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**Cover:**

*Just like the teams involved  
in UEFA's club competitions,  
Europe's national teams  
(including Spain and France,  
shown here in their match last  
October) will soon be kicking off  
the second half of their season  
and completing qualifying for  
the 2014 FIFA World Cup.*

Photo: Getty Images

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## MORE THAN A QUESTION OF ETHICS

What is the footballer's creed if not the persistent quest for victory coupled with respect for the Laws of the Game, the referee, opponents, team-mates and the watching public?

That objective entirely precludes any notion of agreements being reached, compromises being struck or matches being fixed. When footballers lace up their boots, they must do so with a view to winning. Any hint of calculation is nothing less than an affront to their creed.

Cheating of any kind is unacceptable, as it represents an attack on the very integrity of competition, which demands that all parties rely solely on their own strengths in pursuing victory. Of course, there has never been – and never will be – equality in terms of strength. There will always be big clubs and smaller clubs. Whether because of the size of their stadiums, economic circumstances or other factors, some clubs will always have more resources than many others. Clubs can compensate for this “natural” inequality by keenly developing other strengths, such as passion, solidarity and teamwork. However, they must not do so by engaging in practices such as accumulating debts, which is another form of cheating, and one that is particularly dangerous, since it can threaten a club's very existence.

It was for this reason that we introduced the principle of financial fair play in our club competitions. And we did so with a view to helping clubs, not controlling and punishing them. Football is making more money than ever before, and yet clubs have never been in so much debt.

That deplorable paradox cannot continue. It is not merely a question of ethics but about the very survival of professional football. UEFA's job is to defend the interests of football as a whole, which is why we are starting this year by pledging, as always, to do whatever it takes to tackle anything that threatens the good health of our sport.

A stylized, handwritten signature of Michel Platini in black ink.

**Michel Platini**  
UEFA President



# EURO 2020 BEGINS TO TAKE SHAPE

On 25 January, the House of European Football in Nyon played host to the UEFA Executive Committee, which held its first meeting of 2013, chaired by the UEFA President, Michel Platini.



*The Executive Committee's first meeting of 2013*

The Executive Committee's decision in December to make EURO 2020 a "EURO for Europe", with matches played in various cities across the continent, had created considerable excitement and there was eagerness to see the proposals made by the UEFA National Team Competitions Committee, which had begun work immediately and had already met twice in the previous month to discuss the matter. The Executive Committee endorsed all of the recommendations, so EURO 2020 is now beginning to take shape.

The matches will be played in 13 cities in 13 different countries. Of those cities, 12 will host three group matches and a knockout match (as there will be six groups in total), while the 13th will host the two semi-finals and the final. All member associations will be able to bid, but bids will be limited to a maximum of two cities (with only one stadium in each): one city bidding to host the group matches and the one knockout match, and one city bidding to host the semi-finals and the final. (Associations can also propose the same city for both, but the country that is awarded the semi-finals and the final will be prevented from hosting any other matches.)

## Stadium capacity

Minimum capacities have been set for stadiums, depending on the stage of the tournament:

- 70,000 for the semi-finals and the final
- 60,000 for the quarter-finals
- 50,000 for the round of 16 and group matches.

In order to increase the number of possible candidates, there is the potential for a maximum

of two smaller stadiums with minimum capacities of 30,000 to be selected. The Executive Committee will make its final decision in September 2014. The bid regulations will be approved in March 2013; the technical bid requirements will be communicated in April 2013; candidates will confirm their bids in September 2013; and bid dossiers containing all requested guarantees (government support, security, taxation, customs, transportation, etc.) will be submitted in April and May 2014, prior to the start of the evaluation phase.

Given the number of host countries, it is obvious that no team will qualify automatically. There should not be more than two host countries in any one final round group, and those host teams should be able to play at home in two group matches. There will be no such guarantee for the knockout rounds.

## Ten cities for EURO 2016

With UEFA EURO 2016 a little closer at hand, the picture is obviously somewhat clearer as regards that tournament, and the Executive Committee has now confirmed the ten cities that will be hosting matches. Games will be played in Bordeaux, Lyon and Nice (where new stadiums are set to be built), as well as Lens, Lille, Marseille, Paris, Saint-Denis, Saint-Etienne and Toulouse. The draw for the qualifying groups will be made on 9 March 2014 in Nice.

This will be the first time that 24 teams have contested the final round, and it will also be the first time that qualifying matches have been based around "weeks of football", with games



running from Thursday to the following Tuesday and centralised marketing of media rights.

The UEFA Executive Committee has revised the list of members of UEFA committees for the period 2011–15 in order to take account of changes within national associations. It has also approved a new format for the UEFA Elite Club Coaches Forum, which has convened at the beginning of September every year since 1999, bringing together some of the most prominent coaches in European club football. Those meetings are to become more interactive, with more places allocated to the coaches of clubs in the UEFA Europa League.

The committee also addressed the issue of the next Ordinary UEFA Congress, which will take place on 24 May 2013 in London. It approved the provisional agenda and programme, as well as the activity reports and financial documents that will be submitted to the delegates from the national associations.

### Increase in disciplinary proceedings

In recent years, UEFA's disciplinary bodies have seen a relentless increase in both the size and complexity of their caseload. There were a total of 1,060 cases in the 2011/12 season, up from just 304 in 1994/95. In the same period, the number of appeals increased from 12 to 53, and the number of legal proceedings handled by UEFA's disciplinary inspectors passed the 100 mark. With that in mind, the UEFA Executive Committee has decided to appoint five additional disciplinary inspectors: Nodar Akhalkatsi (from Georgia), João Leal Amado (from Portugal), Prune Rocipon (from France), Miguel Liétard Fernández-Palacios (from Spain) and Holger Blask (from Germany).

Finally, the committee again showed its interest in the exchange of knowledge and the sharing of information by giving the green light to the UEFA PLAY project, an IT platform for assistance and cooperation programmes which will be made available to member associations and other confederations. ●

## UNANIMOUS DECLARATION BY UEFA'S MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS

**As part of the consultation procedure regarding the revision of the FIFA Statutes, the presidents and general secretaries of UEFA's member associations met in Nyon on the eve of the Executive Committee meeting.**

Following a very frank discussion, the 53 associations issued a declaration setting out their common position on those amendments to the FIFA Statutes – proposed by FIFA with a view to improving its governance – that had previously been left in abeyance (the remainder having already been adopted in 2012 at the FIFA Congress in Budapest).

The eleven-point declaration (which has been published in full on UEFA.com) includes positions on FIFA's Executive Committee and presidency.

- UEFA's member associations are in favour of continuing with the status quo in respect of the composition of the FIFA Executive Committee, particularly as regards the number of vice-presidents, with the four British associations retaining an automatic vice-presidency.
- The members of the FIFA Executive Committee should continue to be elected by their respective confederations. There is no need for them to be "confirmed" by the FIFA Congress. If "integrity checks" prove necessary, these should be carried out by the confederations on the basis of predefined criteria.
- The FIFA president should be limited to two terms of office: a first term of eight years and a second of four years.
- An age limit of 72 at the time of election should be introduced for members of all FIFA bodies.

The declaration also addresses, among other things, the representation of interest groups within FIFA, the bidding process for the FIFA World Cup and the functioning of the International Football Association Board.

Ultimately, the Ordinary FIFA Congress will rule on the amendments to the FIFA Statutes on 30/31 May 2013 in Mauritius. ●

*A constructive meeting of the presidents  
and general secretaries of UEFA's member associations*



## REMAINING VIGILANT

The campaign to eliminate doping from football continues apace – with UEFA's Anti-Doping Panel determined to make a crucial contribution. The panel's tireless work in this key sector was highlighted at its latest meeting at the House of European Football in Nyon.



Action Images

Every doping control carried out during UEFA EURO 2012 came back negative

UEFA is opposed to doping for a number of reasons. These include adherence to the values of Respect, creating a level playing field, protecting football's image, and protecting footballers' health. The Anti-Doping Panel's duties include the promotion, coordination and monitoring of UEFA's extensive anti-doping campaign, and the Nyon meeting agenda included a review of a successful EURO 2012 from an anti-doping perspective, planning for future activities, and an analysis of anti-doping developments in recent years as UEFA's work in this area has taken on fresh dimensions.

### A drug-free tournament

EURO 2012 in Poland and Ukraine was drug-free. An out-of-competition testing programme involving all 16 teams was undertaken ahead of the

final round, and was followed by a full in-competition programme during the tournament. At each doping control, before and during the tournament, blood and urine samples were collected by UEFA from players from the 16 teams, with each sample analysed for substances such as Erythropoietin (EPO) – the substance deployed to increase endurance and physical strength – and human growth hormone.

No positive tests were registered by the WADA-accredited laboratory in Warsaw. *"EURO 2012 was crowned by success, and we must all be extremely satisfied with the work undertaken,"* said panel chairman Dr Jacques Liénard. Preparation and education work before the tournament also proved its worth in terms of cooperation from the participating teams and players. The 16 team doctors were also apprised at a workshop in March, and signed a pre-tournament charter pledging a drug-free EURO.

### Extended tests

Over the years, drug tests have been extended from EUROs and the major club competitions to include women's, youth and futsal competitions. The panel was told that a total of 1,941 samples had been collected last season – 1,485 in-competition and 456 out-of-competition, with 909 analysed for EPO. There were five positive test cases. This season, no positive results had been recorded from 991 samples collected at the time of the panel meeting – 763 in-competition and 228 out-of-competition.

Young players are being specifically supported as part of a comprehensive education drive which is warning them against the dangers of doping, even if it is unintentional. Anti-doping sessions are taking place at UEFA youth final rounds, in which young male and female footballers are being advised of the risks of taking banned substances or using recreational drugs, thereby harming promising careers.

### A wealth of information

The promotion of UEFA's anti-doping drive is being undertaken via a variety of platforms and initiatives. The UEFA.com Training Ground section includes comprehensive anti-doping information, while almost 25,000 player leaflets warning against doping are sent to all UEFA national associations and clubs in UEFA competitions at the start of each season.

Dr Liénard concluded: *"We cannot say that football is free of doping, as there are still positive cases,"* he reflected. *"It is important that UEFA remains vigilant in its fight against doping and all products that are associated with doping."* ●



Dr Jacques Liénard

The December meeting of the UEFA Anti-Doping Panel was the last to be chaired by Dr Jacques Liénard (France), who is retiring after a distinguished career at the service of European football's governing body.

Dr Liénard was a long-standing member of the UEFA Medical Committee (1996-2011). He was a member of the UEFA anti-doping task force from 2004, before becoming chairman of the Anti-Doping Panel as from its inaugural meeting in 2005. He also served as a doping control officer for UEFA from 1997 to 2012. Dr Liénard is succeeded as UEFA Anti-Doping Panel chairman by Dr Mogens Kreutzfeldt (Denmark). ●



# A HISTORIC INNOVATION

The 21st UEFA Advanced Course for Top Referees and 22nd UEFA Introductory Course for International Referees took place in Rome at the end of January, and were notable for a historic innovation in European refereeing. For the first time, elite women's referees joined their male counterparts and newcomers to the FIFA international list – with a group of the women's referees being given invaluable preparation for this summer's Women's EURO 2013.

UEFA's winter courses serve an important purpose. Firstly, they enable the referees to look back at the first half of the European competition season, and secondly, they prepare match officials for the "sharp" end of the season as the major competitions enter the knockout stages.

The women's and men's referees shared technical and practical sessions. *"I am particularly convinced that this is a good initiative,"* said UEFA's chief refereeing officer, Pierluigi Collina, *"as women's football, and therefore women's refereeing, is becoming more and more important."*

## Forty-five new names

A total of 29 different national associations were represented in Rome by newcomers to the FIFA list for European international referees, with 45 new names attending the introductory course. The new internationals undertook an extensive medical check-up and a FIFA fitness test. The referees' understanding of English – UEFA's common refereeing language – was checked. The UEFA "rookies" also attended presentations by UEFA Referees Committee members, and video sessions analysing specially prepared footage from UEFA matches over the past and present season.

*"Understand that you are representing your national association, UEFA and yourself,"* Pierluigi Collina told the FIFA newcomers *"You are on the first step of a long staircase. Be proud and be happy that you are part of a small group of top European referees. It's a great privilege for you. Be committed, be responsible – and be ready."*

## Nine women's referees

The list of advanced course participants included not only the leading men's referees, but also nine women's referees who have been chosen to officiate at UEFA Women's EURO 2013 in Sweden this summer. A selection of these top referees went through an injury-prevention screening on the day of their arrival.

Practical sessions included a fascinating eye-opener for many match officials, as they watched specialist additional assistant referee training, giving some of them a first taste of what it means to work with the system, which became part of the Laws of the Game last summer and is now deployed in the major European club competitions.

In addition to the on-field training programme, the referees analysed clips of European competition game situations, swapped opinions in group sessions, and underwent fitness and medical checks, as well as a visual test performed by a sporting optometrist. The referees also watched a presentation which highlighted UEFA's zero-tolerance stance towards match-fixing and corruption.



Men's and women's referees together on a UEFA course for the first time

The opportunity for the women's referees to join their male counterparts was greeted unanimously – as expressed by Hungary's Katalin Kulcsár, chosen for the Women's EURO 2013 referee team. *"We have all appreciated this occasion,"* she reflected. *"It's a new challenge for us to be here. It's special to be together with the men referees and share experiences with them."*

*"We are now facing the most important part of the season,"* Collina told the referees. *"Your commitment has been outstanding. You are professionals, you are at the top of football – and UEFA is always ready to support you."* ●



# OUTLINING THE VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Ask any fan about the future of football and they will tell you it is a sport for all seasons – a game that can never be replaced or go out of fashion.

No truer words have been spoken. But the real question is: As football stands today, is it sustainable? The answer is: probably not, unless we make some changes. Now more than ever, it is crucial for UEFA and its 53 member associations to work together and lead football into the positive and just future it deserves.

The UEFA Top Executive Programme (TEP) goes a long way to creating that all-important change. Launched in 2005, it is already the source of numerous strategic developments that are currently in the making – the centralisation of media rights for national team qualifying matches, the expansion of the European Football Championship final tournament to 24 teams as of EURO 2016, and the “EURO for Europe” concept for 2020. TEP is unique because it is the only platform to unite the leaders of European football in an informal discussion format, drawing from the debate innovative ideas to shape and direct a new and modern game.

From September to November 2012, the latest series of TEP round tables were hosted by Armenia, Belgium, Estonia, Republic of Ireland, Israel, Montenegro and Portugal. From past experience, it was decided that a regional approach is by far the most effective. Smaller meetings create a comfortable and harmonious environment where participants can relax, speak candidly and in confidence – also in their mother tongue. In total, 87% of member association presidents

*The relaxed atmosphere of the round tables promotes the exchange of ideas*



and 95% of general secretaries and chief executives attended their regional meetings. The following are just some of the topics that were under review:

- The European Qualifiers project
- The “EURO for Europe” concept
- The future of UEFA club competitions

## The European Qualifiers project

This is the adventurous move to centralise media rights for European national team qualifying matches by 2014. The benefits are the promotion of national team football, providing future stability and increased revenue to member associations. UEFA delivered a status report on all five workstreams of the project – brand, media rights, commercial inventory, centralised match ball and marketing support. The overall response was very positive with some key pointers towards issues such as the match calendar, the timing and market approach for sales as well as maintaining a national identity in the branding.

## The “EURO for Europe” concept

The decision to stage a “EURO for Europe” in 2020, rather than a tournament in one or two host countries, follows an idea initially revealed by the UEFA President, Michel Platini, in June 2012. The idea was widely discussed during the TEP round tables and warmly welcomed by the vast majority of member associations. The top executives highlighted some important factors that needed careful consideration, such as stadium capacity, an efficient regional spread to facilitate travel, the bidding procedure, and the packaging of matches and stadiums, all of which are currently under review by the UEFA National Team Competitions Committee. No doubt, this is an enormous challenge in terms of planning and logistics – but as a jubilee edition of the tournament, the rewards for football fans everywhere will be well worth the effort.

## The future of UEFA club competitions

The member associations feel no need to change the UEFA club competitions for the period 2015–18. During the open round-table discussions about the future of UEFA flagship club competitions, all the top executives expressed their current satisfaction. The previous changes to the access list (champions path) and to the UEFA Europa League group stage had their intended positive effects. Both the UEFA Champions League and the UEFA Europa League are valued by the associations as a top competi-

tion in Europe. The differences between the competitions are considered normal, although UEFA was asked to continue its efforts to close the gap. Many associations value the Europa League as very important for their domestic competitions.

The UEFA TEP meetings are essential to mould football in tandem with a constantly evolving world. Some ideas have been groundbreaking and will change football forever. Some are smaller but nevertheless have a tangible impact

on a specific issue, or in a particular country or region. The essence of TEP is creativity set free through frank and honest discussion – because the journey to tomorrow's football must be taken together. We should clearly understand that united as one we are a stronger force to be reckoned with.

#### Coming up under TEP

The next UEFA Strategy Meeting will take place in Dubrovnik on 17/18 September 2013. ●

*An ideal setting to allow all those present to express their opinions*



## LIST OF TEP ROUND TABLES

Budva, Montenegro	Lisbon, Portugal	Yerevan, Armenia	Tel Aviv, Israel	Tallinn, Estonia	Brussels, Belgium	Dublin, Republic of Ireland
17/18.9.2012	19/20.9.2012	8/9.10.2012	29/30.10.2012	12/13.11.2012	27/28.11.2012	29/30.11.2012
Bosnia and Herzegovina Bulgaria Croatia FYR Macedonia Montenegro Serbia Slovenia	Andorra Hungary Italy Malta Portugal San Marino Spain Turkey	Armenia Belarus Georgia Kazakhstan Moldova Slovakia Ukraine	Albania Azerbaijan Cyprus Greece Israel Romania Russia	Czech Republic Estonia Finland Latvia Liechtenstein Lithuania Norway Poland	Austria Belgium Denmark England France Germany Luxembourg Netherlands Switzerland	Faroe Islands Gibraltar* Iceland Northern Ireland Republic of Ireland Scotland Sweden Wales * observer



The second annual KISS marketing awards ceremony was held in Rome on 29/30 November 2012, rewarding Europe's national football associations for excellence in this field.

These marketing awards are presented under the auspices of UEFA's Knowledge & Information Sharing Scenario (KISS) programme, through which national associations exchange expertise and knowledge with the aim of fostering the development of European football. The awards celebrate excellence in what is a crucial area of modern-day football, given that the marketing of football is key to the future success of the game.

As a result of a large increase in applications, UEFA decided to present an additional creativity and innovation award in each category, to be given to a marketing campaign with particularly interesting features.

UEFA appointed a jury comprising of executives with considerable experience in their respective fields: Laurent-Eric Le Lay (chairman and chief executive of Eurosport), Tim Ellerton (global sponsorship manager at Heineken), Thierry Lardinois (founder and chairman of the ESSEC business school in France), Tamsin Wigley (founding director of top London brand agency ITCH) and Josh Robinson (creative director at digital marketing agency Sports Revolution).

The awards ceremony was held as part of a two-day KISS marketing workshop that included

presentations on marketing strategy and planning, digital marketing, engaging with fans, customer relationship management and sponsorship. National associations gave presentations highlighting their current work and external experts addressed participants on a range of issues. In addition, group exercises and discussions gave the 47 national associations present an invaluable opportunity to share ideas and network.

Speeches were given by UEFA Executive Committee member Allan Hansen (who is also chairman of the UEFA HatTrick Committee) and UEFA Event SA's marketing director, Guy-Laurent Epstein. *"UEFA is delighted by the huge interest and the standard of applications from our national associations,"* Mr Hansen said. *"The awards demonstrate the wonderful promotion of football that is going on across UEFA's national associations, and this bodes very well for the future."*

*"The KISS marketing awards represent everything that is good about national associations' marketing of the game in a number of areas,"* Mr Epstein added. All entries showed excellent marketing initiatives, ideas and activities and will form a priceless database of inspiration for all our national associations. ●



# FULL LIST OF AWARD CATEGORIES, NOMINEES AND WINNERS

## • Best digital marketing campaign

**Winners:** Scottish Football Association (SFA) – “Scotland Supporters Club Renewals 2012”

**Other nominees:** Royal Netherlands Football Association (KNVB) – “Mission KNVB”; Polish Football Federation (PZPN) – “Social Media Development”

**Creativity and innovation award:** Football Federation of Armenia (HFF) – “Star Football – You can be a star too!”

The jury felt that the Scottish Football Association’s project had all the hallmarks of a great digital marketing campaign. It had a clear and sizeable return on investment and included a wonderful viral video campaign. This strong campaign achieved its targets, with many thousands of new members – almost 35,000 in total – signing up.



The Scottish Football Association won the award for the best digital marketing campaign by using social networks to considerably increase the membership of its supporters club and its revenues

The winners of the creativity and innovation award were the Football Federation of Armenia, with their “Star Football – You can be a star too!” project. This was a clever use of digital marketing – especially social networking – to encourage thousands of children to feel part of the national team and promote the game throughout the country.

## • Best fan experiential campaign

**Winners:** Danish Football Association (DBU) – “Camp Denmark”

**Other nominees:** Swiss Football Association (SFV-ASF) – “Get There”; Royal Belgian Football Association

(URBSFA-KBVB) – “Give the National Team back to the Fans”

**Creativity and innovation award:** Israel Football Association (IFA) – “IFA Open Day”

The Danish Football Association produced an outstanding campaign that engaged with fans and demonstrated a great understanding of their needs. The campaign featured excellent research, great evaluation and superb results.

The winners of the creativity and innovation award in this category, the Israel Football Association, provided a comprehensive fan experience. Their open day had many unique features and was a huge logistical project that engaged with fans in many different ways, bringing people closer to the national association.

## • Best sponsorship activation

**Winners:** Football Association of Iceland (KSÍ) – “Passion for Iceland Football”

**Other nominees:** Football Federation of Kazakhstan (KFF) – “Bulgary Dop”; Football Association of Norway (NFF) – “Heroes of Tomorrow”

**Creativity and innovation award:** Portuguese Football Federation (FPF) – “Each Game is a Final”

The Football Association of Iceland won the award with an outstanding collaboration between the national association and their sponsor comprising of bespoke TV adverts and marketing campaigns for every league club, focusing on what makes each club tick. It demonstrated considerable understanding of the local market and achieved the objectives of both the national association and the sponsor.

The winners of the creativity and innovation award in this category, the Portuguese Football Federation, established an initiative entitled “Each Game is a Final”, which involved clever use of their supermarket chain sponsor to increase attendance and revenues at international matches.

## • Best brand strategy and implementation campaign

**Winners:** English Football Association (FA) – “The FA Cup with Budweiser”

**Other nominees:** Football Association of Finland (SPL-FBF) – “Building the National Team Brand”; Royal Belgian Football Association (URBSFA-KBVB) – “Enabling the Red Devils to Share Emotions”

**Creativity and innovation award:** Faroe Islands Football Association (FSF) – “Recruitment of Referees”

The Football Association’s campaign reversed the perception among fans and the media that the country’s major cup competition – The FA Cup – was in decline, by creating a new brand strategy for the competition and implementing a robust integrated marketing communications campaign that has yielded tremendous results.

The Faroe Islands Football Association’s winning campaign involved using marketing to tackle a major issue. Referees were seen as a dying breed in the Faroe Islands, so the association created a strategic brand campaign to attract people to refereeing.

## • Best women’s marketing campaign

**Winners:** French Football Federation (FFF) – “Heading to the Olympic Games”

**Other nominees:** Football Association of Ireland (FAI) – “Bus Éireann Women’s National League”; English Football Association (FA) – “The FA Girls’ Football Festivals”

**Creativity and innovation award:** Lithuanian Football Federation (LFF) – “Women for Football”

The French Football Federation devised a fantastic large-scale marketing campaign fostering growth in women’s football in cooperation with numerous partners and incorporating many marketing elements. The results were outstanding.

The creativity and innovation award went to the Lithuanian Football Federation, which developed a very clever campaign marking all important dates for women (International Women’s Day, Mothers’ Day, etc.), with numerous marketing activities under its new branding for women’s football. ●

## BELGIUM PREPARES

Two superb venues await the players in Antwerp from 28 January to 8 February 2014. Preparations are already in full swing.



Belgium saw off competition from Slovenia and Lithuania in winning the right to host the UEFA Futsal EURO 2014. The tournament will be held in Antwerp, one of the country's largest cities, in two modern sports complexes situated next to each other: the Sportpaleis, which is well known for hosting concerts, and the Lotto Arena, which is generally used for basketball matches. The two venues are situated close to Antwerp's ring road, so they are easily accessible, and a great atmosphere can be expected in both. Accommodation will not be a problem either, with Antwerp boasting a wealth of high-quality hotels (which are also close to the ring road and the motorway network). The Sportpaleis seats more than 15,000, while the Lotto Arena has a smaller capacity of around 5,000 and will host matches in the earlier rounds. All the big games will be played at the Sportpaleis.

### Excellent infrastructure

Following the draw for the preliminary and main rounds, UEFA inspected Antwerp's infrastructure in December 2012, thereby kick-starting its final preparations – despite the fact that the qualifying matches did not begin until January. There have also been political changes since Antwerp was awarded the UEFA Futsal EURO 2014,

with mayoral elections taking place in October 2012. But while Patrick Janssens, who had pledged his support for the event, has now been replaced by Bart De Wever, the new mayor will honour the promises made by his predecessor. The city of Antwerp is brimming with enthusiasm. *"Futsal is important for Antwerp, whether it's the elite or local clubs. It's an extremely accessible sport: all you need to go and play on a playground or pitch is a ball. Indoor football makes sense. It improves your technique,"* explains Geert Bruynseels, Antwerp's sports event coordinator. Futsal Topsport Vlaanderen, the city's best team, have excellent infrastructure, as do other clubs, and those facilities can be made available to tournament participants for training. *"But we do not want to penalise the clubs that use those halls the rest of the time; it's a question of organisation,"* Bruynseels explains.

### A big celebration

As the 2013 European Capital of Sport, Antwerp regards the UEFA Futsal EURO 2014 as the climax to a year rich in sporting events. *"The EURO will be a big celebration. But before that, we will organise a number of events throughout 2013 to get the public interested, to encourage them to take part in the EURO and to spread the word about futsal. For example, we could organise a tournament at the Lotto*

## THE BELGIAN LEAGUE IS AMATEUR



Alain Dopchie

Since being crowned champions of Europe in 2005, Action 21 Charleroi have lost their lustre somewhat, like so many other sports teams in this town, which has seen swingeing economic consolidation. That is one of the reasons for the change in the status of the Belgian league, which reverted to being amateur in 2006/07. A committee has spent the last three months considering the other reasons for that move. There are around 23,000 registered futsal players in Belgium. And the split

between the championship run by the Royal Belgian Football Association and that run by the Belgian Indoor Football Association complicates matters further. While the national team recognised by UEFA takes part in official tournaments, that of the Belgian Indoor Football Association plays teams such as Catalonia.

Despite those problems, Belgium have had a good run of results since May last year, when they secured an impressive 4-2 win in Portugal. Since then, they have beaten Switzerland twice, defeated both Finland and Lithuania, and drawn 4-4 with the Netherlands. Games against France (2-2) and Romania were scheduled for January and February respectively. *"I cannot say how we will do in the EURO, but I am doing all I can to allow us to be successful,"* says Alain Dopchie, who is striving to raise futsal's profile and have it regarded as a complement to football. *"In Norway and Finland, they play indoors in the winter, as Scandinavia is covered in snow. And FC Barcelona have a futsal club. As Pep Guardiola once said, futsal is the basis for the 11-a-side game. The two are not in competition; you can have movement between the two. A child will not learn to hit a 40-metre pass in the mud. And a player who is not big enough for 11-a-side football can blossom in futsal. Playing in small areas improves your technique, your anticipation and your exploitation of gaps. And futsal is successful elsewhere in Europe. When SL Benfica hosted Interiú Madrid, 12,000 supporters turned up to watch – including Eusébio."* ● P.P.



D. Aquilina

Arena and put on plays and other cultural activities alongside the matches. We will also be working with the Royal Belgian Football Association to organise a national campaign supporting clubs in the training of young players. We are not just thinking about a successful EURO. We are also asking ourselves: How do we raise the level of our futsal? How do we improve infrastructure? How do we get people interested in futsal? How can we really benefit from [hosting] the tournament?"

Alain Dopchie, coach of the Belgian national team, is one of the linchpins of the tournament's organisation, together with Filip Van Doorslaer, who heads the marketing unit at the Royal Belgian Football Association. Passionate about futsal and convinced that it has a lot to contribute to football, Dopchie is now seeing the realisation of a dream that began three years ago when he was appointed national coach. "People often say 'third time lucky', and in our case it's true. Four years ago we lost out to Croatia, but this time our bid was successful. We have an advantage over Croatia in terms of the proximity of our venues. Zagreb and Split are a long way from each other. I hope that the EURO will allow us to promote futsal and show people what a great sport it is. We are right at the heart of Europe, so we will be playing host to our neighbours at this tournament. It will be an extremely friendly, fun event." ●

Pascale Pierard

## FIRST STAGE COMPLETED

The preliminary round matches in the European Futsal Championship took place at the end of January, with England, Georgia, Greece, Montenegro, Norway and Sweden all advancing to the main round. Those matches will be played at the end of March, with the teams drawn in the following groups:

- Group 1:** Italy, Hungary, Finland, Montenegro
- Group 2:** Azerbaijan, **Slovakia**, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Norway
- Group 3:** Russia, Romania, Kazakhstan, **Latvia**
- Group 4:** **Spain**, Croatia, FYR Macedonia, Sweden
- Group 5:** Portugal, **Serbia**, Poland, Greece
- Group 6:** Czech Republic, Belarus, **Netherlands**, Georgia
- Group 7:** Ukraine, Slovenia, **Turkey**, England.

(The countries in bold will host the mini-tournaments)

The group winners will each qualify for the final round, where they will join the hosts, Belgium. The seven runners-up and the best third-placed team will compete in play-offs to determine the last four teams in the final tournament. ●

*Georgia (in black) came through the preliminary round by beating the hosts, among others, in the mini-tournament in Malta*



## 2015 WOMEN'S WORLD CUP TO BE HELD IN CANADA

In summer 2015 the final round of the FIFA Women's World Cup will be held in Canada, with matches played in the cities of Edmonton, Moncton, Montreal, Ottawa, Vancouver and Winnipeg.

European qualifying matches will begin in April in the form of a preliminary round comprising two mini-tournaments, which will be contested by Europe's lowest-ranked sides. Of those teams, Albania will be competing in its first official women's competition of any kind, while Montenegro will be taking part in its first women's competition at senior level.

The draw for the preliminary round was made in Nyon in December, resulting in the following two groups:

**Group 1** (in Malta): *Albania, Luxembourg, Malta, Latvia*

**Group 2** (in Lithuania): *Georgia, Faroe Islands, Lithuania, Montenegro.*

Those matches will take place from 4 to 9 April, with the top two teams in each group joining the 38 other European participants in the next round.

The draw for the qualifying group stage will be made on 16 April, when the remaining teams will be divided into seven groups of six. Teams in these groups will play each other home and away, with matches taking place between 20 September 2013 and 17 September 2014.

For the first time, 24 teams will contest the final round of the FIFA Women's World Cup, and eight of those places have been set aside for UEFA's member associations. The European contingent in Canada will comprise the seven group winners plus the winners of play-offs contested by the best four second-placed teams.

■ While the Women's World Cup remains the best advert for women's football – alongside, in Europe, the European Women's Championship and the UEFA Women's Champions League – the sport's development also involves intensive work at the level of national associations, notably to improve the quality and marketing of domestic leagues.

UEFA's women's football development programme was established with that in mind, and it was under the auspices of this programme that representatives of national associations met in The Hague at the end of January for a seminar focusing on marketing. The German Football Association and the French Football Federation, both of which have something of a track record when it comes to developing women's football,



*Before embarking on qualification for the 2015 FIFA Women's World Cup, Germany (in red, against England in the final of EURO 2009) will be trying to defend the European title that they have held since 1995 in Sweden this summer*

passed on their experience to those associations that are still at the project or implementation stage. A presentation on the new BeNe League – which, with provisional authorisation from the UEFA Executive Committee, will bring together teams from both Belgium and the Netherlands – showed seminar participants that there are various ways of seeking to give a further boost to the already spectacular growth of women's football. ●



### UEFA Regions' Cup in Italy

The final round of the 2012/13 UEFA Regions' Cup will be held in June in the Veneto region of Italy, home to one of the eight qualified teams. ●

### ■ News from the UEFA administration

**David Taylor**, who was UEFA's general secretary from 2007 until 2009, when he became CEO of UEFA Events SA, stepped down from that post at the end of last year. However, he continues to sit on various boards of directors with links to UEFA.

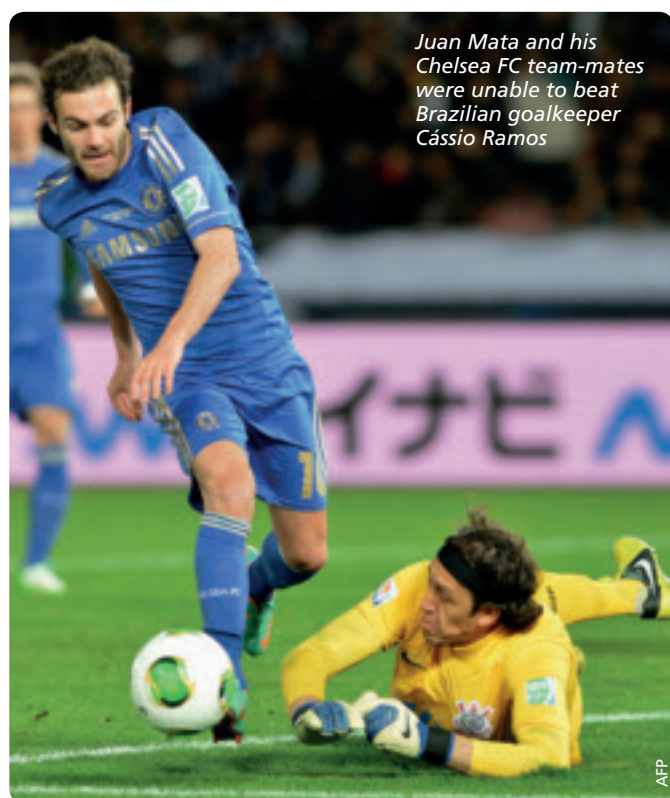
The two divisions within UEFA Events SA – the operations division led by Martin Kallen and the marketing division run by Guy-Laurent Epstein – will now report directly to Gianni Infantino, UEFA's general secretary.

At the beginning of the 2012/13 season, the UEFA administration and UEFA Events SA employed the equivalent of 405.9 people. Staff members' average age was 39, and staff had worked at UEFA for an average of six years. A total of 35% of staff were women. ●

# CHELSEA FC REACH TOKYO FINAL

As winners of May's UEFA Champions League final, Chelsea FC participated in the FIFA Club World Cup held in Japan from 6 to 16 December.

The London club entered the fray at the semi-final stage, where they were convincing winners against the Mexicans of CF Monterrey, who were representing CONCACAF. Chelsea FC's 3-1 victory took them to the final at the Yokohama International Stadium, where the team coached by Rafael Benítez faced the Brazilians of SC Corinthians Paulista, holders of the Copa Libertadores and 1-0 winners against Egypt's al-Ahly SC, African champions, in the semi-finals.



*Juan Mata and his Chelsea FC team-mates were unable to beat Brazilian goalkeeper Cássio Ramos*

On 16 December, after CF Monterrey had beaten al-Ahly SC in the match for third place, the South American and European champions contested a closely fought match in front of more than 80,000 spectators. The English team created a host of chances but were repeatedly thwarted by goalkeeper Cássio Ramos, who was in sparkling form. The Brazilians were more fortunate, scoring the only goal of the game with a second-half header by José Paolo Guerrero.

Corinthians' triumph signalled the end of a run of five consecutive European victories in the Club World Cup. It was the club's second world title, after their victory in the first edition in 2000, and the fourth time a Brazilian club had won the competition, following São Paulo FC in 2005 and SC Internacional in 2006.

This year's other participants were Sanfrecce Hiroshima, Japanese champions, Ulsan Hyundai, AFC champions, and Auckland City FC, OFC champions. ●

## Club competition draws

This season, there will be separate draws for the quarter and semi-finals of the UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa League.

The quarter and semi-final draws will be held at UEFA's Nyon headquarters on 15 March and 12 April respectively. ●

■ On 19 December, in the Brazilian city of Porto Alegre, around 50,000 spectators watched the tenth Match Against Poverty, a charity match organised with the backing of UEFA and FIFA. As goodwill ambassadors for the United Nations Development Programme, former internationals Ronaldo and Zinedine Zidane had each selected a team of star players from years past. The Brazilian's team secured a 3-2 victory over the side picked by the Frenchman. ●

## NEW START FOR THE UNDER-21S



The 2011–13 European Under-21 Championship final round will be held in Israel in June. Eight teams are still in the running, while everyone else is already looking forward to the 2013–15 edition, which will conclude in the Czech Republic.

The draw for the qualifying matches took place at the House of European Football in Nyon on 31 January and produced the following groups:

- Group 1:** England, Wales, Finland, Moldova, Lithuania, San Marino
- Group 2:** Russia, Denmark, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Andorra, Estonia

- Group 3:** Netherlands, Scotland, Slovakia, Georgia, Luxembourg
- Group 4:** Spain, Austria, Hungary, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania
- Group 5:** Switzerland, Ukraine, Croatia, Latvia, Liechtenstein
- Group 6:** Germany, Romania, Montenegro, Republic of Ireland, Faroe Islands
- Group 7:** Sweden, Turkey, Greece, Poland, Malta
- Group 8:** Israel, Portugal, Norway, FYR Macedonia, Azerbaijan
- Group 9:** Italy, Serbia, Belgium, Cyprus, Northern Ireland
- Group 10:** France, Belarus, Armenia, Iceland, Kazakhstan.

The group winners and the four best runners-up will contest play-off matches in order to determine which seven teams will join the Czech Republic in the final round. ●

# NEW WOMEN'S UNDER-17 FINAL ROUND FORMAT

The spotlight was firmly on women's youth football when the draw was made on 20 November at UEFA headquarters in Nyon for the second qualifying round of the 2012/13 competition and the first qualifying round of the 2013/14 competition.

## 2012/13 SEASON



The 16 teams that made it through the first qualifying round of the 2012/13 European Women's Under-17 Championship have been drawn in the following groups:

- Group 1:** Netherlands, Denmark, Germany, **Belgium**
- Group 2:** Norway, Republic of Ireland, **Austria**, Poland
- Group 3:** **France**, Spain, Northern Ireland, Finland
- Group 4:** Switzerland, **Czech Republic**, Sweden, Italy.

(The countries in bold will host the mini-tournaments, which are scheduled for March/April 2013.)

The group winners will head to Nyon for the final round. The semi-finals will be played on 25 June, with the third-place play-off and the final on 28 June.



Karen Espelund, chairwoman of the Women's Football Committee, took charge of the draws and is assisted here by Amanda Ilstedt, captain of the Swedish team that won the women's Under-19 fair play award in 2012



In the European Women's Under-19 Championship, the 21 teams that made it through the first qualifying round join Germany, England and France (who all had a bye) in the second qualifying round. The groups for that second round of matches are as follows:

- Group 1:** Republic of Ireland, Sweden, Italy, **Netherlands**
- Group 2:** France, Switzerland, **Belgium**, Russia
- Group 3:** Denmark, Ukraine, **Scotland**, Austria
- Group 4:** England, **Norway**, Serbia, Hungary
- Group 5:** Finland, Northern Ireland, **Portugal**, Iceland
- Group 6:** **Germany**, Czech Republic, Spain, Greece.

(The countries in bold will host the mini-tournaments, which will be played in April 2013.)

The group winners and the best second-placed team will join hosts Wales (who qualify automatically) in the final tournament, which will take place from 19 to 31 August.

## 2013/14 SEASON

There will be plenty of changes to the women's Under-17 competition in the 2013/14 season. The final round will be contested by eight teams (instead of four) and will – like UEFA's other youth competitions – be organised by a national association, rather than being hosted by UEFA in Nyon. The final round of next season's tournament will take place in England, who will qualify automatically as hosts. Germany, Spain and France have been given a bye to the second qualifying round, while the other 40 participants have been drawn in the following groups for the first qualifying round:

- Group 1:** Czech Republic, **Scotland**, Northern Ireland, Montenegro
- Group 2:** Norway, Romania, Croatia, **Estonia**
- Group 3:** Netherlands, Finland, **Ukraine**, Slovakia
- Group 4:** Republic of Ireland, **Russia**, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Turkey
- Group 5:** Iceland, Hungary, Latvia, **Moldova**
- Group 6:** Sweden, Serbia, Portugal, **Israel**
- Group 7:** Belgium, **Slovenia**, Belarus, Lithuania
- Group 8:** **Poland**, Austria, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan
- Group 9:** Switzerland, Italy, **Bulgaria**, FYR Macedonia
- Group 10:** **Denmark**, Wales, Faroe Islands, Greece.

(The countries in bold will host the mini-tournaments, which are scheduled for July/August 2013.)

The top two teams in each group and the best third-placed team will qualify for the second qualifying round, which will take place from 20 September to 20 October. As the final round will determine the teams that qualify for the 2014 FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup (which will be held from 15 March to 5 April 2014 in Costa Rica), it has been brought forward and will take place from 26 November to 8 December 2013.

■ A record number of countries will take part in the Under-19 competition in the 2013/14 season, with three new teams (Malta, Montenegro and Albania). Three teams that were given a bye in the first qualifying round (Germany, Spain and France), and hosts Norway qualify automatically. The 44 teams participating in the first qualifying round have been drawn in the following 11 groups:

- Group 1:** **Austria**, Croatia, Israel, Azerbaijan
- Group 2:** Denmark, **Republic of Ireland**, Greece, Kazakhstan
- Group 3:** Sweden, Portugal, Estonia, **Lithuania**
- Group 4:** Czech Republic, **Finland**, Faroe Islands, Moldova
- Group 5:** Russia, Wales, Cyprus, **Belarus**
- Group 6:** Netherlands, **Serbia**, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Malta
- Group 7:** Italy, Poland, **Slovenia**, Albania
- Group 8:** Scotland, Romania, **FYR Macedonia**, Georgia
- Group 9:** France, Iceland, Slovakia, **Bulgaria**
- Group 10:** Belgium, **Hungary**, Turkey, Montenegro
- Group 11:** Switzerland, Ukraine, Northern Ireland, **Latvia**.

(The countries in bold will host the mini-tournaments, which will take place in September 2013.)

The group winners and the ten best second-placed teams will progress to the second qualifying round. ●



# MEN'S YOUTH COMPETITIONS

The draws for the men's youth competitions were also made at the end of last year, on 5 December, by Jim Boyce, chairman of the UEFA Youth and Amateur Football Committee.

## 2012/13 SEASON



The seven groups for the elite round of the European Under-17 Championship have been drawn as follows:

- Group 1: **Croatia**, Belgium, Spain, France
- Group 2: Serbia, Republic of Ireland, Georgia, **Austria**
- Group 3: **Hungary**, Sweden, Finland, Belarus
- Group 4: **Germany**, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Estonia
- Group 5: Czech Republic, **Switzerland**, Israel, Poland
- Group 6: **England**, Slovenia, Portugal, Russia
- Group 7: Norway, **Netherlands**, Italy, Northern Ireland.

(The countries in bold will host the mini-tournaments, which will be held at the end of March 2013.)

The group winners will join hosts Slovakia in the final tournament, which will take place from 5 to 17 May. The draw for the final tournament will be made on 4 April. The teams will be competing not only for the European title, but also for six places at the 2013 FIFA U-17 World Cup, which will be held in the United Arab Emirates from 17 October to 8 November.



The groups for the elite round of the European Under-19 Championship have been drawn as follows:

- Group 1: **Austria**, France, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sweden
- Group 2: **Serbia**, Republic of Ireland, Slovakia, Switzerland
- Group 3: Denmark, **Portugal**, Czech Republic, Bulgaria
- Group 4: Spain, Croatia, **Poland**, Greece
- Group 5: Netherlands, Germany, **Norway**, Cyprus
- Group 6: Scotland, England, **Belgium**, Georgia
- Group 7: Turkey, Ukraine, **Russia**, Italy.

(The countries in bold will host the mini-tournaments, which are scheduled for May/June 2013.)

The group winners will join hosts Lithuania at the final tournament, where they will compete for the European crown between 20 July and 1 August. The draw for the final tournament will be made on 14 June.

## 2013/14 SEASON

The final round of the 2013/14 European Under-17 Championship will be held in Malta, with the hosts qualifying automatically. A total of 52 teams will compete in the qualifying round this autumn, with the top two teams in each group, plus the best third-placed team, joining Germany (who have a bye in the qualifying round) in the elite round in spring 2014. The various groups have been drawn as follows:



Jim Boyce, chairman of the Youth and Amateur Football Committee, assisted by England Under-19 captain Tom Thorpe; England topped the fair play rankings in the last European Under-19 Championship

- Group 1: Belarus, Romania, Finland, **Albania**
- Group 2: Italy, Sweden, Ukraine, **Lithuania**
- Group 3: Czech Republic, France, **Israel**, Liechtenstein
- Group 4: Scotland, Hungary, **Slovenia**, Wales
- Group 5: Croatia, Portugal, Montenegro, **Bosnia and Herzegovina**
- Group 6: Greece, **Serbia**, Estonia, Andorra
- Group 7: Republic of Ireland, England, Gibraltar\*, **Armenia**
- Group 8: Norway, Spain, **Cyprus**, Moldova
- Group 9: **Northern Ireland**, Turkey, Latvia, Luxembourg
- Group 10: **Russia**, Iceland, Slovakia, Azerbaijan
- Group 11: **Georgia**, Netherlands, San Marino, Faroe Islands
- Group 12: **Denmark**, Switzerland, Kazakhstan, Austria
- Group 13: Belgium, Poland, Bulgaria, **FYR Macedonia**.

(The countries in bold will host the mini-tournaments, which are scheduled for September/October 2013.)

\* Subject to Gibraltar being admitted by the 37th Ordinary UEFA Congress on 24 May.

■ The winners of the 2013/14 European Under-19 Championship will be decided in Hungary, and that final tournament will also determine the European participants in the 2015 FIFA U-20 World Cup in New Zealand. The 52 participating countries have been drawn in the following 13 groups:

- Group 1: Croatia, **Czech Republic**, Gibraltar\*, Cyprus
- Group 2: Romania, **Poland**, Armenia, Lithuania
- Group 3: Republic of Ireland, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Azerbaijan, **Sweden**
- Group 4: **Belgium**, France, Northern Ireland, Iceland
- Group 5: Germany, Scotland, **Belarus**, Latvia
- Group 6: Greece, Slovakia, Albania, **Bulgaria**
- Group 7: **Serbia**, Austria, Kazakhstan, Finland
- Group 8: **Portugal**, Norway, Luxembourg, San Marino
- Group 9: Switzerland, England, Andorra, **Slovenia**
- Group 10: Italy, Denmark, **Israel**, Liechtenstein
- Group 11: Netherlands, **Georgia**, Moldova, Wales
- Group 12: Turkey, Montenegro, **FYR Macedonia**, Faroe Islands
- Group 13: **Russia**, Ukraine, Malta, Estonia.

(The countries in bold will host the mini-tournaments, which are scheduled for between September and November 2013.)

\* Subject to Gibraltar being admitted by the 37th Ordinary UEFA Congress on 24 May.

The top two in each group, plus the best third-placed team, will join Spain (who have a bye in the qualifying round) in the elite round. ●

# CHILDREN HELPING CHILDREN

The solidarity within the global football family is well known, but nothing is more touching than when children themselves reach out a hand to help other, less fortunate children who share the same interest: football.

Last year, the regional division of the Football Association of Norway (NFF) in Sogn and Fjordane approached the Football for All in Vietnam (FFAV) project, proposing that mini-tournaments organised by the NFF should be used to help other children and raise money for good causes. The two agreed to focus on the football club in Hong Tien, in the Huong Tra district, one of the poorest areas in Hue province. This area was the scene of some of the bloodiest fighting during the Vietnam war. As a result, the area is heavily contaminated with explosive remnants of war. FFAV and Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) work together in this area, educating children on the risks posed by such material and clearing unexploded items. The two football pitches in Hong Tien – and the area immediately around them – have now been made safe.

## Friendship clubs

Fundraising was carried out in both 2011 and 2012, and as a result, Hong Tien FC can now expand and support other clubs in the area. More than NOK 100,000 (around \$17,000) was raised, guaranteeing funding for Hong Tien for many years to come. The success of this project

has inspired FFAV and the NFF to launch a “friendship club” initiative, whereby all clubs in Vietnam will have a dedicated “friendship club” in Norway, exchanging information about events, learning about each other's cultures and promoting companionship and solidarity. This initiative will be launched in 2013, with four pilot projects already in operation. It is hoped that it will increase Norwegian children's understanding of what life in a poor country is like, and create support for grassroots football activities in places such as these, where there are not enough resources and volunteerism is difficult, simply because adults and young people – and sometimes even children – have to work around the clock to be able to feed themselves.

## Positive change

Running fun football activities in Vietnamese schools has been proven to reduce both absences and dropout rates, meaning that more children receive an education. Those schools have become more attractive places, and reports from parents, teachers and the children themselves indicate that their daily lives have changed in a very positive way. FFAV and the NFF wish to express their

*A Norwegian initiative that allows children from Vietnam to experience the joys of football*



NFF



## FACTS ABOUT FFAV

FFAV was established in Vietnam in 2001 as a joint project bringing together the Football Association of Norway (NFF) and the Vietnam Football Federation (VFF). The project educates football coaches, administrators and referees, as well as establishing non-competitive grassroots football clubs in primary and secondary schools in Hue province. FFAV organises regular training sessions, local leagues and tournaments and football festivals, with football activities being used to teach important life skills. By the end of 2012, FFAV had established 145 football clubs, providing football activities for around 14,000 children and young people (50% of whom are girls). More than 4,000 people have received football-related training. Other organisations have now begun to replicate this concept, with an additional 80 clubs being set up around the country as a result. For more information, visit [www.ffav.com.vn](http://www.ffav.com.vn). ●

sincere gratitude to all their friends in Sogn and Fjordane, whose support is great motivation for all those involved in the project.

Chau Hong Tinh, head of FFAV's communication department, said: "Receiving this support makes us work even harder to expand our outreach so that more children benefit from the project. We really hope this will inspire more clubs and NFF regions to follow Sogn and Fjordane's example. We now have 145 clubs in Hue province, but there are still more than 250 other schools that want an FFAV football club, and that is just here. There are another 62 provinces in Vietnam, and they do not have such clubs. With sufficient funding, FFAV can train other provinces, teaching them how to start such clubs. Our dream is to be a centre of competence for the whole of the country, maybe even the entire Southeast Asia region. The success in Hue has also inspired the Vietnam Football Federation to include such a model in its strategic plan. There is great interest all over the country, and the experience and manuals are there, but the funding is lacking. Hopefully, other people and organisations in the world of football will learn from Sogn and Fjordane and follow their example." ●

Alf Hansen



Albania  
[www.fshf.org](http://www.fshf.org)

## Seminar for Albanian referees

The Football Association of Albania's annual refereeing seminar was held in Tirana from 14 to 18 January. It was attended by the country's elite referees and assistant referees, those in the second category of match officials, and several referees considered to be promising young talents.

The seminar was also attended by Kyros Vassaras, a member of the UEFA Referees Committee, who heads the commission responsible for the performance and training of Albanian referees.

A moment of silence was observed in honour of Rigers Pjetrush, a referee from Lezhe who recently died tragically in a car accident.

The meeting started with an analysis of the first half of the 2012/13 season, looking at the problems that had arisen in terms of match

officials' decisions. The next session explored the issue of additional assistant referees, looking at the benefits of having them and the role that they perform during a match.

The first day ended with a test based on a UEFA DVD showing the way in which professional referees prepare for matches.

The second day began with a presentation by Mr Vassaras on the subject of the handball rule, a problematic issue not only in Albania, but throughout European and world football.

The next session, which prompted considerable discussion, addressed the issue of cooperation between referees and assistant referees and its importance given the speed of football today. With match situations changing quickly from one moment to the next, it looked at the difficulties that referees face in managing these situations.

The final session of the seminar was attended

by Armand Duka, the president of the Football Association of Albania. Mr Duka wished the referees all the best for the second half of the season and thanked Mr Vassaras and UEFA for supporting the professional development of Albanian referees.

Finally, FIFA badges for 2013 were presented to Albania's top referees and assistant referees.

● Tritan Kokona



The participants  
at the refereeing seminar



Azerbaijan  
[www.affa.az](http://www.affa.az)

## Awards for the best players of 2012

Nowadays, football is established as a wonderful way to promote personal and sporting development. Accordingly, the Association of Football Federations of Azerbaijan (AFFA) has, for the last four years, held an annual awards ceremony with various categories to honour the country's top footballers. This has increased the popularity of football across the country and motivated its star players.

It comes as no surprise that the AFFA was voted the best Azerbaijani sports federation of 2012 in a survey on a local sports website. The association has conducted a number of public awareness projects, implemented measures strengthening the technical foundations of the game and maintained a positive presence in local media.

The fourth annual awards ceremony honouring the country's finest footballers took place in December 2012 and was closely followed by the public, the media and the football community.

Delivering the opening address, Elkhon Mammadov, general secretary of the AFFA, explained the voting procedure and congratulated both the winners of the various awards and their colleagues, saying: "Football is a team game, so these awards go to both the players in question and their team-mates."



The winners of the 2012 awards

The national team coaches elected to give Aytaj Sharifova the award for the best player in the women's national Under-17 team. Mark Hereward, UNICEF's representative in Azerbaijan, presented the award to the star goalkeeper on stage.

Vitaliy Borisov won the award for the best player in the national beach soccer team. And national team goalkeeper Kamran Agayev won the award for the best goalkeeper of 2012.

The climax of the event was the presentation of the award for the best player of 2012. Head coach Berti Vogts took to the stage to present the award to international defender Ruslan Abisov.

● Ayan Aghayeva





**Bosnia and Herzegovina**  
www.nfsbih.ba

## Elvedin Begić appointed president

At the assembly of the Bosnia and Herzegovina Football Federation (NFSBiH) in December, the 60 delegates elected a new 15-member executive board by secret ballot. In accordance with the statutes of the NFSBiH, which are in line with those of FIFA and UEFA, the presidents of the entity associations, Mile Kovačević of the Football Association of Republika Srpska Bosnia and Herzegovina (FF RS BiH) and Mato Jozić of the Football Association of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FF FBiH), directly joined the committee. The remaining 13 members were chosen from among 26 candidates, nine from the FF FBiH and four from the FF RS BiH.

Representatives of FIFA and UEFA congratulated the NFSBiH normalisation committee on its good work over the past year and a half. At the suggestion of the FIFA and UEFA representatives, delegates of the assembly unanimously approved the establishment of a mediation committee consisting of six members, including four of the normalisation committee (Ivica Osim, Sead Kajmaz, Duško Bajević and Faruk Hadžibegić). The other two members will be chosen later at the proposal of the new president and executive board (which includes the presidents of the two entity associations).

The members of the executive board from the FF FBiH are Mato Jozić, Elvedin Begić, Ibrahim Adilagić, Amer Halep, Nurdin Peštalić, Ivan Beus, Ivan Perić, Muhamed Begagić, Josip Bevanda and Senad Islam, and the five from the FF RS BiH are Mile Kovačević, Milorad Sofrenić, Zlatko Spasojević, Dragan Kulina and Darko Ljubojević.

All members of the new executive board had the right to run for president, but the only candidate apart from Mr Begić, a native of Sarajevo, was Josip Bevanda of Siroki Brijeg. After the first round of voting, no candidate received the required 45 votes, with Mr Begić receiving 36 and Mr Bevanda 23. One delegate was absent.

The result remained unchanged in the second round of voting, where only a simple majority was required, and so Mr Begić, president of the cantonal football federation of Sarajevo, was officially sworn in on a four-year mandate. He has lately served as vice-chairman of the NFSBiH normalisation committee. His two vice-presidents in his new post, Darko Ljubojević and Ivan Beus, were also elected at the meeting.

At a ceremony for the best Bosnian athletes of 2012, which was held at the Olympic Museum in Zetra, Sarajevo, the NFSBiH received special recognition from the Bosnian Olympic committee for its implementation of grassroots programmes in 2012. The Bosnian national association has devoted special attention to the promotion of activities in all sectors of non-professional football, as well as competitions for youth players, women, veterans, amateurs, footballers with special needs, orphans and the homeless, and indoor football and active leisure activities in schools.

At the same ceremony, a lifetime achievement award was presented to Ivica Osim, chairman of the normalisation committee, in recognition of his services to football in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

● Fuad Kravac



The new president of the NFSBiH, Elvedin Begić



**Czech Republic**  
www.fotbal.cz

## Seminar for top youth coaches

On 26 and 27 November 2012, the Olympic sports centre in Nymburk hosted the third major seminar run by the Czech Republic's youth sports centre. More than 150 coaches, sports managers and members of top youth clubs gathered in the conference hall. They received a wealth of information – details regarding financing from the ministry for youth and the Football Association of the Czech Republic (FAČR), information on changes to rules governing youth competitions, and lectures on youth development trends, conceptual work and planning in clubs, as well as modern training methods and physiology.

The seminar was organised by Dušan Fitel, technical director of the FAČR, Otakar Mestek, director of the grassroots department, Antonín Plachý, head of the coach education department, Stanislav Rýznar, licence manager for professional football and Michal Blažej, grassroots manager. Many distinguished guests attended the seminar, including Josef Tancoš, a member of the FAČR's executive committee, Tomáš Provazník, chairman of the youth committee, Petr Doležal, director of the legislative and law department, and Josef Csaplár and Aleš Čvančara, the coaches of the national Under-19 and Under-17 teams.



Youth football was at the heart of the discussions

The main focus of this seminar was discussion groups looking at youth competitions and developments in coaching methods between Under-12 and Under-19 levels. These sessions show that the FAČR is working closely with coaches looking at training methods and the latest coaching trends. We know, though, that we must all carry on learning and improving, taking inspiration from many different sources. That is the only way to get our players to the very pinnacle of European football.

Dušan Fitel, technical director of the FAČR, said: "I think this seminar has been very positive for all of us. We have obtained very important information – mostly from discussion groups – showing that we are on the right path as regards improving our football. We are gradually exchanging our old ways for modern thinking, and if we carry on running coaching seminars like this, it will be of great benefit for the whole of Czech football in the future. The seminar included lectures on many important issues, and all of this information can be used by coaches in their future work in clubs."

● Michal Blažej



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## Launch of the 150th anniversary celebrations

On 16 January, Michel Platini helped to launch a year of events marking the 150th anniversary of the establishment of The Football Association (FA) in fitting style at a glittering London ceremony. The UEFA President sent a specially recorded video message, which was played to the 400 assembled guests in the Grand Connaught Rooms. There was also a congratulatory address from the FIFA president, Joseph S. Blatter.

Others involved included His Royal Highness Prince William, Duke of Cambridge, in his role as president of The FA, UEFA vice-president Şenol Erzik and FIFA vice-president Jim Boyce, while David Beckham was one of several of the sport's greats to contribute messages of support. The star-studded audience included five England managers and a host of FIFA World Cup winners.

Mr Platini said: "On behalf of UEFA, I would like to congratulate The Football Association on this wonderful landmark. It is a milestone that is worthy of celebration by the entire worldwide football family. To my mind, it is logical that this season's UEFA Champions League final will be played at Wembley – the new home of The Football Association. Furthermore, the Women's Champions League final, the European Women's Under-17 Championship and the UEFA Congress will also take place in England during the next 12 months. We thank The Football Association for its contribution to creating, fostering and building our sport."

The event included a special section looking ahead to the UEFA Champions League and UEFA Women's Champions League finals in May. Final ambassadors Steve McManaman and Faye White took to the stage alongside the FA's vice-chairman, David Gill, who looked forward to the 37th Ordinary UEFA Congress.

As well as the elite level, there were constant references to the importance of the grassroots game and the need to celebrate those who give their time to help others. The duke said:



The England manager, Roy Hodgson (left), alongside his predecessors Graham Taylor, Terry Venables, Fabio Capello and Sven-Göran Eriksson, and FA chairman David Bernstein (third from right)

"I consider it a huge honour to lead The FA. It is an organisation which reaches every community, bringing the simplest enjoyment to people of all ages and all abilities. Over 150 years, football has become part of the very fabric of our society and I hope the year ahead will allow us to celebrate every aspect of this great game."

His Royal Highness paid a glowing tribute to the people who dedicate their lives to football across the country: "I would like to highlight the incredible efforts of the 400,000 volunteers that deliver the game week in, week out, up and down the country. I am delighted that The FA will be honouring this army of volunteers through a special '150 Grassroots Heroes' initiative. They deserve our full praise and unstinting thanks."

In its anniversary year, The FA will recognise the 400,000 volunteers, 300,000 coaches and 27,000 referees who give their time every week to the nation's favourite game. Introducing the event, the chairman of The FA, David Bernstein, outlined that commitment, saying: "After 150 years, there remains a simple beauty to the universality of football. From Wembley to park pitches, an invisible, unbreakable thread runs through. Through hope, ambition and a love of the game, it links us all – every player, coach, official and fan. It is why The FA is a not-for-profit organisation that fundamentally exists to support football at all levels. It is also why, in our 150th year, we will continue to embrace the power and magnetism of the professional game and use it to shine a light on the efforts taking place in the wider world of football – the grassroots."

● Greg Demetriou

## Martić takes charge of Finnish futsal

The Croatian Mićo Martić has taken over as head coach of the Finnish futsal team, having signed a contract with the Football Association of Finland until the end of September 2013. The contract will automatically be extended to cover the 2014 European Futsal Championship final round in the event that Finland qualify.

In addition to his duties as head coach, 48-year-old Martić will also be heavily involved in the training of domestic futsal coaches. He succeeds Jouni Pihlaja, who was in charge of the team from 2005 until the end of 2012.

*"When Jouni Pihlaja announced his resignation last autumn, we started looking for an internationally acclaimed coach. Our futsal committee has long emphasised the need for a better coach education system, and we strongly believe that we have now found someone who meets our needs and can take our futsal to the next level,"* said Pertti Alaja, president of the Football Association of Finland. Mićo Martić had a long playing career, which spanned three



Finland's new national futsal coach, Mićo Martić

decades. He represented first Yugoslavia and then Croatia, playing in a European Futsal Championship and a Futsal World Cup. He captained his country, was capped 44 times and scored 32 international goals between 1994 and 2001.

Martić completed an Italian futsal master's course at Coverciano in 2004. He has coached the Croatian national team, as well as club sides in Italy and Croatia. In addition to his work in Finland, Martić will continue to coach MNK Alumnus in Zagreb.

*"I am very happy to have this chance to develop Finnish futsal, which has a long history. Domestic futsal has improved in recent years, which can be seen in the fact that the national team is now starting its qualification matches for the EURO at the main round stage for the first time. However, my main task is to develop the game at the grassroots level, so that the national team will have a solid basis for future success,"* said Martić.

*"The national team already has a good basis for development. The players are rapid, quick and aggressive. All of these qualities are needed in modern futsal. If Spain can develop their game ever further, I don't see why Finland cannot do the same."*

Before qualification for Futsal EURO 2014 starts in March, Finland will play the Netherlands twice in February, shortly after a national team training camp in January. Finland will be competing with Italy, Hungary and Montenegro for a place in the final round in Belgium in 2014.

● Sami Terävä

## Integration prize: nominees selected

A jury chaired by Wolfgang Niersbach, president of the German Football Association (DFB), has selected nine nominees for the 2012 DFB and Mercedes-Benz Integration Prize. *"Football is a strong driver of integration,"* Niersbach said after the meeting in Frankfurt am Main. *"Our national team is an example of how people from different backgrounds can play together in a creative and successful manner. We received applications from a total of 235 clubs and projects, which is superb. The jury was also impressed by the quality of many of the applications."* Oliver Bierhoff, manager of the German national team, is the prize's patron and is also on the jury. This year, the special award goes to Bundesliga club SV Werder Bremen for its project "Werder –

a lifetime of inspiration". Of the 235 applications received, 118 were from clubs, 38 were from schools and 79 were from institutions of various kinds. These prestigious awards have been presented by the DFB and its main sponsor since 2007 under the slogan "Many different cultures – one shared passion", and almost €1m in monetary and material prizes has been awarded during that period in support of integration projects. This year, the DFB and Mercedes-Benz will be holding their awards ceremony on 25 March in Nuremberg, the day before Germany's FIFA World Cup qualifying match against Kazakhstan, and all winners will receive tickets to the match. Last year, Angela Merkel, the German chancellor, was the guest of honour at the awards ceremony in Berlin.

Nominated clubs: FC Internationale Berlin 1980, TSV Großheubach 1900 and Türk FV 1984 Miltenberg, VfR Schleswig



Wolfgang Niersbach, president of the DFB, Ursula Schwarzenbart of Daimler AG and Oliver Bierhoff, the German national team manager, at a jury meeting

Nominated schools: Comenius-Schule, Flensburg, GGS Kettelerstraße, Cologne, Christophorus Schulverein, Munich, Stüveschule, Osnabrück

Nominated projects: Stadt Dortmund (MIA-DO), KiTa Elisabeth-Heimpel-Haus, Göttingen, KJK Sandgasse, Offenbach

● Thomas Hackbarth

## Football forum in Budapest

At the invitation of Sándor Csányi, president of the Hungarian Football Federation (MLSZ), Pierluigi Collina was special guest at the second Hungarian football forum in Budapest in January. The Italian former referee, who is now UEFA's chief refereeing officer, spoke on the subject of the additional assistant referee (AAR) system and his experiences of it so far. He explained that statistics from UEFA EURO 2012 showed that the new system greatly reduced the number of refereeing errors, and that mistakes affecting the final results of matches were now even rarer. He voiced support for the MLSZ's decision to introduce additional assistant referees in the Hungarian National League next season.



*"One of the most important topics in world football is refereeing,"* Mr Collina said. *"The MLSZ is doing great work for Hungary by raising this to a higher level. The acceleration and speed is the biggest difference between*

MLSZ president Sándor Csányi and Pierluigi Collina

*football of the past and of the present. Because of this, the AAR system and the extra assistants have been brought in."*

Another representative of UEFA introduced UEFA's technical education programme, which is composed of three pillars: improving professional standards, producing better players and implementing coaching conventions. The MLSZ president gave the public a wealth of information regarding the association's achievements and future plans, including details of the Bozsik youth education programme and investment in infrastructure.

● Márton Dinnyés





## Winter seminar for top match officials

At a recent winter training camp in Eilat, referees and assistant referees from the top two tiers of Israeli football attended a theoretical and practical workshop exploring various issues (especially the additional assistant refereeing system, which has recently been implemented in Israel).

The course was conducted by UEFA refereeing officer Hugh Dallas (who acts as a professional advisor for refereeing matters in Israel), along with a number of Israeli instructors headed by referee development manager Shmuel Shteif.

In the practical training exercises, several types of situation were reproduced in and around the penalty area, including foul play, holding, handball and simulation. Various offside situations were recreated and assistant referees' decision-making was tested, with all incidents filmed and checked later for accuracy.



*Hugh Dallas passes on instructions to Israeli referees*

In addition, all referees underwent a challenging "yo-yo test", a fitness exercise similar to that undergone by elite referees in the UEFA Champions League and the UEFA Europa League. Israel's top international referee, Alon Yefet, recorded the best result, demonstrating to his younger colleagues that hard work, professionalism and dedication pays dividends.

The 2013 FIFA badges were presented at an official ceremony led by director of refereeing Yariv Teper, referees committee chairman Dani Koren, and Hugh Dallas. The event was also an opportunity to formally thank and bid farewell

to former international referee Haim Yaakov, who has recently retired. Mr Yaakov now serves as a referee observer in the Israeli Premier League and soon, following a recommendation by the Israeli referees' union, will become an international referee observer at UEFA.

Mr Teper said: "The workshop and training camp was an extremely successful exercise and all our aims and goals set by the professional staff and match officials were achieved. The referees and assistants also increased their understanding of the additional assistant referees' role, and I'm sure that the added value provided here will contribute to improving the high level of officiating within our top league."

● Michal Grundland



## Second group inducted into the Hall of Fame

The Hall of the 500 in Florence's Palazzo Vecchio was the backdrop for a ceremony held in December 2012 in honour of the second group of individuals inducted into the Italian Football Hall of Fame. This initiative was launched in 2011 by the Italian Football



*Six stars of Italian football: (from left to right) Paolo Maldini, Luigi Agnolin, Giovanni Trapattoni, Giampiero Boniperti, Dino Zoff and Paolo Casarin*

Federation (FIGC) and the Italian Football Museum Foundation to pay tribute to people who had made an outstanding contribution to Italian football.

The prizes were awarded by an illustrious jury made up of the heads of all major Italian sports publications. They awarded places in the Hall of Fame to the following: in the category "Italian player", Paolo Maldini (who gave the museum the shirt he wore when winning the FIFA Club World Cup with AC Milan in 2007 – the last of his intercontinental trophies); in the category "foreign player", Marco van Basten; in the category "coach", Giovanni Trapattoni; in the category "Italian official", Giampiero Boniperti (who gave the museum the shirt

he wore on his international debut in 1947); in the category "Italian referee", Luigi Agnolin and Paolo Casarin jointly; and in the category "veteran Italian", Dino Zoff (who presented the museum with the match ball from the final of the 1968 European Football Championship, which was won by Italy). Angelo Schiavio, Concetto Lo Bello, Valentino Mazzola and Nereo Rocco were also admitted to the hall of fame posthumously.

The Hall of Fame now contains 29 legends of the game, who lit up Italian football and, to remind us all of their glorious pasts, have donated souvenirs from their careers to the football museum.

The Hall of the 500 was packed with pupils from football schools, as well as numerous dignitaries, including: Matteo Renzi, the mayor of Florence (who is also a registered referee and a passionate football supporter and who offered to continue to host Hall of Fame ceremonies in Florence in the future); Giancarlo Abete, the president of the FIGC (who reminded everyone that 2013 marks the 30th anniversary of the death of Artemio Franchi and

announced that the Football Museum Foundation is to bear his name); Carlo Tavecchio, executive vice-president of the FIGC and president of the national amateur league; Demetrio Albertini, vice-president of the FIGC; Antonio Matarrese, former president of the FIGC; Marcello Nicchi, president of the Italian referees association; Renzo Ulivieri, president of the Italian football coaches association; Damiano Tommasi, president of the players' union; Marco Brunelli, director general of Serie A; Andrea Abodi, director general of Serie B; Francesco Ghirelli, director general of the professional league; and Antonello Valentini, director general of the FIGC.

● Barbara Moschini



## Marians Pahars takes charge of Latvian Under-21s

The Latvian Football Federation (LFF) has reached an agreement with former Skonto FC head coach and former star international Marians Pahars, to become the head coach of Latvia's Under-21 team, replacing Dutchman Anton Joore. Former national team captain Vitālijs Astafjevs and FS Metta/LU head coach Andris Riherts have been appointed assistant coaches.

The team's first official tournament under its new coaches was the Commonwealth Cup in January in St Petersburg. Pahars will now look ahead to the qualifying matches for the 2013–15 European Under-21 Championship, which starts later this year.

In other news, the Latvian First Division will begin on 29 March and run until November, with the ten teams playing each other three times. For the first time, the Latvian football season will kick off with a Super Cup match between current champions FC Daugava Daugavpils and Latvian Cup winners Skonto FC on 9 March. The Latvian Second Division will begin in April, with 16 teams (of which seven are First Division clubs' reserve teams) playing each other twice.

● Viktors Sopirins



*LFF general secretary Jānis Mežekis welcomes the new national Under-21 team coach, Marians Pahars*



## Fourth annual awards ceremony

At a ceremony in January, the Liechtenstein Football Association (LFV) presented the fourth annual LFV Awards, honouring the best footballer, young footballer and coach of 2012. As usual, the LFV also paid tribute to the efforts of volunteers, presenting Andreas Kollmann with the award for the volunteer of the year.

In the prestigious footballer of the year category, the award went to 28-year-old professional Michele Polverino of Austrian

Bundesliga side Wolfsberger AC after the midfielder came out on top in a poll of experts and the public. The award was presented by former Swiss international Ludovic Magnin.

In the young footballer of the year category, Nicolas Hasler of FC Vaduz succeeded in defending his title. He received his award from former international Michael Stocklase, who announced his retirement as a player in 2012.

Finally, the award for coach of the year went to Uwe Wegmann, coach of Liechtensteiner Cup winners FC USV Eschen/Mauren. This was the second such honour for Wegmann, who



*Michele Polverino, player of the year, flanked by the president of the LFV, Matthias Voigt, and former Swiss international Ludovic Magnin*

had also won the inaugural award in 2009. The presentation was made by Hans Muntener, who was coach of Liechtenstein's national team at the time of their first official international match in 1982.

● Anton Banzer

## Promotion of grassroots football in clubs

The Luxembourg Football Federation (FLF) has tasked itself with increasing efforts to support and promote grassroots football in the country's clubs, recognising that the grassroots game represents the foundations of the football pyramid.

Over the last three years, all clubs with youth programmes have been given free training equipment and footballs with a total value of €400,000.

Those clubs have had several opportunities to choose and order the items that they need for their training sessions from a list drawn up by the national association.

All Luxembourg clubs with youth teams have taken advantage of the FLF's offer and ordered equipment from the national association. As a result, all children and young players



*A guide to help coaches educate young players*

attending club training sessions in Luxembourg now have new equipment that meets all their needs, and sufficient numbers of footballs.

In addition, the national association recently issued all youth team coaches with a manual setting out the FLF's guidelines regarding the coaching of children and young players.

The aim of the manual is to provide the coaches of the various age groups with theoretical background information on key areas of coaching for children and young players of all ages, in order to make their practical work more targeted and efficient.

As a next step, all youth team coaches will be offered practical resources in the form of DVDs and educational videos on the association's website to enable them to tailor their training sessions to the ages of their players.

All of these initiatives serve to foster organised grassroots football in Luxembourg, with the aim of helping clubs to organise such activities and ensuring that children and young players continue to enjoy our beloved sport.

● Joël Wolff

## Annual awards gala

In front of 1,500 people, Alexandru Epureanu, the defender who plays for PFC Krylya Sovetov Samara in Russia, received the 2012 player of the year award at the traditional ceremony when the Football Association of Moldova (FMF) recognises the outstanding football personalities of the year. The gala was attended by officials including Nicolae Timofti, president of the Republic of Moldova, and Vlad Filat, the country's prime minister.

Other awards were presented for the best coach (Vlad Goian, FC Tiraspol), best referee (Gabriel Tupicica), best futsal player (Oleg Hilotii, CSC Lexmax Stauceni), best women's player (Nadejda Colesnicenco, Sport School No. 4 Tiraspol), best beach soccer player (Stefan Efras, CS Gratiesti) and best football-tennis player (Cristian Rotaru, CS Ialoveni).

The ceremony continued with awards for the best goalkeeper in the national championship (Eugen Matiughin, FC Dacia Chisinau), best defender (Miral Samardžić, FC Sheriff), best midfielder (Alexandru Pascenco, FC Sheriff), best forward (Gheorghe Boghiu, FC Milsami Orhei) and top goalscorer (Benjamin Balima, FC Sheriff).

FC Tiraspol took the 2012 fair play award, and the FMF also presented awards to the British Embassy in the Republic of Moldova, CSCT Buiucani Chisinau and the Moldovan department of penitentiary institutions.

● Press office

## FIFA badges and plaques for Maltese referees

An annual function on the calendar of the refereeing department of the Malta Football Association (MFA) is the presentation of FIFA badges to match officials. This year's event was held in conjunction with one of the monthly instructional meetings for match officials and referee observers.

The meeting started with an interesting presentation about the success of the additional assistant referees experiment in UEFA matches by referees' committee chairman Charles Agius.

Norman Darmanin Demajo, the MFA president, then presented FIFA badges to 16 match officials: referees Esther Azzopardi, Kevin Azzopardi (new), Marco Borg, Clayton Pisani and Alan Mario Sant; assistant referees Alan Camilleri, William Debattista, Mariano Debono, Chris Francalanza, Mitchell Scerri, Edward Spiteri, Ingmar Spiteri and Duncan Sultana (new); futsal referee Franco Cachia; and beach soccer referees Stefan Pace and Jude Amin Utulu.

Plaques were also presented to two officials, Christopher Lautier (FIFA referee, 2005–12) and Konrad Borg (FIFA assistant referee, 2002–12) in recognition of their service on the FIFA list.



*The president of the MFA, Norman Darmanin Demajo, surrounded by Maltese referees with their FIFA badges*

In his address, the MFA president made reference to ongoing projects such as the successful refereeing academy, which is now in its second year, the referees' exchanges in the past 18 months in which nearly all elite referees and elite assistant referees have been involved, and the new refereeing department's own quarters adjacent to Centenary Stadium. He also took the opportunity to mention some refereeing initiatives taking place in the next three months.

Norman Darmanin Demajo thanked the director of refereeing, Adrian Casha, the referees' committee, all the referees and assistant referees, referee observers and others in the sector, not least the Malta Football Referees Association, which devotes much of its time to maintaining a united refereeing fraternity.

● Alex Vella



*FMF president Pavel Cebanu addresses the 1,500 guests at the Moldovan football gala*

## Social projects

The Irish Football Association's "Football For All" project relaunched its EU PEACE III-funded programme "Looking Back to Move Forward" at the Playhouse in Derry-Londonderry at the end of January, with support from Northern Ireland's deputy first minister, Martin McGuinness, Northern Ireland manager Michael O'Neill and drama students from St Cecilia's College. The Football For All project is delivered locally with support from the European Union's PEACE III programme, which is managed for the Special EU Programmes Body by the Community Relations Council/Pobal consortium.

Students from local school St Cecilia's got proceedings started at the relaunch, performing a drama piece based on the topic of tackling hate crime which supports the "Hands Off My Friend" campaign.

Northern Ireland manager Michael O'Neill introduced a short film about the grassroots initiative "Street League", which supports marginalised and homeless men. He commented: "With valued support from the PEACE III programme, the Irish Football Association is committed to working in partnership with community groups, clubs, fans and volunteers to promote Football For All throughout all levels of the game. Grassroots initiatives like Street League and Limestone United demonstrate how



*The Irish Football Association's project relaunch event*

*sport is able to harness a common passion and use it as a basis to promote learning, respect for diversity and self-development."*

The Football For All project will continue to focus on using football as a hook to promote peace and reconciliation, develop partnerships and build capacity within clubs, fans and communities. Looking Back to Move Forward highlights areas where we can learn from our

history to help shape our future. It aims to reach beyond the sport of football to invest in education and social development, creating advocates for change within communities and peer groups. Other key elements of the project include the development of a new full-time Football For All post based in Derry-Londonderry, "Dealing with the Past" seminar

events, intergenerational storytelling workshops at clubs and the creation of a Football For All youth forum to give young people a voice on community relations issues facing football. The project will be delivered alongside continued support and work within domestic leagues and international supporters' groups.

● Lisa Rickett

## Women's futsal shows its strength

More than 24,000 fans attended the third World Women's Futsal Tournament in December, which was hosted by the Portuguese Football Federation in Oliveira de Azeméis in the north of the country.

The success of the tournament could be seen in the large numbers of fans in attendance, and home supporters saw the Portuguese team knock out Spain on penalties in the semi-finals, before losing 3-0 to Brazil in the final, the South Americans winning their third title in a row. During the week, the teams from Brazil, Costa Rica, Iran, Japan, Malaysia, Portugal, Russia, Spain, Ukraine and Venezuela showed the best of international women's futsal, opening the door to recognition by FIFA and demonstrating the need for an official competition that reflects the quality of the sport.

Two more editions of the tournament are planned for 2014 and 2015, and they are expected to be just as successful as this one.

● Selma Pereira



*The Brazilian winners of the World Women's Futsal Tournament*

## 2013 season starts in St Petersburg

The new football season has begun with the traditional international youth tournament in memory of Valentin Granatkin, the very first FIFA vice-president. A total of 16 national Under-18 teams took part in the tournament, which was being staged for the 25th time. The matches, which took place in the largest indoor arena in St Petersburg, were fiercely contested, but ultimately Russia prevailed, winning the trophy for the eighth time. It should be noted that this was the first international tournament for the new head coach of Russia's Under-18 team, Dmitri Ulyanov, who was appointed in December of last year.

"I am delighted that Russia's Under-18s have won this first tournament of the 2013 season. This is the 25th time that the tournament has been staged, and from year to year, the competition grows stronger and becomes more representative. The main goal in this tournament is certainly to win, but it is also important for teams as a stepping stone and a learning experience," said Nikolai Tolstykh, president of the Russian Football Union (RFS).

The 2013 Commonwealth Cup followed hot on the heels of that tournament. Its opening ceremony was attended by the FIFA president, Joseph S. Blatter, the Russian sports minister, Vitaly Mutko, and Nikolai Tolstykh. "This event has become a firm fixture in the Russian football calendar and is supported by both UEFA and FIFA. A total of 12 national teams from countries in the



*The president of the Russian Football Union, Nikolai Tolstykh, presents the trophy to the captain of the Russian Under-18 team*

Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic countries are competing for victory in this 21st Commonwealth Cup. The chief purpose of the competition is not only to determine the best national team, but also to assess these young players, who could soon become members of their countries' senior teams," Mr Tolstykh noted.

In 2011, a decision was made to change the format of the Commonwealth Cup. It is now a competition for national Under-21 teams – primarily those of countries in the Commonwealth of Independent States plus the Baltic countries (i.e. the countries of the former Soviet Union). The tournament was previously intended as a club competition pitching the champions of those countries against each other. The tournament has been held every year since 1993. It was held in St Petersburg in 2008, 2011 and 2013, and in Moscow on every other occasion.

● Irina Baranova



## Sixth UEFA B licence coaching course

In cooperation with the technical department of the Italian Football Federation (FIGC), the San Marino Football Federation (FSGC) scheduled its sixth UEFA B licence coaching course to take place during the 2012/13 season.

At the end of the application period, course director Luciano Casadei, general secretary of the FSGC, approved the applications of ten candidates (see photo). The 130 hours of lessons were divided into two periods: the first began on Monday 12 November and ended on Wednesday 19 December; the second started on Tuesday 22 January and will finish in the last week of February.

Four hours of lessons have been taking place between 18.30 and 23.00 on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays. This schedule was designed to enable the trainee coaches to fully commit their time to the course, and has taken into account local weather conditions, the sporting and social backgrounds of the participants and, above all, the aims of the FSGC.

The course coordinator is Emilio Cecchini, head of the training department and professor of coaching methods and theory. Mr Cecchini



*The ten B licence candidates and their mentor*

recommended and recruited the most experienced and highly qualified teachers from San Marino and the surrounding parts of Italy for the course. Together with the respective teachers, he has organised and coordinated theory-based and practical lessons as well as indoor facilities for use during inclement weather, and has recommended an extensive

bibliography and multimedia support materials for the course topics.

The comfortable multimedia classrooms at the Casa del Calcio (the headquarters of the FSGC) and the adjacent artificial pitch have provided an optimum setting for the lessons.

● Emilio Cecchini

## Familiar faces on new Pro licence course

In January, the Scottish Football Association (SFA) welcomed a new intake of UEFA Pro licence candidates for a two-day session at Hampden Park.

A procession of world-class coaches have graduated from this prestigious course, the highest rung on the coaching ladder, and a host of familiar faces are among the 2013 entrants hoping to gain the two-year licence.

They include the Rangers FC captain, Lee McCulloch, former Trinidad and Tobago national coach, Russell Latapy, the Dundee FC manager, Barry Smith, former Leeds United AFC star, Brian Deane, (now head coach of Norwegian side Sarpsborg 08 FF), and Everton FC coach Duncan Ferguson.

In addition, an official dinner and presentation ceremony was held for those coaches who graduated from the Pro licence course last year. They included David Weir, Scott Gemmill, Gary Locke and Scott Booth – as well as Anna Signeul and Shelley Kerr, the coaches of Scotland's senior women's and women's Under-19 teams respectively, who were the first women to graduate from the Pro licence course.

Graduate David Weir said: "The course is a big commitment, but well worth it because you get so much out of it."

"There have been top-quality coaches on the course who all speak very highly of it. The course offers quality access to the best coaches in the game."

● Andrew Harris



*Lee McCulloch, one of the participants on the Pro licence course*

## Electronic administration system takes Slovak football into a new era

One of the largest projects currently being undertaken by the Slovak Football Association (SFZ) involves the establishment of a fully electronic administration system for Slovak football. The SFZ has focused on ensuring the best and shortest possible preparation phase for future users of the system (who include regional administrative units, clubs, referees, official delegates and players). After a difficult and lengthy selection process, it opted to task Tempest – one of the largest IT companies in

Slovakia – with providing the system. Since the beginning of the 2012/13 season, referees have been using both paper and electronic match reports. These reports have been placed straight on the project's public website (www.futbalnet.sk), which has quickly become an authoritative source of official information on matches. Match results are now presented in a completely different way – one that reflects the digital age that we live in.

The new system contains all relevant data about registered players, clubs, referees, coaches, delegates and observers, and it is improving all the time. In January, an

electronic transfer option was added for players, which should help clubs and registration offices. The first purely electronic transfer was carried out on 24 January, with Roman Maruniak of FK Slovan Levice in the third tier of Slovak football being loaned to TJ Lokomotiva Kozárovce in the sixth tier of the game.

The SFZ hopes this proves that its user-friendly administration system covers even the smallest clubs at grassroots level, and that the belief that the system would not work properly has proved to be entirely unfounded.

● Juraj Čurný





### New offices and a new look for the SvFF

Råsundastadion took its final bow after the UEFA Europa League game between AIK Solna and SSC Napoli in November, and after 75 years it was time for the Swedish Football Association (SvFF) to move to new offices. Appropriately, those new headquarters are located right next to Sweden's new national stadium, the Friends Arena in Solna.

In January, the SvFF welcomed adidas as a new partner and official kit supplier. The deal

with adidas will run from 2013 to 2018 and marks the end of a ten-year partnership with Umbro. "We're convinced that adidas is the best partner to further build on the success of our national teams. They are the market leaders in Sweden and have great products and visions for our football. We also have a great history, having worked together from 1970 to 2002," said the SvFF president, Karl-Erik Nilsson.

The partnership with adidas is about more than just the national teams' kit; it covers all SvFF activities, such as the association's annual



The SvFF president, Karl-Erik Nilsson (right), and Brian Grevy, adidas Nordic's general manager, introduce the new Sweden home shirt

football school, which is attended by more than 55,000 children from 600 clubs every summer.

● Andreas Nilsson



### Success for Swiss youth teams

Following the introduction of its youth development plan in 1995, the Swiss Football Association has consistently achieved great success with its youth teams. The association is not "just" producing players who are establishing themselves and having an impact in the Swiss Super League and the senior national side; its youth teams are regularly making headlines of their own. A few years ago the achievements of those teams provoked amazement, but such success is almost expected these days.

People in Switzerland are only too happy to look back over the incredible achievements of the last ten years: winners of the European Under-17 Championship in 2002; winners of the Under-17 World Cup in 2009; beaten finalists in the European Under-21 Championship in 2011; and qualifiers for the final rounds of well over 20 competitions across the various age categories.

This year, too, Switzerland's youth teams are doing well, with both Under-19 teams and both Under-17 teams making it through the first round of qualifying matches and looking ahead to the next rounds in the spring.

The Under-19 men's team, coached by Claude Ryf, qualified for the elite round with



Florijana Ismael, a member of the Swiss women's Under-19 team

four points, despite a narrow 4-3 defeat to Scotland. They will now compete with Serbia, the Republic of Ireland and Slovakia for a place in the final round. Meanwhile, the Under-17 men's team, coached by Heinz Moser, qualified for the elite round with seven points and will now face the Czech Republic, Israel and Poland at the end of March for a place in their final round.

The women's teams have also achieved almost traditional levels of success. The Under-19s, coached by Yannick Schwery, won all three of their group games (beating the Netherlands, Romania and Israel) to take their place in the second qualifying round in Belgium, where they will play the hosts, France and Russia. The Under-17s, coached by Walter Späni, also secured three wins, beating Belgium,

Moldova and Bulgaria – scoring 21 goals and conceding just once in the process. They will now play the Czech Republic, Sweden and Italy in the second qualifying round in April.

● Pierre Benoit



### Project FUTSAL

The Wales national team manager, Chris Coleman, recently helped to launch Wales' second Project FUTSAL "hub" at Prestatyn Town FC. He was joined by Neil Ward, chief executive of the Welsh Football Trust, Tony Maguire, Project FUTSAL coordinator, and Gafyn Buckley and Brian Wall from Wales' first hub in Llangefni.



(From left to right) Gafyn Buckley, Chris Coleman and Brian Wall

The launch was a huge success, highlighting the positive impact that Project FUTSAL has had on both the individuals involved in the scheme and their communities as a whole. Also in attendance were Ann Jones, a member of the Welsh Assembly, and Chris Ruane MP, who closed proceedings by praising the incredible work of all those involved in the project to date, and looked forward to the continued success of the scheme as more hubs are opened across North Wales.

Project FUTSAL is a joint initiative bringing together the Football Association of Ireland and the Welsh Football Trust. Its core aim is to use football as a social inclusion tool in order to facilitate innovative community regeneration.

● Ceri Stennett



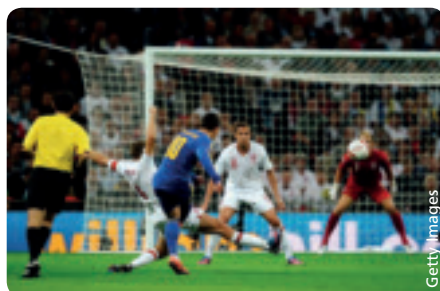
### A new chapter in Ukrainian football

Ukrainian football is embarking on a new era. On New Year's Eve, new head coaches took charge of Ukraine's senior and Under-21 teams. The new coach of the senior team is the former star defender Mykhailo Fomenko, who played for FC Dynamo Kyiv and the Soviet Union, winning the European Cup Winners' Cup and the European Super Cup. Another former Dynamo Kyiv player, Serhiy Kovalets, has taken charge of Ukraine's Under-21s.

Both coaches face the ultimate task: qualifying for major tournaments. The main aim of Ukraine's senior team is to qualify for the final round of the 2014 FIFA World Cup in Brazil. Meanwhile, Ukraine's Under-21s will be bidding to qualify for the final round of the 2015 European Under-21 Championship in the

Czech Republic. Mykhailo Fomenko's first match in charge was a friendly against Norway on 6 February, while Serhiy Kovalets made a successful start at the Commonwealth Cup.

● Serhiy Dryga



Ukraine put in a good performance to get a draw against England in London

Benny Jacobsen (Denmark, 1 March)  
 Luis Medina Cantalejo (Spain, 1 March)  
 Damir Vrbanić (Croatia, 2 March)  
 Jenni Kennedy (England, 2 March)  
**Gerhard Mayer-Vorfelder (Germany, 3 March)**  
 ☆☆☆ 80th  
 Hans Lorenz (Germany, 3 March)  
 Carolin Rudolph (Germany, 3 March)  
 Patrick McGrath (Republic of Ireland, 4 March)  
 Franco Combi (Italy, 4 March)  
 Zoran Bahtijarević (Croatia, 5 March)  
 Samuel James Shaw (Northern Ireland, 6 March)  
 Boris Durlen (Croatia, 6 March)  
 Liana Melania Stoicescu (Romania, 6 March)  
 Ichko Lozev (Bulgaria, 6 March)  
 Sandro Rosell (Spain, 6 March)  
**Pedro Maria Aurteneche Viñegra (Spain, 7 March)** ☆☆☆ 80th  
 Dušan Maravić (Serbia, 7 March)  
 Tomás Gea (Andorra, 7 March)  
 Josep Lluís Vilaseca Guasch (Spain, 8 March)  
 Florentino Pérez Rodríguez (Spain, 8 March)  
 Giorgio Crescentini (San Marino, 8 March)  
 Diogo Paiva Brandão (Portugal, 8 March)  
 Alexis Ponnet (Belgium, 9 March)  
 Vladimir Aleshin (Russia, 9 March)  
 Henk Kesler (Netherlands, 9 March)  
**Ruben Hayrapetyan (Armenia, 9 March)**  
 ☆☆☆ 50th  
 Herbert Fandel (Germany, 9 March)  
 Joseph S. Blatter (Switzerland, 10 March)  
 Mateo Beusan (Croatia, 10 March)  
 Ilkka Koho (Finland, 10 March)  
 Jasmin Baković (Bosnia-Herzegovina, 10 March)  
 Lucien Kayser (Luxembourg, 11 March)  
 Sergey Fursenko (Russia, 11 March)  
**Olga Zhukovska (Ukraine, 11 March)**  
 ☆☆☆ 50th  
 Jean-François Crucke (Belgium, 12 March)  
 Miroslav Vitković (Croatia, 12 March)  
 Thomas Partl (Austria, 13 March)  
 Yngve Hallén (Norway, 14 March)  
 Neil Jardine (Northern Ireland, 14 March)  
 Lucia Knappkova (Slovakia, 14 March)  
 Ivan Ćurković (Serbia, 15 March)  
 Götz Dimanski (Germany, 15 March)  
 Cornelius Bakker (Netherlands, 17 March)  
 Liutauras Varanavicius (Lithuania, 17 March)  
 Christos Skapoullis (Cyprus, 18 March)  
**Marcello Nicchi (Italy, 18 March)**  
 ☆☆☆ 60th  
 Andreas Georgiou (Cyprus, 18 March)  
 Paul Elliott (England, 18 March)  
 Marina Tashchyan (Armenia, 18 March)  
 Helmut Spahn (Germany, 19 March)  
 Ronald Zimmermann (Germany, 19 March)  
 Høgni í Stórustovu (Faroe Islands, 19 March)  
 Aristides Stathopoulos (Greece, 20 March)  
**Sándor Csányi (Hungary, 20 March)**  
 ☆☆☆ 60th  
 Edward Foley (Republic of Ireland, 20 March)  
 James Boyce (Northern Ireland, 21 March)  
 Kai-Erik Arstad (Norway, 21 March)  
 Ginés Meléndez (Spain, 22 March)  
**Chris Georgiades (Cyprus, 22 March)**  
 ☆☆☆ 60th  
 Michail Kassabov (Bulgaria, 22 March)  
 Luca Zorzi (Switzerland, 22 March)  
 Pafsanias Papanikolaou (Greece, 22 March)  
 Bernard Barbet (France, 23 March)

Franz Krösslhuber (Austria, 23 March)  
 Andrea Lastrucci (Italy, 23 March)  
**Mahmut Özgener (Turkey, 23 March)**  
 ☆☆☆ 50th  
 Hilda McDermott (Republic of Ireland, 23 March)  
 Outi Saarinen (Finland, 23 March)  
 Fernando Ruiz Hierro (Spain, 23 March)  
 Daniel Prodan (Romania, 23 March)  
 Michael Kirchner (Germany, 25 March)  
 Wilfried Straub (Germany, 26 March)  
**Steen Jørgensen (Denmark, 26 March)**  
 ☆☆☆ 40th  
 Anton Ondrus (Slovakia, 27 March)  
 José Antonio Casajus (Spain, 27 March)  
 Armen Minasyan (Armenia, 27 March)  
 Pavel Cebanu (Moldova, 28 March)  
 Edgar Obertüfer (Switzerland, 29 March)  
 Ian Beasley (England, 29 March)  
 Stefan Ormandjiev (Bulgaria, 29 March)  
 Alan Snoddy (Northern Ireland, 29 March)  
**Bernadette Constantin (France, 29 March)**  
 ☆☆☆ 50th  
 Bernadino González Vázquez (Spain, 29 March)  
 Sanna Pirhonen (Finland, 29 March)  
 William Hugh Wilson (Scotland, 30 March)  
 Richard Havrilla (Slovakia, 31 March)

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### Meetings

**1 March, in Nyon**  
 Club Competitions Committee

**11/12 March, in Nyon**  
 HatTrick Committee

**15 March, in Nyon**  
 UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa League: quarter-final draws

**19 March, in Nyon**  
 Youth and Amateur Football Committee

**27 March, in Sofia**  
 Professional Football Strategy Council

**28 March, in Sofia**  
 Executive Committee

### Competitions

**5/6 and 12/13 March**  
 UEFA Champions League: round of 16 (return legs)

**7 March**  
 UEFA Europa League: round of 16 (first legs)

**14 March**  
 UEFA Europa League: round of 16 (return legs)

**20/21 March**  
 UEFA Women's Champions League: quarter-finals (first legs)

**27–30 March**  
 European Futsal Championship: main round

**27/28 March**  
 UEFA Women's Champions League: quarter-finals (return legs)

## NOTICES

- On 17 December, Elvedin Begić was elected as the new president of the Football Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- On 14 January, UEFA vice-president Giancarlo Abete was re-elected president of the Italian Football Federation for a further four-year term.

## MATCH AGENTS

Seven new match agents have been granted a UEFA licence:

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## OBITUARY

**Mick Michels** (Belgium) was the first of the media officers used by UEFA at major tournaments. He first performed that role at the 1988 European Football Championship and was also involved when the service was extended to UEFA Champions League matches. He performed that same function for FIFA for many years and was secretary general of the European Union of Sports Press from 1985 to 1995. He passed away suddenly on 2 January at the age of 80.



WE CARE ABOUT FOOTBALL

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