### Festival of young talents

England coach Stuart Pearce holds the notable achievement of leading his side to the finals for a third time in succession. After reaching the semi-finals in 2007 (when England were knocked out on penalties by the Netherlands) and the final in 2009, he has just one thing on his mind: "I want to win the final," he said.

Of course, the tournament is all about the young talent on show that will form the backbone of senior sides across the continent for years to come. And, as in years past, when the likes of Raúl González, Petr Čech and Luís Figo have graced the finals, the 2011 generation is sure to set the pulses racing.

It is a measure of just what this competition means to the stars of tomorrow that Spain are likely to have two FIFA World Cup winners in their ranks – Javi Martínez and Juan Mata – while Jack Wilshere could prove the difference for England, having taken in his stride the step up at Arsenal FC and the senior England side over the past 12 months.

### Olympic qualification

With Olympic qualification also up for grabs, the stakes could not be higher, and for those involved kick-off cannot come soon enough. "We have been looking forward to this for a long time," Denmark centre-back Jørgensen said. "This will be huge for us, no doubt about that. It is the biggest football event ever on Danish soil." ●

➔ <http://en.uefa.com/under21>



# Open issue in Italy

The beginning of June marks the start of the holiday season in the Emilia-Romagna region of northern Italy, but for about 200 visitors relaxing could not be further from their minds. Silverware beckons, in the shape of the European Women's Under-19 Championship trophy.



Some are more familiar with it than others. Germany were the leading light in the tournament's four-year stretch as an U18 event, and continued to shine brightest beyond the switch to the U19s in 2001. No side can better their haul of three titles – one more than holders France – though it is testament to the finals' competitiveness that in nine seasons there have been six different winners.

Indeed, France will not defend their title, having come unstuck against an up-and-coming Netherlands side in the second qualifying round. Norway knocked out England, the 2009 winners and runners-up last season, and they and the Jong Oranje had cause to feel hard done by when April's draw paired them with Germany and Spain in Group B.

## New coach for Germany

Germany will have old scores to settle, not least against Spain. In 2004 the Roja beat them 2-1 to take the title, a result all the more remarkable because six days earlier Germany had won 7-0 when the teams met in the group stage.

Bettina Wiegmann, who is leading Germany's team while Maren Meinert is on maternity leave, was making her first coaching steps at the time, after a playing career that included 154 international caps, four Women's EUROs and the Women's World Cup. Wiegmann stresses that in Italy, Germany's *"main goal is to produce players for the senior team,"* though she adds that *"if there were a chance of a title we wouldn't say no."*

## Promoting women's football

Italy are also keen to impress on home turf and repeat their success of three years ago when, surprisingly, they won their first European crown. Even if friendly results have not gone their way, captain Martina Rosucci, the only survivor from 2008, says the Azzurine *"can repeat that miracle – and it was a miracle – if we can reach that level of intensity again."*

Corrado Corradini's side begin their campaign on 30 May against the 2005 winners, Russia, and will also have to negotiate Switzerland and best runners-up Belgium in Group A. One man following their progress will be the tournament director Stefano Balducci, a former journalist who helped organise the Italian Tennis Open before joining the Italian Football Federation (FIGC) in 1992.

For the sake of local interest, Balducci hopes the hosts will *"reach the semi-finals at the least"* as he looks to build on the past two years, when attendance records were broken – 8,000 spectators turned out for one of last season's openers. Yet he is more concerned with the wider implications: *"We've been putting a lot into promoting women's football and this tournament can bring people closer to it."*

## Final in Imola

That will happen directly at venues in Rimini, Cervia, Bellaria and Imola (on the infield at the motor racing circuit), as well as at events around the tournament. Chief among them is an FIGC coaching initiative, backed by the UEFA HatTrick programme, which provides four-day courses for 140 trainers from all levels.

For the eight competing nations, all their focus will be on the final in Imola on 11 June, which will be shown live on Eurosport. Only then will thoughts drift elsewhere – to holidays, perhaps. ●

→ <http://en.uefa.com/womensunder19>



Bettina Wiegmann is standing in for Maren Meinert as Germany's coach



# Portugal awaits the finalists



Amateur teams representing 39 national associations have been taking part in the 7th UEFA Regions' Cup, which got under way at the end of last August. Now, after the qualifying and intermediate rounds, there are just eight teams left in the running and preparing

for the final round in Portugal – home to one of the finalists – at the end of June. Lots had to be drawn to determine one of the finalists, Team Belgrade from Serbia, who finished their three Group 5 intermediate round matches level with Bulgaria's South West Region.



D. Aquilina

Showing respect at the end of a 2010/11 UEFA Regions' Cup match between Württemberg and Gallega in the Group 1 intermediate round mini-tournament in Malta

Portugal's representatives, Braga, losing finalists in 2001, have the honour of hosting the final round, which will take place in the Minho region, in the north of Portugal, from 21 to 28 June.

The draw to divide the eight finalists into the following two groups was made at the Colunata de Eventos in Braga on 11 May.

**Group A:** Braga (Portugal), Zlín Region (Czech Republic), Yednyst Plysky AMA (Ukraine), Württembergischer FV (Germany);

**Group B:** South Region AMA (Russia), Team Belgrade (Serbia), Team Ankara (Turkey), Leinster & Munster (Republic of Ireland),.

The group matches run from 21 to 26 June in Fao, Braga, Vila Verde and Barcelos, where the final will be held on 28 June.

The only participating association to have already won this competition is the Czech Republic, whose amateur representative team from Central Moravia won the 2000/01 edition. Turkey, meanwhile, are making their first appearance in a UEFA Regions' Cup final round. ●

## EURO 2012 ticket allocation

In the space of just one month, from 1 to 31 March, 12,149,425 applications for tickets for EURO 2012 were submitted to UEFA via UEFA.com.

With demand far exceeding supply, tickets had to be allocated by ballot. This operation, supervised by a notary, took four days and required the assistance of a super computer at UEFA's headquarters.

The lucky applicants have been informed by email. ●

## FIFA U-17 World Cup in Mexico

The European Under-17 Championship final round held in Serbia in May decided which six teams would represent Europe one month later at the FIFA U-17 World Cup in Mexico.

This honour went to the top three in each group, namely Denmark, England, France, the Netherlands, Germany and the Czech Republic.

The other continents are represented by Burkina Faso, Congo-Brazzaville, Côte d'Ivoire and Rwanda (Africa); Australia, Japan, Uzbekistan and North Korea (Asia); Canada, USA, Jamaica, Mexico and Panama (North and Central America, Caribbean); Argentina, Brazil, Ecuador and Uruguay (South America); and New Zealand (Oceania).

The participants were drawn into six groups of four on 17 May. The venues for the final round, which kicks off on 18 June, are Morelia, Monterrey, Pachuca, Torreon, Queretaro, Guadalajara and Mexico City, whose Estadio Azteca hosts the final and the match for third place on 10 July. ●

## Club competition finals

In Dublin and London respectively, the UEFA Europa League and UEFA Champions League trophies were handed over to the mayors of the two cities for them to look after until they are presented to the captains of the winning teams. ●



Getty Images

The UEFA President with the Mayor of London, Boris Johnson.



# “Heads, hearts and legs”

The Alatau mountain range that provides an imposing backdrop to Almaty was not the only towering spectacle to take in from Kazakhstan's largest city at the end of April and beginning of May. Not with the UEFA Futsal Cup in town.



A field of 48 clubs had been reduced, over the three rounds of the qualifying competition (preliminary, main and elite), to a select four – and this quartet jostled for position at the Baluan Sholak Sport Palace during the semi-finals on Friday 29 April and the final and third-place match on Sunday 1 May.

The action began with a thrilling encounter between tournament hosts Kairat Almaty and Sporting Clube de Portugal, both of whom were attempting to better previous competition bests of third place. The Portuguese team won 3-2 with second-half strikes from Divanei and Caio Japa (2) after a tight contest had developed into an epic one. Orlando Duarte's Sporting survived a brave Kairat comeback from two goals down to reach their first final, yet for João Carlos Barbosa's Kazakh champions – who had restored hope with Leo Santana's late double – this was a fourth semi-final defeat.

Next, holders SL Benfica got started against ASD Città di Montesilvano C/5. Benfica had stolen the lime-light in Lisbon 12 months before, yet for Italy's UEFA Futsal Cup debutants, Città di Montesilvano, a new horizon beckoned in this most eastern of UEFA tournaments. And then some. Fulvio Colini's men underlined their sta-

tus as the surprise package of the campaign by ending the European champions' reign.

Leandro Cuzzolino's goal gave the Italian title holders a precious lead that they refused to surrender in the face of sustained pressure. Cristian Borruto and goalkeeper Stefano Mammarella rubber-stamped the 3-0 victory late on as Paulo Fernandes's Benfica were denied an all-Portuguese final against neighbours Sporting.

## Consolation prize

Now a city of about 2 million people, Almaty developed as a trading post on the Silk Road to and from China, and the prize commodity available in the Sunday final was a trophy enjoying its tenth anniversary. Nor was the bronze medal to be undervalued in the match for third-place that kicked off proceedings.

Here, Kairat claimed the consolation prize with a 5-3 penalty shoot-out win after a pulsating 3-3 draw with Benfica. The home side were pushed all the way, however, after the first-half advantage given to them by Santana and Sidnei Silva was overturned by strikes from Benfica's Joel Queirós, Gonçalo and César Paulo. Kairat equalised late on through Felipe, then prevailed on spot kicks thanks to Anderson's penalty after Marinho's miss for the outgoing champions.

ASD Città di Montesilvano celebrate their first European title







Benfica failed to defend their title and were beaten by Kairat Almaty in the match for third place

Barbosa's valiant team duly equalled their third-place finish of 2009. A second accolade would follow later as Kairat's dynamic Brazilian No.4 Leo Santana was confirmed as the final tournament's three-goal leading marksman.

### Sixth winners

So to the final, where Montesilvano became the new name on the UEFA Futsal Cup after seeing off their fellow first-time finalists Sporting 5-2. Colini's men turned their weapons of dogged defending and clinical finishing on to a second Lisbon outfit in three days, and goals from Hernan Garcias, Adriano Foglia (2), Fabricio Calderoli and Cuzzolino meant Leitão's late double for Sporting made no impression at all. Montesilvano thus became the sixth club to lift the trophy in what was the competition's tenth final – and in the process put Italian futsal on a roll of honour already including Spain, Belgium, Russia and Portugal.

Typical of his performances in front of the media throughout the week, coach Colini downplayed the tactical achievement of outwitting first Benfica and then Sporting, merely attributing Italy's first UEFA Futsal Cup triumph to his side's "heads, hearts and legs". He said: "We had great strength in our heads, hearts and legs, and winning a championship by three goals, arguably against the favourites, is a great achievement. We play man to man, so when the opposition attacks there's never a free man for them to play to. We press teams individually and every one of our boys is very strong one on one. It's hard to break us down."

However, Sporting trainer Duarte conceded that the better-organised unit had held sway. "They scored five goals from very few opportunities," he said, "whereas we had lots of chances and scored only two. But they were very well organised. We don't make excuses – simply put, they played well, they were better organised, they were more efficient and ultimately deserved it. While they were superbly organised and strong defensively, we didn't do as well as we could have done up front."

Montesilvano's man of the match in the final, Argentinian international playmaker Garcias, spoke rather more effusively about his enjoyment of the event, telling UEFA's website: "The level of competition here, the atmosphere, was just like at a World Cup. The teams were really serious – you sometimes get a weaker team at a World Cup

but look at all the internationals in the Benfica team. So on both a playing level and an organisational one, this was at least the standard of a World Cup."

### Top-class futsal

What was also certain is that the spectators at the 5,000-capacity Baluan Sholak Sport Palace (which was also used for the 2011 Asian Winter Games) had witnessed a display of top-class futsal. The competition's fifth four-team final tournament may well have been a deluxe edition according to Kairat coach Barbosa: "The quality of European futsal is getting better and better, and not just because of the Brazilian players. You have



The final between Sporting Clube de Portugal and Città di Montesilvano

a lot of good players in Europe too – in countries like Spain and Russia.

"I would say that since I've been at Kairat, this is the most balanced the competition has been – you have had four really strong teams. Maybe Benfica stood out a little at first because they won the competition last year. But this season there has been nothing to choose between us."

If there were summits to scale at the foot of the Alatau mountain range, the players and coaches were never found wanting as a new name and a new country joined the honours list. ●

## RESULTS

### Semi-finals (29.4.2011)

Sporting Clube de Portugal – Kairat Almaty 3-2

SL Benfica – ASD Città Di Montesilvano C/5 0-3

### Third-place match (1.5.2011)

Kairat Almaty – SL Benfica 3-3, 5-3\*

\* on penalties

### Final (1.5.2011)

Sporting Clube de Portugal –  
ASD Città Di Montesilvano C/5 2-5

# Fair play in sport and everyday life

The Comenius project promoting fair play and respect in sport and in life in general (cf. *ufadirect* No. 96) is running successfully, and, in 18 months, nine schools of eight countries have participated in the activities and at five of the six planned meetings.

The objectives have already been largely achieved. The pupils have gained a European perspective on violence and identified, analysed and blogged about examples of violence and fair play. They have also developed their communication and language skills and broadened their cultural horizons through visits to the towns and countries where the meetings were organised, without forgetting the many friendships that they have formed along the way. As the blog was not a huge success with the young people, the teachers from Technicum Noord in Antwerp (Belgium) came up with the idea of a Facebook page. This has received much more interest from the pupils involved in the project. They also participated enthusiastically in the competition to design a mascot for the project and developed a code of conduct known as the "ten commandments of fair play". In return, the most deserving pupils were part of the delegations who went to the meetings in Sandanski (Bulgaria) and Antwerp respectively.

## Global picture

After the analysis, in Izmir in March 2010, of a questionnaire given to the pupils, a meeting in Sandanski at the beginning of May provided a further opportunity to find out how young people view fair play in sport and in life in general. The principle objectives of the meeting in Antwerp in September were then to announce the winner of the design competition, to put on a wide range of sporting activities and to produce videos about aspects of fair play in sport and in life. The pupils participated fully in all the activities. The competition to design a mascot for the project was won by Indre Burneckaitem, a Lithuanian pupil, who had the idea of ordering a model from a Lithuanian business, which the delegations present unanimously agreed was the best. Her prize was an official Champions League ball given by UEFA and signed by the UEFA president, Michel Platini. The pupils also came up with ideas for videos illustrating different moments of fair play in sport and in life. The pupils had to work hardest for this meeting, as they were the principal "actors".

## Ten commandments of fair play

Changing the dates and order of the last two meetings of the project paid off and the meeting in Paredes de Coura (Portugal) from 13 to 19 March this year confirmed the great success of the meeting in Antwerp. It was there that the ten commandments of fair play – to which all the schools contributed – were drawn up. The ten commandments chosen are:

1. Always obey the rules!
2. Respect your opponents!
3. Be honest and fair!
4. Be a team player/use your skills to help your team!
5. Be accepting of different opinions!
6. Say no to drugs!
7. Don't discriminate!
8. Always be yourself/genuine!
9. Look for a new opportunity in every challenge!
10. Remember that it's not the winning that counts, it's the taking part!

Each commandment will be illustrated by two photos, so there will be a slide show of the commandments. Each school will select photos for one or two command-



The winner of the competition to design the project mascot receives a match ball signed by the UEFA president.





The participants in front of the town hall in Antwerp

ments by choosing from the photos taken during the five meetings that have already taken place.

The Lithuanian delegation brought the mascots ordered by the Portuguese school and everyone agreed that the decision made in Antwerp was the right one. The delegation from Hunedoara also presented two spin-off products – embroidered pennants and scarves with a picture of the mascot in the national colours. A third (key rings) is still in production. The final products will be given to participants in the project – the pupils and project leaders of each town involved.

This meeting also provided an opportunity to define the objectives of the last meeting of the project, from 9 to 13 May in Olsberg, Westphalia, and to discuss some of its practical aspects.

### Cultural aspect

The intercultural parts included visits to many well-known places, such as the archaeological site of Ephesus, the Agora, the temple of the goddess Athena, the House of the Virgin Mary and that of Kemal Atatürk (in and around Izmir), the Rila and Melnik monasteries, the architectural treasures of Antwerp and Brussels, the scenic towns of Bansko, Blagoevgrad, Porto, Paredes de Coura, Monção, Melgaco, Guimaraes, Braga, St Jacques de Compostelle and Baiona, as well as the museums of Sandanski, Izmir and Paredes de Coura (where the participants were able to attend a practical demonstration of a traditional activity). The official parts

of the meetings were very full, with visits to town halls, the departments of education and sport in several towns and the European Parliament in Brussels. The Bulgarian and Portuguese organisers brought some originality to the proceedings by putting on superb shows. The meeting in Sandanski included a multilingual show and the meeting at Paredes de Coura included African dances and music.

### Five-year collaboration

The visits to sports facilities were also very interesting. The facilities visited included the Kemal Atatürk complex (Izmir), which hosted the Universiade games in 2005, the Sandanski stadium and the impressive municipal stadium in Braga. However, the delegations missed out on the opportunity to attend a football match like the delegations were able to in Karsiyaka in Izmir in March 2010. The programme in Belgium did include a championship match in Antwerp, but the match was postponed until the following day – the day that the delegations had to leave!

The meeting in Olsberg will conclude a five-year collaboration between the schools in Romania, Italy and Paredes (who were already involved in a previous project), but the friendship and the understanding that have been formed and developed make it easy to imagine that further collaboration will follow in years to come. ●

George Gîscă



# Re-energising grassroots thinking

The Dutch coastal town of Noordwijk provided the venue for the 9th UEFA Grassroots Workshop, staged from 12 to 14 April.



The 27-hour programme illustrated the diversity of football played under the grassroots umbrella and the progress made since events of this kind were first held. UEFA's member associations were fully represented, with no fewer than 35 of them sending specialised grassroots managers – something which, a decade ago, would have been practically unimaginable. Only a quartet of national associations are not yet members of UEFA's Grassroots Charter, but by the time the event in Noordwijk kicked off all four had applied to join.

## Various aspects

The diversity of the event makes it difficult to summarise in a few words – and some of the issues are addressed in greater depth in the Grassroots Newsletter which features in this issue. Suffice it to say that the topics ranged from disability football to social values and the grassroots activities pegged to major events such as the two big club competition finals in Dublin and London, along with the Under-21 finals in Denmark. Some of the participants were even persuaded to brave the North Sea winds in a session dedicated to beach soccer.

Two other facets which are close to UEFA's heart were highlighted on the second morning, with Mark Milton, chairman of the Education 4 Peace foundation, explaining how football can be productively used in life skills education and England's Robin Russell reviewing how volunteers can be attracted into the grassroots game and helped to make top-quality contributions. This tied in nicely with the gratitude expressed by Michel Platini at the UEFA Congress to *"the millions of grassroots coaches and volunteers who devote themselves out of a passion and love for football"*. The UEFA president had also reaffirmed the grassroots game among UEFA's core values.

## Hand in hand

The thread which drew together the sessions in Noordwijk was 'promotion and progress' – and it quickly became clear that the two elements are inextricably intertwined. The host association (the KNVB), apart from reminding everybody how good the Dutch are at organising this sort of event, lived up to its reputation of being one of Europe's leading innovators during a series of sessions which signposted paths from the grassroots to the summit of the footballing pyramid and illustrated how amateur and professional clubs can work hand in hand to offer football for all and to develop the sort of talent which can compete and succeed at the highest levels of the game.

In offering inspiration to the participants in Noordwijk, the KNVB was assisted by professional club AZ Alkmaar and by one of the Netherlands' leading amateur clubs, Rijsburgse Boys. On the second afternoon, the participants were taken to Rijsburg to observe a range of grassroots activities enjoyed by 300 girls and boys on the club's natural and artificial surfaces. In terms of offering the workshop participants a glimpse of benchmark standards, it could not have been better. As UEFA's technical director, Andy Roxburgh, said, *"this is a grassroots paradise"*. Much the same could be said of an event which undoubtedly achieved its aims of inspiring greater momentum and re-energising the efforts now being invested in the grassroots game. ●



The Grassroots Workshop participants



## Training for safety and security experts

**With its partners in the pan-European think tank on policing football, UEFA's Stadium and Security Committee is involved in a project designed to ensure optimum safety and security during EURO 2012 in Poland and Ukraine.**

The initiative was launched with two five-day training sessions in London in the first half of April, attended by more than 50 police officers and stadium safety and security professionals from the EURO 2012 host cities identified as having key roles in integrated safety and security management at next summer's tournament. The programme seeks to develop participants' awareness of the challenges of such an event through a combination of multimedia presentations, practical observations and an interactive scenario-based learning environment, designed to immerse participants into scenarios which are as realistic and challenging as possible and test their decision-making skills.

The programme will continue with regular sessions up to the tournament and form the basis of a pan-European football police training programme funded by the European Commission and supported by UEFA. ●

## Student exchange programme

**UEFA's drive to nurture the quality of coach education throughout Europe took another bold step forward in the first week of May with the official start of an innovative student exchange programme which has the backing of the UEFA Executive Committee.**



The Pro licence candidates in training at Colovray stadium in Nyon

UEFA

The aim of the project is to give Pro licence students opportunities for international knowledge exchange as well as to enjoy direct access to UEFA tutors and content as part of their education. The inaugural pilot course took place at UEFA's headquarters in Nyon.

Pro licence students from the Czech Republic, Poland and Scotland took part in this four-day course, led by their coach education directors.

Experienced English coach and technician Howard Wilkinson was the course director and former England international Gareth Southgate addressed participants about his experience of moving from playing to management.

UEFA will stage a second pilot course during the first week of the European Under-21 Championship final round in Denmark, where students from the Danish Football Association (DBU) will be joined by visitors from Finland, Norway and Sweden. All will have the opportunity to observe several matches during the tournament. ●

## NEWS FROM BRUSSELS

**Times are not so easy for the European Union. Euro-sceptic sentiment and anti-EU political parties are gaining ground in Europe, most recently in the Finnish general elections in April.**

It is well documented that voters are more concerned about matters close to home than foreign policy or financial solidarity towards other countries when times are hard.

Could this context present an opportunity for sport? Might politicians be relieved to turn their attention to other, less high-profile areas for a change? Would voters breathe a sigh of relief if, instead of the gloomy economy, the newsreader was talking about football? Failing to reach decisions on key policies, politicians might welcome the chance to turn their attention to new, softer areas such as sport. And voters may have lost faith in politics, but never in their football team.

The EU's competence in sport is light, despite the excitement with which the new treaty article specifically on sport was greeted. According to Article 165 of the Lisbon Treaty, the EU's role is merely to "support, coordinate and supplement" member states' actions – hardly as impressive as monetary or competition policy, for example, where the EU has exclusive competence to initiate laws. One of the big battles facing the EU this year is the budget negotiations. However, sport does not even come into the equation: there is no specific EU budget for sport.

But perhaps sport is not just the soft option; perhaps it could also provide Europe with the common thread, the common identity, that seems to be missing. The identities of today's Europeans are fragmented, a mixture of local, regional and national ones. These colourful mixes are often not present on political stages but are much better represented in sport. A young Dutch professional working in Liverpool, having completed his or her studies there, might feel as much of a Liverpudlian as does Dirk Kuyt of Liverpool FC. Sport also manages to marry the local and regional identities with the national ones: watching a UEFA Champions League match, a French supporter might cheer on a Spanish or English team, for example, but they would naturally wear the tricolour shirt for national team competitions. And German fans of Turkish origin might find themselves cheering especially for Mesut Özil.

UEFA has a privileged insight into this, organising both national and club competitions and hence coming into contact with the whole spectrum of national, regional and local allegiances and identities. We are already gearing up towards EURO 2012, the pinnacle of European football talent. The national teams in the competition are rivals, but united under one common denominator – Europeanness – perhaps not politically, but in sporting terms. ●

# A football match a day for a whole month

Thomas Rensen, a 29-year-old communications specialist from the Netherlands, went to 32 football matches in 31 days, all across Europe. This is his story of his month of non-stop European football.

"All of a sudden it hits me: where is my passport? I showed it to the steward in San Siro a few hours ago. But after that...? Oh no, I lost it. Is this the end of my 32 matches in 31 days? I was actually planning to go to Switzerland to see Basel v Grasshoppers, but without a passport, that's impossible. Is this the end of one football match a day? No, of course not. Because in Europe there are so many football matches – on a daily basis – that you can make a backup plan within seconds. So, I go to Monza (near Milan), pick up an emergency passport and am back on schedule with a match in Karlsruhe.

"Two weeks after this incident, I've seen my 32nd and last match: Chelsea v Tottenham, a London derby. When I walk out of the stadium, I take one last look back. This was an amazing month. In the past 31 days I saw 32 games in 18 different countries across the whole of Europe. In total I saw 93 goals. And I did it not because I lost a bet or because I wanted to be in the famous book of world records, but because I like seeing football matches in stadiums. It is so much better than seeing them on television.

"The plan came to me two years ago. I always wanted to go InterRailing, travelling through Europe by train for one month. And I would do this InterRail adventure in April or September, so I could see a few games in foreign competitions. And all of a sudden this plan grew bigger and bigger ... would it be possible to see one football match a day for a whole month? They always

say there is a match every day, but is that true? And is it possible to make a schedule that gives you enough time to travel between the games, by train? Well, I proved it. The answer is yes to all those questions.

## European U17 Championship

"My journey started in Belgium at the decisive game between England and Spain in the European Under-17 Championship elite round. A clash between two of the top youth teams of Europe and only one could qualify for the final round. A nice start to a once-in-a-lifetime journey. But who to watch? I asked an English official: "Who are your best players?" "They're all good," he answered. "They're too young to single one out already." During the match you could see the influences of the national teams on these youth teams. Spain played enticingly, had individual class and liked to run with the ball. The English players used the long ball more often, played more directly and read their opponents' passes better. You could see the future Lampard and the future Gerrard in the same roles as the real Lampard and Gerrard. England won the match 2-1. After the game I bumped into the official again: "Told you they were all good!"

## Highlights

"I saw a lot of great games and I enjoyed every one of them, but of course there are a few highlights – the match between West Ham and Manchester United, for example. West Ham took an early 2-0 lead because of two penalties but lost 2-4, with a hat-trick from Wayne Rooney giving Manchester United a well-deserved win. The cup tie in Liechtenstein was another highlight, not just because it was such a great game between USV Eschen/Mauren and FC Balzers but because you could feel the fact that they were playing for the national honour. Normally they play in the Swiss division against Swiss clubs but in this competition only clubs from Liechtenstein are allowed to participate. And all seven clubs from this Alpine country do! USV won, but lost the final against Vaduz later that month. A predictable highlight was Schalke 04 v Internazionale in the UEFA Champions League. This was top of the bill and you could see why. I saw this match with a German dentist, who is a big fan of Schalke. His surgery is even decorated in blue and white and is full of fan memorabilia. Schalke won the first match 5-2 and the second leg brought



Thomas Rensen's itinerary consisted of just over a match a day in 31 days





The Olympic stadium in Berlin was sold out for the second division Bundesliga match between Hertha BSC Berlin and SC Paderborn 07

them a victory as well: they won 2-1. The dentist was over the moon with this result. But the following morning his happy mood was gone. He had never expected Schalke to reach the semi-finals so he had booked his holiday already, and that meant no semi-final for him...

### First Vienna

"From the small stadium of Proleter Novi Sad with 100 spectators to the enormous sold-out Olympic stadium in Berlin, seeing so many stadiums in such a short period was a great ground-hopping experience. The most beautiful stadium is without a doubt First Vienna FC's stadium in Austria. The country's oldest club plays at the Hohe Warte stadium, which for years was the national stadium. The first match at this ground was in 1899 and in 1921 it was renovated to become the most modern stadium in the world. And that stadium still exists. The record crowd here is 82,000, and if you close your eyes you can imagine them there, wearing hats, smoking cigars, and cheering like they cheered back then. But the truth is that the stands are covered by grass, trees and flowers. You can still walk all the way to the fourth tier of the stadium. From here the players seem tiny and you have a beautiful view over Vienna. There is a new stand with 5,000 seats. I saw First Vienna's quarter-final match in the Austrian Cup. It was the first time in years that they had reached this stage, but unfortunately Kapfenberger SV won after a hectic last few minutes. First Vienna missed a penalty in stoppage time, after which Kapfenberger finished the game off by making the score 0-2.

### Same language

"I didn't expect a big difference between fans from Stockholm and fans from Milan. Or Zagreb. Or Tilburg. And I was right. Football is an international language that everyone speaks. All the fans are cheering for their club, want to impress the opponent with their songs and

blame the referee when they lose. Whether you are in Luxembourg or France, Germany or Wales, it was not offside, the red card should not have been given and there should have been more stoppage time.

"So what now, after a month of football? Am I tired of the game? Am I watching curling now? Do I need a summer break? No. I have new teams to follow (First Vienna, Bangor City and Monza, for example) and I cannot wait to see the Champions League final on television. Because European football is just that beautiful." ●

## THE ROUTE

31.3	Mol, Belgium	England-Spain U17
1.4	Bangor, Wales	Bangor City-Prestatyn Town
2.4	London, England	West Ham-Manchester United
3.4	Berlin, Germany	Hertha BSC-Paderborn 07
3.4	Wolfsburg, Germany	Wolfsburg-Eintracht Frankfurt
4.4	Stockholm, Sweden	Djurgardens-AIK
5.4	Copenhagen, Denmark	BK Skjold-GBA
6.4	Dresden, Germany	Dynamo Dresden-RW Erfurt
7.4	Vyle Theroux, Belgium	Vyle Theroux-Spa
8.4	Altach, Austria	Rheindorf Altach-Gratkorn
9.4	Zagreb, Croatia	Dinamo Zagreb-Lokomotiva
10.4	Novi Sad, Serbia	Proleter Novi Sad-Mladost
11.4	Prague, Czech Republic	Sparta Prague-Slavia Prague
12.4	Eschen, Liechtenstein	USV Eschen/Mauren-Balzers
13.4	Gelsenkirchen, Germany	Schalke04-Inter
14.4	Eindhoven, Netherlands	PSV-Benfica
15.4	Metz, France	Metz-Clermont
16.4	Milan, Italy	AC Milan-Sampdoria
17.4	Monza, Italy	Monza-La Spezia
18.4	Karlsruhe, Germany	Karlsruhe SC-Augsburg
19.4	Vienna, Austria	First Vienna-Kapfenberger SV
20.4	Genk, Belgium	KRC Genk-Club Brugge
21.4	Freiburg, Germany	SC Freiburg-Hannover
22.4	Differdange, Luxembourg	Differdange-Hamm
23.4	Tilburg, Netherlands	Willem II-AZ
24.4	Auxerre, France	Auxerre-Lens
25.4	Cologne, Germany	Fortuna-Germania Windeck
26.4	Maribor, Slovenia	Maribor-Koper
27.4	Szolnok, Hungary	Szolnoki-Vasas
28.4	Zurich, Switzerland	FC Zurich-Neuchâtel Xamax
29.4	Reims, France	Reims-Dijon
30.4	London, England	Chelsea FC-Tottenham Hotspur

**Austria**

www.oefb.at

## New name for national cup competition

On 5 April, Samsung became the main sponsor of the ÖFB-Cup, which will be known as the ÖFB-Samsung-Cup from the quarter-final stage onwards in the current 2010/11 season as well as for the next three seasons (until 2013/14 inclusive).



The new logo for the national cup

The president of the Austrian Football Association (ÖFB), Leo Windtner, is delighted with the new partnership: "The ÖFB-Cup is one of the oldest competitions in international football. The fact that Samsung, one of the world's leading, most innovative companies, has agreed to become the competition's main sponsor and naming rights holder for several seasons is a further milestone in our efforts to raise the cup's status even higher within the Austrian football family."

The ÖFB's chief executive, Alfred Ludwig, is also convinced that the ÖFB-Samsung-Cup has a bright future. "The cup has

become much more financially attractive since it took a break in the year of UEFA EURO 2008. Our relaunch of the competition at the start of the 2009/10 season has paid off. The new logo, the new trophy, the catchy slogan 'Goals for Europe' and the total revamp of the competition have been well received by the whole football family. Together with our new main sponsor, Samsung, we are endeavouring to make the cup even more attractive and we are proud to welcome this global corporation, which is also involved in football at international level, to the family of ÖFB partners and sponsors," he said.

The very first match played under the new name once again demonstrated the cup competition's appeal, with second division side SC Austria Lustenau sweeping aside record cup winners FK Austria Wien (27 titles) with a sensational 4-0 victory in their opponents' own stadium. The Austrian football family is now looking forward to the final, which will be played in the Austrian capital on 29 May.

● Peter Klinglmüller

**Azerbaijan**

www.affa.az

## School Kids Cup project continues



The School Kids Cup project has been a great success

The School Kids Cup project was started by the Association of Football Federations of Azerbaijan (AFFA) in 2010. The main aim of the project is to increase the popularity of youth football throughout the country, as well as to promote life skills and awareness of healthy lifestyles among children.

The second year of the School Kids Cup started at the beginning of April in the Sabayil district of Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, with fourth grade pupils from 15 secondary schools.

The second group involved 15 secondary schools from the Binagadi district of Baku. In total, the cup was attended by about 250 children, as well as their parents, schoolmates and teachers.

All the children demonstrated their competitive spirit and surprisingly high level of football skills.

There are plans for the School Kids Cup in the future to include all the schools in Baku along with schools from across the whole country.

The AFFA has always tried to encourage grassroots development. The AFFA and the ministry of education continue to run Football lessons at schools as special pilot courses for school pupils. This project was launched two years ago and it is still running successfully.

The AFFA always supports all efforts to accelerate the development of youth football in the country.

● Ulviyya Najafova

**Belarus**

www.bff.by

## New president elected

22 April was a big day for the Football Federation of Belarus (BFF), as it was the day of its annual ordinary conference. In addition to the usual business of discussing the results and achievements of the previous season and improvements that needed to be made, the outgoing BFF president, Gennady Nevyglas, summed up the results of his eight years in office. He also presented the executive committee's report. The key items on the agenda of the conference were, however, the presidential and executive committee elections.



Sergey Rumas, the new president of the BFF

The conference had two special guests: Grigoriy Surkis, member of the UEFA Executive Committee, and Eva Pasquier from FIFA.

Mr Surkis commended the BFF on the development of football in Belarus and on the spirit of fair play and respect in which the conference was taking place. He also hoped to see the Belarusian national team in Ukraine for UEFA EURO 2012.

Ms Pasquier said that it was the first time she had attended an annual conference in Belarus as an observer and she praised the high standard of organisation of the assembly and wished good luck to the new president.

The only candidate for the position of BFF president was Sergey Rumas, deputy prime minister of Belarus since December 2010, who was therefore elected unanimously.

Born on 1 December 1969, Sergey Rumas is a professional banker and financial specialist who has held several high-level positions in banking.

In his speech, Mr Rumas stressed the importance of developing youth, amateur and grassroots football in Belarus. He also supported the idea of applying to host the UEFA Europa League final after the construction of the new stadium.

● Yulia Zenkovich



## Steven Martens appointed new general secretary

On 2 May, Steven Martens took up the position of general secretary of the Royal Belgian Football Association (URBSFA). His appointment was announced on 26 January, but professional commitments prevented him from starting his new job sooner.

Born on 25 May 1964, Steven Martens is a well-known face on the Belgian sporting scene, particularly in tennis, as he was captain of the Belgian national team for the Davis Cup (2001–05) and the Fed Cup (1993–98). His achievements in Belgian tennis do not stop there, as he was also technical director of the Flemish Tennis Association (VTV) between 2005 and 2006, and previously technical coordinator of the VTV's training centre and the coach of renowned players such as Sabine Appelmans, Kim Clijsters, Justine Henin, Xavier Malisse and Olivier Rochus.



Steven Martens (left) and François De Keersmaecker, the URBSFA president, at the official presentation

In 2007, Steven Martens decided to broaden his horizons and accepted the post of player director of the British Lawn Tennis Association, with the aim of modernising the sport

and attracting more participants in the UK. Through this role, which he fulfilled very successfully, he also had the opportunity to work directly with a staff of around 130, which will be very useful experience for him in his new position.

Of course, Steven Martens, whose knowledge of different languages is undeniably an asset, knows tennis better than football, even though he played football in his youth. However, the intricacies of high-level sport are no mystery to him, and he comes to the job with new ideas which will allow him to work on further modernising Belgian football and continuing to improve the way that our association operates.

In short, we at the Belgian association are pleased to have someone of Steven Martens' calibre on board and are convinced that his performance will live up to the high expectations that we have of him.

● Pierre Cornez

## A new title for APOEL FC

Many more young footballers than expected participated in the 2010/11 national grassroots championships, and, as always, it was a great success.

From November 2010 to April 2011, grassroots championships were organised all over Cyprus for children born between 1998 and 2004, who were divided into seven different age groups. A total of more than 250 teams took part. Based on the official records of our association, more than 5,000 children participated first at regional level and then in national finals in Nicosia.

In other news, APOEL FC from Nicosia secured their 21st league title four games before the end of the 2010/11 competition.

Meanwhile, in women's football, Apollon Limassol FC won the double this season.

In our futsal first division, AC Omonia from Nicosia finished in the top spot, ahead of AGBU Ararat Nicosia FC.

Lastly, for the third consecutive season we organised a cup competition exclusively for teams from the third and fourth divisions. Ethnikos Assias FC won the cup by beating ENAD Polis Chrysohous FC 1-0 in the final.

● Kyriakos Giorgallis



The grassroots championships attracted a pleasingly high number of participants

## SO Chambéry at the French Cup final

First on the 2010/11 honours board which rewards the Davids among the Goliaths of the French Cup, SO Chambéry, from the second division of the French amateur championship (CFA 2), were invited by the French Football Federation (FFF) to attend the final on 14 May at the Stade de France. About 15 youth players from the Savoyard club also attended this dream event.

"This invitation really touched us," said David Guion, the team's coach and the former director of the Saint-Étienne training centre. "The players are very proud to have been chosen. We are also happy that we could bring the younger players with us. They were lucky enough to accompany the professionals onto the pitch before kick-off. It was fantastic! Our wish was for our success to be enjoyed by the whole club. This has happened today. This is in keeping with our philosophy of sharing."

Eliminated in the quarter-finals by Angers SCO (League 2), the Savoyards went down in cup history after knocking out three League 1 teams in a row (AS Monaco FC, Stade Brestois 29 and FC Sochaux-Montbéliard), a feat never



One of many happy scenes experienced by Chambéry's players in this season's French Cup

before achieved by amateurs. However, what stands out above all for Guion from his team's fantastic cup run is the shared emotions. "We were totally at one with the fans, the players and the staff. It's for moments like these that I became a coach. This performance is unquestionably the most memorable of my career."

Today, the euphoria has still not given way to disappointment. "We knew that we wouldn't go all the way, which made every victory even sweeter," said Guion. "We're now aiming for promotion to the CFA. The cup has helped us a lot with this aim. Thanks to the cup, we know that we are capable of great things."

● Pierre Bougeois



Georgia

www.gff.ge

## Schoolball project a huge success

Since 2006, the Georgian Football Federation (GFF) has been running the Schoolball tournament in cooperation with the Georgian street football association, the municipality of Tbilisi and the Georgian ministry of education and science. In its first year, only state schools in Tbilisi were involved and only 2,000 pupils participated. However, the tournament has been so successful that it has now developed into a nationwide competition in which approximately 13,000 school children aged from 10 to 13 now participate annually.

This year Coca-Cola has become the official sponsor of the event.

The opening of this year's tournament was attended by the GFF's president, Zviad Sichinava, as well as other representatives of the



Senes Erzik greets the young participants

federation; UEFA's first vice-president, Senes Erzik; and the Georgian minister of sport and youth affairs, Lado Vardzelashvili, among others.

Senes Erzik greeted the participants and opened the tournament officially with a symbolic kick of the ball.

On the first day, schools from the Vake-Saburtalo district of Tbilisi played each other in the Irao stadium.

The tournament will end with the final on 29 June. The winners will then be offered the chance to participate in an international tournament this summer, choosing from tournaments in Cologne (Germany), Costa Brava (Spain) and Sardinia (Italy).

● Tata Burduli



Hungary

www.mlsz.hu

## Over €8 million for youth education

The Hungarian ministry of national resources is donating 2.2 billion forints (€8.1 million) to support the youth education programme of the Hungarian Football Federation (MLSZ). As announced at a press conference in April, most of the funds will go to the best Hungarian youth academies for the major role they play in elite education, while the rest will be available for smaller clubs and schools throughout the country through the Bozsik programme, the MLSZ's youth education programme (named after József Bozsik, the Magical Magyar and legendary midfielder of Budapesti Honvéd who is the most-capped Hungarian player to date).

The clubs and academies had to take part in an open tender and fulfil different criteria in the field of football and outside of it, for example in academic education. "We will adhere to strict standards to ensure that only youth education institutions which satisfy the principles



Greece

www.epo.gr



Volunteers with Sofoklis Pilavios, president of the Greek FA, in the stands of the Georgios Karaiskakis stadium after the match between Greece and Poland

## Volunteers' national team

Following UEFA's recommendations, one of the most interesting and innovative programmes that the Hellenic Football Federation (EPO) designed and launched for 2011 was the official volunteering programme. The official volunteers' national team (VNT) was created and made a dynamic debut on 29 March, at the friendly international match between Greece and Poland. Thirty-five enthusiastic volunteers of all ages kindly offered their assistance in spectator services, protocol services, ticketing, marketing, media and match operations.

The VNT took about three months to form. The procedure consisted of the following stages:

1. Advertising campaign: the campaign included extensive advertising of the programme on the federation's official website and the national team's fan club website. The application form for the programme was available on the EPO website and all applications were submitted electronically.

2. Selection process: meetings and personal interviews with the applicants were arranged, during which a short briefing about the programme was given.
3. Recruitment process: all applicants were informed whether or not they had been selected.
4. Training process: general and specific training was provided.
5. Retention phase: frequent communication between the VNT and the EPO was established, in order to keep the team united and the spirit alive between matches. Various events are also being held for this reason.

The application process is still ongoing and new interviews are being arranged. The VNT will grow rapidly as more operational tasks will be assigned soon. However, the most important thing is to build up knowledge, create a legacy and enable fans of the national team to become a vital part of match preparations and conduct.

● Panos Korkodeilos



Attila Czene, secretary of state for sport, Sándor Csányi, president of the Hungarian FA, and Tamás Szabo, head of the national institute for youth sport

benefit from this support," said Sándor Csányi, president of the MLSZ. "With clear, transparent rules and the proper use of this money, we expect to see visible progress."

Former international Tibor Nyilasi also spoke at the press conference. The current MLSZ sports director said that the coaches must work together closely at youth level for the benefit of Hungarian football. "The MLSZ will make sure that the football education is of a high standard. Children have always been a great treasure. Many youngsters have moved abroad, but now we must provide professional support for their careers at home."

● Márton Dinnyes



## Coaching the coaches

In mid-April about 45 coaches – male and female – from Liechtenstein football clubs attended a course run by the technical staff of the Liechtenstein Football Association (LFV). The aim of the course was to convince the club coaches of the merits of the LFV's match and training philosophy and thereby encourage them to follow the same principles in their clubs as applied at national level. In a nutshell the philosophy is: *"Train in the way you want to play and you will play in the way you train."*

The course, held at the Eschen-Mauren stadium, began with a presentation on the theoretical aspects of football coaching. The second part of the programme involved putting theory into practice under the supervision of national coach Bidu Zaugg and his team of technicians. At the end of the course everyone received a detailed manual for training sessions and match preparation, which documents the theory of training and playing complete with concrete examples.

● Anton Banzer



Continuous development for coaches



**Malta**

www.mfa.com.mt



The course participants with Norman Darmanin Demajo, MFA president

D. Aquilina

## Seminar on artificial and grass pitches

Several artificial and grass pitches have been laid in Malta and Gozo in conjunction with UEFA aid programmes, which has led to

a need for widespread maintenance by specialised ground staff. Professional upkeep of the playing surfaces is important for prolonging the lifespan of the pitches.

With this in mind, the Malta Football Association (MFA) organised an intensive two-day

seminar for personnel working in football infrastructure and management. The seminar was an excellent opportunity for them to acquire knowledge of how to preserve artificial and grass playing surfaces as well as to share this knowledge.

Foreign experts on the subject conducted the seminar, which was held at the MFA's football complex in Ta' Qali. Specialists from the UEFA administration led the team of lecturers, which consisted of Alan Ferguson, head groundsman at Ipswich Town FC, Markus Keller, a UEFA consultant on artificial turf, Alastair Cox, member of UEFA's Artificial Turf Experts Panel, and Tero Auvinen, infrastructure manager for the Football Association of Finland.

Addressing the participants, the MFA president, Norman Darmanin Demajo, spoke about the importance his association is placing on the maintenance of Maltese clubs' playing and training facilities. He said that this would ensure that football was played under the best possible conditions and that the surfaces would last longer.

● Alex Vella



**Moldova**

www.fmf.md

## Women's Martisor tournament in Vadul lui Voda

The Moldovan national teams' technical centre in Vadul lui Voda has hosted the women's Under-18 Martisor tournament. In total, 12 women's teams from different regions of Moldova took part in the tournament, which was held in an atmosphere of fair play and friendliness, as the organisers, the Football Association of Moldova and the national women's football association, had intended.

The winners of the tournament were Chisinau sports lyceum, who beat CS Gloria Edinet 2-0 in the final, after penalties. In the third-place match, the Tiraspol sports school beat FC Academia UTM Chisinau 3-1, also after penalties.

An awards ceremony was held in which awards went to Anna Zatusavscaia (Gloria) for best goalkeeper, Ecaterina Gheruta (Chisinau sports lyceum) for best defender and Anastasia Toma (Chisinau sports lyceum) for best goal-getter. Alla Andruh (Gloria) was voted player of the tournament.

The awards ceremony was attended by Pavel Cebanu, president of the Football Association



A happy conclusion to the tournament

of Moldova, Roman Perciun, president of the national women's football association, and Anatol Teslev, sports director of the Football Association of Moldova. They presented the participants with their well-deserved medals, trophies and gifts.

*"The aim of this tournament was to promote women's football and to bring young players together to socialise and make friends, all through sporting competition,"* said Pavel Cebanu.

● Press Office



## Montenegro

www.fscg.co.me

### A special visit to children with special needs

Montenegrin national team players Stefan Savić and Petar Grbić were guests of the 1st June centre for the education and training of children with special needs in Podgorica, to the delight of a large number of youngsters who had the opportunity to talk about football and life in general with their idols. The visit was organised by the grassroots department of the Football Federation of Montenegro (FSCG), through the Football Ambassadors programme.

During the visit, the players signed autographs and gave out numerous presents, including shirts, footballs, flags, scarves and pins. The highlight of the event was a futsal game

between the players and some FSCG employees on one side and a team of children from the centre on the other. The game was won by the home team in front of a crowd of thrilled fans. The children even managed to score no fewer than four goals against Savić's defence.

Savić said: "Words cannot describe how happy I am to be here. I enjoyed hanging out with the kids. They reminded me how much joy we can bring to someone with a little attention. These kids showed a great love of football and sport in general, so I hope our visit encourages them to enjoy it even more in the future. And of course, we have arranged the return game for the next time we come."

Football ambassadors have also visited several primary schools during the last three



Savić and Grbić surrounded by happy children

months with one single goal – to let our youth experience the joy and the beauty of football, regardless of their age, sex, or physical or intellectual abilities.

● Ivan Radović



## Netherlands

www.knvb.nl

### Nicolet Bakker appointed assistant referee in professional football

Last month, Nicolet Bakker became only the second female assistant referee to be appointed for a professional football match. Bakker, 27, officiated as an assistant to former international referee Jan Wegereef at the second division match between FC Volendam and SC Fortuna Sittard on 8 April. The home team won 2-1 and the overall opinion was that Bakker had made a flawless debut.



Nicolet Bakker at work

Born in Hoogeveen and the daughter of a male amateur referee, Nicolet Bakker started her career as an amateur referee, but soon entered the Dutch FA's programme for budding assistant referees. In 2008 she received her FIFA badge as an international assistant in women's football and from that moment she decided to focus on a career as an assistant referee. Her first reward was an appearance in the FIFA Under-20 Women's World Cup in Trinidad and Tobago last year, during which she officiated in no fewer than four matches, the last of which was the quarter-final between Nigeria and the eventual winners, South Korea.

The first ever woman to serve as an assistant referee in Dutch professional football was Sjoukje de Jong, in 2001. De Jong, a teacher by profession, made her debut in the second division match between Go Ahead Eagles and VVV-Venlo. However, after only two professional football matches, an injury cut short De Jong's career as an assistant referee. When she eventually recovered, she began a very successful career as a referee in top-level amateur football.

● Rob de Leede



## Northern Ireland

www.irishfa.com

### New technology for referees

The Irish Football Association recently launched an exciting pilot scheme in the Carling Premiership aimed at helping speed up the administration process for referees after each game.

Traditionally, referees would write their match reports at home and send them into the Irish FA a few days after each game. However, with the use of a Samsung Galaxy Tab from Barclay Communications, they will now be able to send their reports and match information to the Irish FA at the touch of a button after the match.

Speaking at the launch of the pilot scheme, Alan Snoddy, referee development officer for the Irish FA, said: "This new technology will



Alan Snoddy, referee development officer (left), with a representative of Barclay Communications

simplify and streamline our post-match work and I am very excited about the benefits this new initiative will bring".

● Graeme Beggs



## Poland

www.pzpn.pl

### New logos bring visual identity of Polish football into harmony

On 14 April, at the Capitol Theatre in Warsaw, the new logo of the Polish Football Association (PZPN) was unveiled. The logo is shaped like a ball and the top part depicts the head of an eagle, the symbol of Polish identity and national pride, both of which are just as important for Polish football fans as the national colours.

The logo's colours – red, complemented by an elegant gold – draw on the best traditions of national football and retain the colours of the previous logotype. The new logo combines modernity with tradition.

The process of creating a new visual identity began last autumn. Seven marketing agencies specialising in brand design took part in the competition to design a new logo. The brief sent to them included information about the insignia used by the PZPN in its 90-year history, as well as information about the symbols used by other European football associations.

After selecting the three best proposals, we decided to carry out research among football fans. In January, from the recommended

projects, the PZPN board chose the project of the SaltPepper agency.

As part of the process of giving the association's visual identity a new look, the logos of the Polish Cup, national team and the PZPN foundation were also redesigned, with the aim of harmonising the whole visual identity of the PZPN.

Until now, there have been multiple logos, often in different colours and styles. The old PZPN logo was different from other logos, such as those of the Polish Cup, national team and children's tournaments; there was no link between them and the PZPN logo. Basing logotypes on a common design will be more attractive to the fans, sponsors and media.

Since April, the new logo has been visible on all corporate and advertising materials. The website layout and the official newsletter of the PZPN will also be given a fresh look. With the change of logo, we have launched a fan page on Facebook, and soon there will also be a video channel on YouTube.

We have also started work on an official fan club. We believe that thanks to the modern logotype we can create an interesting range of products for fans.

● Agnieszka Olejkowska



The new logo of the Polish FA





## Homeless football takes centre stage

More than 300 players from all over the Republic of Ireland came together in Tallaght, Dublin, last month to participate in the Big Issue Street Soccer Finals, which precede the Homeless World Cup.

Fostering the sense of inclusion that is such an important aspect of the leagues, 30 teams from all over Ireland, including players from Ghana, Nigeria and Afghanistan, battled it out for supremacy in a superb display of skill, agility and sportsmanship. For the second year in a row, WHAD (We Have a Dream) from the St Catherine's Street League in Dublin claimed the title.

At the awards ceremony afterwards, trophies were presented to the players by various dignitaries, including Michael O'Neill, manager of Shamrock Rovers FC; Maureen O'Sullivan TD, Luke "Ming" Flanagan TD and Mattie McGrath TD (members of the Irish Parliament and supporters of the street leagues); and South Dublin County deputy mayor, Cathal King.

The tournament is used as the basis for selecting a squad of 30 players from which a team to represent Ireland in the Homeless World Cup in Paris in August will be selected.

For more information on the street league and the Homeless World Cup, visit: [www.irishstreetleague.com](http://www.irishstreetleague.com).

● Fran Whearty



The winners after the awards ceremony



Six of the Executive Committee's guests

## A successful debate

The Scottish FA broke with tradition recently by inviting guests from across football to take part in a debating forum at its council meeting.

Stewart Regan, the Scottish FA chief executive, is determined to push through reforms recommended in the Henry McLeish review, and the decision to bring independent representatives into the council proved a huge success.

*"I believe it is important that, as the governing body for Scottish football, we are inclusive and representative of all stakeholders in the game," said Regan. "The debate was encouraging and we hope that the council can evolve into the main debating chamber for all issues that affect Scottish football."*

Mark Hovell, a senior judge for the Court of Arbitration for Sport, and Fraser Wishart, chief executive of PFA Scotland, were among the six invited guests, and both made presentations on the topic of the debate:

*"Football disciplinary matters can be handled by the football authorities without the need for legal intervention: is this a pipe dream in the current football market place?"*

The question was prompted by the recent trend for member clubs to be represented by QCs in disciplinary matters.

Derrick Brown, of the Fife FA, Michael Johnston, the Kilmarnock FC chairman, and Dr Andrew Waddell, of the East of Scotland Football League, also spoke in favour of the motion.

Also in attendance at the council were Alan Harris, chairman of Supporters Direct, Gavin MacLeod, chief executive of Scottish Disability Sport, and Roddy Forsyth, president of the Scottish Football Writers' Association.

All declared the debate a success and the shape of things to come.

*"We welcome the opportunity to have our views heard and for us, as representatives of the football players, to be able to contribute to the debate on issues that affect the whole of Scottish football," said Wishart. "I found the debate very worthwhile and the exchange of views helpful in increasing understanding of the roles of all the stakeholders within football. I am confident that this will be the first step towards a new mandate for the Scottish FA council."*

● Darryl Broadfoot



## May is the month of youth football in Slovakia

May is the month of the annual U18 Slovakia Cup. This year is the 21st year of the tournament, which is known as an unofficial European championship for this age category. Eight teams will play 16 matches in 15 cities in western Slovakia. Among the teams in the tournament is one from Japan with a player who was affected personally by the earthquake in March – he studies at the football academy in the badly hit city of Fukushima.

The next tournament is also very important both for Slovak and for international youth football players. In the second half of May, Slovakia hosts the Group 3 matches of the elite round of the European Under-19 Championship. The winner will qualify for the final



The Slovak U18 team

round in Romania in July. The teams from Slovakia, France, Greece and Belarus will play in stadiums in Senec and Nitra, including the national training centre in Senec. Both

these tournaments are a very good and important test for the European U17 Championship final round, which the Slovak Football Association will host in 2013.

● Juraj Curny




**Switzerland**
[www.football.ch](http://www.football.ch)

## Second recruitment camp for overseas-based Swiss players

After a successful first edition last year, the Swiss Football Association (SFV) will hold its second recruitment camp for overseas-based Swiss players in cooperation with Swiss Olympic from 25 September to 1 October at the Tenero sports centre in Ticino. The training week will provide 25 talented young players born between 1994 and 1997 with an opportunity to stake a claim for a place in one of the Swiss national youth teams or one of the football academies in Payerne, Emmen or Tenero. The SFV uses these academies to offer top-level professional training to talented young players. "Since we don't have scouts in every country in the world, we have decided to

use this method to identify and assess talented young players with Swiss passports," said Dany Ryser, Swiss youth coach who coached the Swiss Under-17 team to the world title in Nigeria in 2009.



Getting ready to take over from the current brigade at the Emmen training centre

Keystone

Of course, playing ability is the main attribute that will be evaluated during the daily training sessions of this week-long camp, although the players' personality and sense of camaraderie also represent important aspects.

● Pierre Benoit


**Ukraine**
[www.ffu.org.ua](http://www.ffu.org.ua)

## Blokhin back in charge of Ukraine

Oleg Blokhin has taken charge of Ukraine's national team for the second time, after being unveiled as the new coach of the UEFA EURO 2012 co-host's team.

Blokhin, who enjoyed a successful first spell in the post between 2003 and 2007, beat off stiff competition for the role, including prospective candidates Yuriy Kalitvitsev, the caretaker coach, and Pavlo Yakovenko, the tactician in charge of the Ukrainian Under-21 side.

The 58-year-old former Ballon d'Or winner, who won 18 out of a possible 27 votes in the elections held by the executive committee of


**Turkey**
[www.tff.org](http://www.tff.org)

## Supporters and players of the future will develop through theatre

Football is Only a Game, a theatre performance for children, was staged free of charge as part of National Sovereignty and Children's Day activities on 23 April, courtesy of the Turkish Football Association (TFF).

The premiere was held in the Kadikoy Public Education Centre, with the participation of the TFF vice-president, Lutfi Arıboğan.

Aiming to impress upon the children a love of football, respect and fair play, the TFF has worked with the Enis Fosforoglu children's

theatre as part of Football for Everyone (grass-roots) programme activities. Football is Only a Game was staged 20 times in 10 cities in Anatolia in November and December 2010, watched by 15,000 children. Eight special performances were also staged in Istanbul, giving out messages devoted to fair play.

Football is Only a Game, by Enis Fosforoglu, a famous Turkish actor, is about the place and importance of football in our daily lives. The play puts forward the positive aspects of the game by examining the violence within it, and invites the children to become good participants and respectful supporters.

● Türker Tozar



TFF

When training becomes theatre



Oleg Blokhine is back

the Football Federation of Ukraine (FFU), guided Ukraine to the 2006 FIFA World Cup quarter-finals – their highest achievement on the international stage – before stepping down after his side failed in their bid to qualify for UEFA EURO 2008.

"We thank Yuriy Kalitvitsev for his good work and hope Oleg Blokhin can surpass his own achievements during his previous spell in charge of Ukraine," said Grigoriy Surkis, FFU president.

"Our time is very limited and the players should prove their right to play in the national team in every game," said Blokhin. "Our task is to win the championship but we should bear in mind that there will be at least ten other very strong contenders. Apart from Brazil and Argentina, all the strongest national teams in world football are based in Europe, which is why we should first focus on the 'compulsory programme' – progressing from the group stage."

The former PAOK FC, AEK Athens FC and FC Moskva coach added: "We have many talented players, but the youngsters often lack consistency at the top level. I think we should have a balanced team with a proper mix of young and experienced players."

● Bogdan Buga



## Birthdays

**Michael Joseph Hyland** (Republic of Ireland), member of the circle of former UEFA committee members, will celebrate his 80th birthday on 6 June. **George Courtney** (England), match delegate, and **Rolf Haugen** (Norway), referee observer, will both turn 70 on 4 June. Reaching the same landmark in June are **Kenneth J. Hope** (Scotland), referee observer, on 7 June, and **Viacheslav Koloskov** (Russia), honorary member, on 15 June. On 12 June, meanwhile, **Alain Courtois** (Belgium), member of the circle of former UEFA committee members, will celebrate his 60th birthday. Also turning 60 in June are **Michael Joseph Maessen** (Netherlands), vice-chairman of the Appeals Body, on 17 June, **Hannelore Ratzburg** (Germany), vice-chairman of the Women's Football Committee, on 18 June and **Sigurdur Hannesson** (Iceland), referee observer, on 27 June.

UEFA also extends birthday wishes for June to:

**Dušan Savić** (Serbia, 1.6)  
**Ekaterina Fedyshina** (Russia, 1.6)  
**Ferenc Székely** (Hungary, 2.6)  
**Ivaylo Ivkov** (Bulgaria, 3.6)  
**Radek Lobo** (Czech Republic, 3.6)  
**Klara Bjartmarz** (Iceland, 3.6)  
**John Ward** (Republic of Ireland, 4.6)  
**Jean-Samuel Leuba** (Switzerland, 4.6)  
**Ludovico Micallef** (Malta, 5.6)  
**Jaap Uilenberg** (Netherlands, 5.6)  
**Léon Straessle** (Switzerland, 6.6)  
**Theo Zwanziger** (Germany, 6.6)  
**Piotr Werner** (Poland, 6.6)  
**Ryszard Wójcik** (Poland, 6.6)  
**Stefano Braschi** (Italy, 6.6)  
**Lars-Åke Björck** (Sweden, 7.6)  
**Michel Sablon** (Belgium, 7.6)  
**Sondre Kåfjord** (Norway, 7.6)  
**Sándor Berzi** (Hungary, 7.6)  
**Charles Ronlez** (Belgium, 7.6)  
**Yury Dupanau** (Belarus, 7.6)  
**Onofre Costa** (Portugal, 7.6)  
**Johannes Scholtz** (Netherlands, 8.6)  
**Bryan Drew** (England, 8.6)  
**Jesper Møller Christensen** (Denmark, 9.6)  
**Petri Antero Jakonen** (Finland, 9.6)  
**Hans Bangerter** (Switzerland, 10.6)  
**Eleni Kiriou** (Greece, 10.6)  
**Mikalai Varabyov** (Belarus, 10.6)  
**Alun Evans** (Wales, 11.6)  
**Leonardo Grosso** (Italy, 11.6)  
**Kyros Georgiou** (Cyprus, 11.6)  
**Nathan Bartfeld** (Moldova, 11.6)  
**Thórir Hákonarson** (Iceland, 11.6)  
**Zoran Dimić** (Serbia, 11.6)  
**Jørn West Larsen** (Denmark, 12.6)  
**Roland Coquard** (France, 13.6)  
**Targo Kaldaja** (Estonia, 13.6)  
**Galina Doneva** (Bulgaria, 14.6)  
**Nuno Castro** (Portugal, 14.6)  
**Giulio Campanati** (Italy, 15.6)  
**Miguel Galan Torres** (Spain, 15.6)  
**Stephen Thomas** (England, 17.6)  
**Markus Nobs** (Switzerland, 17.6)  
**Philippe Piat** (France, 18.6)  
**Amit Klein** (Israel, 18.6)  
**Ivan Novak** (Croatia, 18.6)  
**Eduard Prodani** (Albania, 18.6)  
**Elkhan Mammadov** (Azerbaijan, 18.6)

**Gaioz Darsadze** (Georgia, 19.6)  
**Dag Riisnaes** (Norway, 20.6)  
**Michel Platini** (France, 21.6)  
**Peter Peters** (Germany, 21.6)  
**Zoran Cvrk** (Croatia, 21.6)  
**Keith Stuart Hackett** (England, 22.6)  
**Zvi Rosen** (Israel, 23.6)  
**Vladimir Antonov** (Moldova, 23.6)  
**Leslie Irvine** (Northern Ireland, 23.6)  
**Georg Pangl** (Austria, 23.6)  
**Emanuel Zammit** (Malta, 24.6)  
**Jean-Jacques Schonckert** (Luxembourg, 24.6)  
**Rene H.J. Temmink** (Netherlands, 24.6)  
**João Rocha** (Portugal, 24.6)  
**Reinhard Walser** (Liechtenstein, 25.6)  
**Christian Schmölzer** (Austria, 25.6)  
**Foppe de Haan** (Netherlands, 26.6)  
**Barry W. Bright** (England, 27.6)  
**Eyjólfur Ólafsson** (Iceland, 27.6)  
**José Venancio López Hierro** (Spain, 27.6)  
**Levent Kızıl** (Turkey, 27.6)  
**Wim Koevers** (Belgium, 28.6)  
**Ivan Borissov Lekov** (Bulgaria, 29.6)  
**Wolfgang Sowa** (Austria, 29.6)  
**Peter J. van Zunderd** (Netherlands, 30.6)

## Forthcoming events

### Meetings

#### 8.6.2011, Bucharest

2010/11 European Under-19 Championship: draw for the final round

#### 16/17.6.2011, Nyon

Executive Committee

#### 20.6.2011, Nyon

2011/12 UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa League: draw for the first and second qualifying rounds

#### 23.6.2011, Nyon

2011/12 UEFA Women's Champions League: draw for the qualifying round

### Competitions

#### 30.5–11.6.2011, Italy

European Women's Under-19 Championship: final round

#### 11–25.6.2011, Denmark

European Under-21 Championship: final round

#### 18.6–10.7.2011, Mexico

FIFA U-17 World Cup

#### 21–28.6.2011, Braga

UEFA Regions' Cup: final round

#### 26.6–17.7.2011, Germany

FIFA Women's World Cup

#### 28/29.6.2011

UEFA Champions League: first qualifying round (first leg matches)

#### 30.6.2011

UEFA Europa League: first qualifying round (first leg matches)

### Notices

■ On 22 April, Sergey Rumas was elected president of the Belarus Football Federation.

■ On 12 April, the FIFA Emergency Committee appointed a six-man normalisation committee to solve the problems faced by the Bosnia and Herzegovina Football Federation (NFSBiH), which was suspended by FIFA and UEFA on 1 April.

This committee is acting as the NFSBiH executive committee and emergency committee. Its first task is to prepare and convoke an ordinary general meeting for the purpose of adopting the federation's statutes. Among its other tasks after that, the normalisation committee will have to prepare elections for all the new bodies by 30 November at the latest, in accordance with the newly adopted statutes.

■ The 61st FIFA Congress takes place in Zurich on 31 May and 1 June.

### Obituary

**Ivan Slavkov**, former president of the Bulgarian Football Union, passed away on 1 May at the age of 70. At UEFA level he served as an expert in marketing, TV and new technologies from 2002 to 2004.



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Diversity



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The Game