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Cover:

*The Ordinary UEFA Congress
took place in London on
24 May to mark The Football
Association's 150th anniversary*

Photo: Getty Images

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COME ON YOU GIRLS!

I cannot deny that, every May, the player deep inside me still gets excited about the special atmosphere of the UEFA club competition finals, these momentous international climaxes that all footballers dream of playing in, or even being the heroes of.

This year was no exception, and the finals in Amsterdam and London, with their mixture of public fervour, joy and emotions, as well as uncertainty, were magnificent celebrations once again.

The men's and women's finals in London were all the more festive in as much as, like the UEFA Congress, they formed part of the celebrations marking the 150th anniversary of The Football Association, the oldest in the world. The quality of the matches served as a fitting tribute to the pioneers of our game. The match between FC Bayern München and Borussia Dortmund, staged in the prestigious, historic setting of Wembley, will have satisfied all fans of open football, where the desire to score is more important than any tactical manoeuvres.

There were fewer goals at Stamford Bridge in the final between VfL Wolfsburg and Olympique Lyonnais, but women's football nonetheless proved once again that it has all the ingredients needed to continue its fantastic progress.

Women's football will also be the focus in Sweden in July, when the continent's best national teams will be competing for the title of European champions. Behind the scenes, a conference on the development of women's football will bring together experts from all our member associations. Their general secretaries will also be there, illustrating the desire of virtually all our national associations to devote all the resources and attention to this sector that it deserves.

Organised men's football has been delighting crowds all over the world for more than 150 years now. Women's football would love to do the same, and we should be right behind them, encouraging them all the way.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Michel Platini'.

Michel Platini
UEFA President

ELECTIONS, NEW MEMBER AND RESOLUTION

Held in London on 24 May in honour of the 150th anniversary of The Football Association and attended by representatives of UEFA's 53 member associations, the 37th Ordinary UEFA Congress once again bore witness to the harmonious environment that currently reigns in European football.



HRH The Duke of Cambridge

Chaired by the UEFA President, Michel Platini, the Congress business was completed in a little less than three and a half hours. The delegates were welcomed, firstly, by His Royal Highness The Duke of Cambridge, president of The FA, who said that "[...] we English have a love affair with football," a sport that "can transform boys' and girls' lives". He also underlined the importance of grassroots football and the huge responsibility of the game's leaders, concluding his speech by declaring that "We are all first and foremost fans."



David Bernstein

The FA chairman, David Bernstein, highlighted the principles of universality and solidarity, "fundamental principles [...] that have been integral to the culture of football in its first 150 years." He also praised UEFA's "innovative and dynamic approach," stressing that it was the responsibility of those who had the privilege to lead to work together to create the required consensus and ensure the positive progression of the game. Finally, he quoted some impressive statistics concerning English football: 7 million players, 400,000 volunteers, 300,000 coaches, 27,000 referees and £100 million of FA investment in grassroots football.



Joseph S. Blatter

Reiterating his words of previous years, the FIFA president, Joseph S. Blatter, stressed the importance of football in the world and that of Europe in the world of football. He reminded the delegates of FIFA's desire for "reform to bring the football community back onto the right path and [...] correct some people's perception of football." He also referred to the problems threatening football, particularly violence, racism, doping and match-fixing. After mentioning the forthcoming FIFA competitions, from the Confederations Cup to the Club World Cup, without forgetting the U-17 and U-20 World Cups and the Beach Soccer World Cup, he concluded: "We cannot change the world, but we can prepare a better future."



Michel Platini

"Welcome to London! A city that lives and breathes football, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. A country – England – whose heart beats for football." After paying tribute to England's passion for football and recalling the success of EURO 2012 and the other competitions of the past season, the UEFA President painted a very positive picture of the current state of European football, which was more popular than ever: "Looking, first of all, at events on the pitch, the quality of the football is exceptional – better than ever – and the results are following close behind. Throughout Europe, the game is progressing. From Reykjavik to Valletta, football is improving day by day. The development programmes that you are putting in place, esteemed delegates, are bearing fruit."

However, it was not a time to rest on one's laurels, as he reminded the national association representatives: "Your role is to allow as many children in your countries as possible to play football in the best possible conditions."

Referring to UEFA's excellent financial results and the principle of solidarity that underpinned the fair distribution of revenue, he reasserted that the aim was "to share that revenue in order to continue investing, again and again, in the development of the game across Europe."

After looking ahead to EURO 2020 ("Fans won't have to go to the EURO; the EURO will come to them") and EURO 2016 ("an event that is not to be missed"), the UEFA President also mentioned the launch of the UEFA Youth League, a club youth competition which, he admitted, required a few more adjustments.

He concluded: "We can say that we are a confederation which is moving forwards, which is moving forwards at a good pace, and which is moving in the right direction."

Two new Executive Committee members

After Fernando Gomes (Portugal) had withdrawn his candidacy, the UEFA Executive Committee elections were merely a formality, since there were eight candidates for the eight seats available, each for a four-year term. By acclamation, the UEFA Congress therefore re-elected Giancarlo Abete (Italy), Allan Hansen (Denmark),



Sportsfile

František Laurinec (Slovakia), Marios N. Lefkaritis (Cyprus), Avraham Luzon (Israel) and Michael van Praag (Netherlands) and elected David Gill (England) and Wolfgang Niersbach (Germany). David Gill and Wolfgang Niersbach replace their compatriots Geoffrey Thompson and Theo Zwanziger, who had decided not to stand for re-election.

A RESOLUTION TO FIGHT RACISM

Responding to a call for concerted and united action against the dangers that threaten football, the national association delegates sent out a strong signal by unanimously adopting a resolution to fight racism. This 11-point resolution condemns all forms of discrimination and establishes a policy of zero tolerance towards racism. To this end, it calls for harsher disciplinary measures and invites referees to suspend or even abandon a match if racist incidents occur. It also provides for the punishment of players, team officials and supporters, with a partial stadium closure (concerning the section where the incident occurred) or even a match behind closed doors and a fine for further offences. The resolution also calls for awareness programmes and encourages players and coaches to lead the way. It expresses UEFA's full commitment to applying these measures and the fact that its member associations are also united against racism and determined to stamp it out without further ado. ●

GEOFFREY THOMPSON NAMED HONORARY MEMBER

The UEFA Congress awarded the title of UEFA honorary member to Geoffrey Thompson (England), who stood down from the Executive Committee in London, having served as a member since being elected at the Luxembourg Congress in 2000. He had been a UEFA vice-president since 2002.

The former chairman of The Football Association had also sat on various UEFA bodies since 1992, the year in which he had become a member of the Control and Disciplinary Body.

"The things that really matter are those that you cannot touch and see: humour, courage, loyalty, steadfastness. And, above all, integrity," said the new honorary member. *"It means setting your sights ever higher."*

Geoffrey Thompson is the 22nd UEFA honorary member. Twelve of them are still alive and most were in London, led by the honorary UEFA president, Lennart Johansson. ●



Sportsfile

The UEFA President present Geoffrey Thompson with his certificate of honorary membership

GIBRALTAR BECOMES 54TH UEFA MEMBER

The UEFA Congress accepted the application for UEFA membership of the Gibraltar Football Association (GFA), which therefore becomes the 54th full member of UEFA. The Executive Committee had already accepted the GFA as a provisional member at its meeting last October. The GFA president, Gareth Latin, expressed his association's satisfaction with its accession, which, he said, "will allow us to offer the football community the best possible future." ●

In the afternoon, the new Executive Committee held its constitutive meeting. As a result, for the 2013-15 period, it will have the following composition:

President: Michel Platini (France); vice-presidents: Şenes Erzik (Turkey), Ángel María Villar Llona (Spain), Marios N. Lefkaritis (Cyprus), Giancarlo Abete (Italy), Grigoriy Surkis (Ukraine). Members: Karen Espelund (Norway), Sergey Fursenko (Russia), David Gill (England), Peter Gilliéron (Switzerland), Allan Hansen (Denmark), František Laurinec (Slovakia), Avraham Luzon (Israel), Borislav Mihaylov (Bulgaria), Wolfgang Niersbach (Germany), Mircea Sandu (Romania), Michael van Praag (Netherlands).

At the same meeting, the Executive Committee appointed Fernando Gomes as special adviser in charge of relations with the other football confederations and as a member of the UEFA EURO 2016 steering group. Fernando Gomes will thus attend Executive Committee meetings in an advisory capacity and remain vice-chairman of the National Associations Committee.

FIFA Executive Committee

The FIFA Executive Committee elections also went effortlessly, since the number of candidates again matched the number of seats available.

All four outgoing members had sought a new term and were therefore re-elected by acclamation. For the next four years, Michel D'Hooghe (Belgium), Şenes Erzik (Turkey), Marios N. Lefkaritis (Cyprus) and Vitaly Mutko (Russia) will therefore remain part of the European delegation that also includes Michel Platini, Ángel María Villar Llona, Theo Zwanziger and the representative of the four British associations, Jim Boyce (Northern Ireland).

In brief

- The Congress approved the Report of the President and Executive Committee and the Report of the UEFA Administration 2011/12. This summary of UEFA's activities was supplemented by a brief video presentation in which the committee chairmen described the work of their respective committees. The UEFA General Secretary, Gianni Infantino, also summarised the activities carried out since the period covered by the report, i.e. since July 2012.
- As far as the presentation of all its accounts is concerned, UEFA has now abandoned the Swiss franc in favour of the euro. However, whatever the currency, UEFA's financial situation remains extremely healthy. The 2011/12 financial year, which included all revenue and expenditure linked to UEFA EURO 2012, showed a net profit of €128.8 million. The accounts and budgets were approved by the Congress.
- The next Ordinary UEFA Congress will be held in Astana, Kazakhstan on 27 March 2014. ●

The new lineup of the Executive Committee for the period 2013-15



Sportstyle

2015 CLUB FINALS IN BERLIN AND WARSAW

On 22 and 23 May, the UEFA Executive Committee met in London for the last time in its current composition, which had been in place since the 2011 UEFA Congress in Paris.

This third meeting of the year, chaired as usual by the UEFA President, Michel Platini, in particular prepared the ground for future UEFA club competitions.

It did so, firstly, by choosing the venues for the 2014/15 finals. The UEFA Champions League final will be held at the Olympiastadion in Berlin, which can accommodate some 74,000 spectators. Meanwhile, the National Stadium Warsaw, with a capacity of just over 57,000, will host the UEFA Europa League final in 2015.

UEFA Champions League place for the UEFA Europa League winners

The Executive Committee then discussed the 2015–18 cycle of the competitions and noted the proposals of the Club Competitions Committee (which met in London on the afternoon of 22 May), themselves based on intensive analysis by an internal working group.

In the UEFA Champions League, no major changes are envisaged for the new cycle because the competition is already an undeniable success. However, to increase the prestige of the Europa League, the Executive Committee agreed that the competition winners should be awarded a place in at least the play-offs of the subsequent season's Champions League. It also increased the maximum number of UEFA Champions League places to which a national association will be entitled from four to five, so that the UEFA Europa League winners will not replace a club that had qualified through its domestic league. This increase concerns only the top three national associations in UEFA's rankings. Moreover, no association will be able to enter more than three teams for the UEFA Europa League, excluding any that may qualify through the UEFA fair play ranking system, as these places are not affected.

The UEFA Europa League winners will qualify for the UEFA Champions League from the start of the 2015-18 cycle, which means that the 2014/15 UEFA Europa League winners will qualify for the 2015/16 UEFA Champions League.

The Executive Committee also decided to increase the number of teams qualifying directly for the UEFA Europa League group stage to 16 from 12 associations rather than six from six, as is currently the case. Furthermore, the centralisation of sponsorship rights will be extended to include the group matches.

New disciplinary regulations

The Executive Committee also approved a new version of the UEFA Disciplinary Regulations, which now include stricter sanctions for

racist conduct. For a first racist incident involving spectators, a partial stadium closure will be imposed (closure of the stand concerned), followed by a match behind closed doors and a €50,000 fine for a second such offence. Players and team officials found guilty of racism will be suspended for at least ten matches.



The Executive Committee during its London meeting

The new regulations also include additional measures to combat match-fixing. There will no longer be any statute of limitation for corruption or match-fixing offences and the UEFA Control and Disciplinary Body will be able to take action if a member association (or one of its members) fails to punish appropriately offences that harm the essence of football, notably match-fixing, corruption and doping offences.

In the fight against doping, the Executive Committee also gave the green light to a study aimed at retrospectively analysing the steroid profiles of around 900 players who have been tested at least three times in the UEFA club competitions since 2008. It also approved the introduction of blood tests as part of the regular UEFA anti-doping programme from the 2013/14 season onwards. Until now, such tests have only been conducted at the European Football Championship final tournaments.

On the competition front, the Executive Committee approved the regulations of the four youth competitions for the 2013/14 season, i.e. the European Under-17 and Under-19 Championships for men and women.

Finally, the Executive Committee decided to create a working group on relations with the European Union. ●

PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL STRATEGY COUNCIL

The UEFA Professional Football Strategy Council met on the morning of 22 May in London, ahead of the UEFA Executive Committee meeting.

Transfer matters, which have been identified as one of the council's priorities this year, were the main topic of discussion. A working group involving all the parties concerned has been created to examine this subject further and will continue its work throughout 2013. Furthermore, the council received an update on the changes being considered to the UEFA club competition formats for the 2015–18 cycle. Other items on the agenda were squad size limits and social dialogue. ●

UEFA CLUB COMPETITIONS COMMITTEE

The future of the UEFA Champions League and the UEFA Europa League was also the focus of the meeting of the Club Competitions Committee, which, under the chairmanship of Michael van Praag, met in London on 22 May after the first part of the Executive Committee meeting.



The Club Competitions Committee

An analysis of the presentation given by an internal working group enabled the committee to put the finishing touches to the proposals it subsequently made to the Executive Committee (see page 7). In addition, the committee examined the results of a study conducted by another working group on the UEFA Youth League. The study examined factors including the organisation, financial provisions, calendar and logistics of the new competition. More information will be published on UEFA.com and communicated to participating clubs during the pre-season site visits ahead of the 2013/14 UEFA Champions League. ●

2013/14 CLUB COMPETITIONS CALENDAR



UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

- 24 June 2013, in Nyon: draw for the first and second qualifying rounds
- 2/3 July: first qualifying round (first legs)
- 9/10 July: return legs
- 16/17 July: second qualifying round (first legs)
- 19 July, in Nyon: draw for the third qualifying round
- 23/24 July: return legs
- 30/31 July: third qualifying round (first legs)
- 6/7 August: return legs
- 9 August, in Nyon: play-off draw
- 20/21 August: play-offs (first legs)
- 27/28 August: play-offs (return legs)
- 29 August, in Monaco: group stage draw
- 17/18 September: group matches (matchday 1)
- 1/2 October: matchday 2
- 22/23 October: matchday 3
- 5/6 November: matchday 4
- 26/27 November: matchday 5
- 10/11 December: matchday 6
- 13 December, in Nyon: draw for the round of 16
- 18/19 or 25/26 February 2014: round of 16 (first legs)
- 11/12 or 18/19 March: return legs
- 21 March, in Nyon: draw for the quarter-finals
- 1/2 April: quarter-finals (first legs)
- 8/9 April: return legs
- 11 April, in Nyon: draw for the semi-finals
- 22/23 April: semi-finals (first legs)
- 29/30 April: return legs
- 24 May, in Lisbon: final



UEFA EUROPA LEAGUE

- 24 June 2013, in Nyon: draw for the first and second qualifying rounds
- 4 July: first qualifying round (first legs)
- 11 July: return legs
- 18 July: second qualifying round (first legs)
- 19 July, in Nyon: draw for the third qualifying round
- 25 July: return legs
- 1 August: third qualifying round (first legs)
- 8 August: return legs
- 9 August, in Nyon: play-off draw
- 22 August: play-offs (first legs)
- 29 August: play-offs (return legs)
- 30 August, in Monaco: group stage draw
- 19 September: group matches (matchday 1)
- 3 October: matchday 2
- 24 October: matchday 3
- 7 November: matchday 4
- 28 November: matchday 5
- 12 December: matchday 6
- 13 December, in Nyon: draw for the rounds of 32 and 16
- 20 February 2014: round of 32 (first legs)
- 27 February: return legs
- 13 March: round of 16 (first legs)
- 20 March: return legs
- 21 March, in Nyon: draw for the quarter-finals
- 3 April: quarter-finals (first legs)
- 10 April: return legs
- 11 April, in Nyon: draw for the semi-finals
- 24 April: semi-finals (first legs)
- 1 May: return legs
- 14 May, in Turin: final

FIFTH TITLE FOR FC BAYERN MÜNCHEN

Half a century after it first hosted the final of the European Champion Clubs' Cup – a match that resulted in the first of AC Milan's seven victories in this competition and the first of SL Benfica's seven consecutive defeats in the finals of club competitions – Wembley Stadium was, for the seventh time, the setting for the climax of Europe's club competition season.



The new Wembley Stadium – which had hosted the UEFA Champions League final between FC Barcelona and Manchester United FC just two years ago – was used again this year on account of the 150th anniversary of the establishment of The Football Association, with its hosting of the final forming part of UEFA's tribute to the world's oldest football association.

Unprecedented

This 58th European Cup final was unprecedented. It was the first time in the history of the competition that two German teams had met in the final – something that had only ever happened to teams from Spain (Real Madrid CF v Valencia CF in 2000), Italy (AC Milan v Juventus in 2003) and England (Manchester United FC v Chelsea FC in 2008). The only previous all-German final was that of the UEFA Cup in 1980, when VfL Borussia Mönchengladbach played Eintracht Frankfurt over two legs. It is worth noting, too, that German clubs had not featured in any of the six previous finals played at Wembley.

Bizarrely, the general pattern of the Champions League final was very similar to that of the UEFA Europa League final in Amsterdam ten days earlier: a goal by the eventual winners after an hour, followed by an equaliser from the penalty spot eight minutes later, and the winning goal being scored just as extra time was looming. However, in all other respects, the two finals played out differently. In London, Borussia Dortmund were the more enterprising and dangerous early on, giving goalkeeper Manuel Neuer several opportunities to demonstrate his considerable talents.

Fresher

As time went by, though, Jupp Heynckes' players gradually began to dominate and it was Roman Weidenfeller's turn to show that he was a first-rate last line of defence. Inevitably, Jürgen Klopp's team eventually slipped up, and when Arjen Robben burst through to score the winning goal, it was a

resounding confirmation of the superior physical freshness of the team from Munich.

Fruitful season

So, one year on from their painful defeat against Chelsea FC in their own stadium in the final of the same competition, FC Bayern München had won their fifth European Cup. That is the reaction of a champion, and one that speaks volumes for the fortitude of the German team, who dazzled in their domestic championship and were impressive in the latter stages of their European campaign. And that campaign – completed by a victory in the national cup – is not over yet, with the UEFA Super Cup still to come in Prague on 30 August, followed by the FIFA Club World Cup in Morocco in December. ●

25 May 2013

Wembley Stadium, London – 86,298 spectators

Borussia Dortmund v FC Bayern München 1-2 (0-0)

Goals: Mandžukić 60 (0-1), Gündoğan 68p (1-1), Robben 89 (1-2)

Referee: Nicola Rizzoli (Italy)

Victory for Bayern after losing two in finals in the last three years



CHELSEA FC ACHIEVE AN UNPRECEDENTED DOUBLE

Both in life and in sport, it sometimes seems that people are simply dogged by bad luck. SL Benfica's players may have experienced that unpleasant feeling at the end of the UEFA Europa League final.



Just a few days after losing to FC Porto by virtue of a goal conceded in added time – their first defeat of the season in the Portuguese championship, and one that resulted in the league title being snatched away from them – Benfica endured a similar nightmare at the Amsterdam ArenA, where a headed goal by Branislav Ivanović

tionally fluid move – from Petr Čech in goal to centre forward Fernando Torres, via a single player in midfield – that resulted in Chelsea opening the scoring after an hour.

Benfica equalised fairly soon afterwards, when they were awarded a penalty for handball. However, the players were visibly fatigued at the end of a long season, and those two goals were unable to spur them on to greater efforts. As a result, the game seemed destined for extra time when the Chelsea defender struck.

Benfica, who (like their opponents in the final) had begun the season in the UEFA Champions League, will therefore have to wait a little longer for a fresh taste of success in a European final: since they last won the European Champion Clubs' Cup – back in 1962 in Amsterdam – Benfica have now appeared in seven finals, and lost them all.

Two different cups in a row

For their part, Rafael Benítez's team ended the season in the best possible way, qualifying for next season's Champions

League and securing their fifth European title, following victories in the Cup Winners' Cup in 1971 and 1998, the UEFA Super Cup in 1998, and the Champions League last year. The London club are also the first to win the Europa League the year after winning the Champions League.

In addition, they have joined the very select group of clubs that have won all three of UEFA's major club competitions – i.e. the European Cup, the Cup Winners' Cup and the UEFA Cup. AFC Ajax, FC Bayern München and Juventus are the only other clubs to have done it. ●



Another success for the London club, one year after winning the UEFA Champions League

at the end of stoppage time abruptly ended their hopes of winning the UEFA Europa League, just when extra time looked inevitable.

Relentless

A twist of fate? Ill fortune? A lapse in concentration at the crucial moment? Fatigue? People can choose their own explanations. The Chelsea players were certainly not wondering how it had happened. They had already shown – notably in their semi-final encounter in Basle, where they took a big step towards the final thanks to a goal right at the end of the game – that they would never give up until the final whistle had been blown.

Prior to that dramatic conclusion, the final had been a fairly even contest. Jorge Jesus's side were marginally superior, and at times they put the English goal under considerable pressure, but they lacked the necessary inspiration at decisive moments. Chelsea proved to be more effective in that regard, with two dangerous shots by captain Frank Lampard and, above all, the excep-

15 May 2013
 Amsterdam ArenA – 46,163 spectators
SL Benfica v Chelsea FC 1-2 (0-0)
 Goals: Torres 60 (0-1), Cardozo 68p (1-1), Ivanović 90+3 (1-2)
 Referee: Björn Kuipers (Netherlands)

SHE-WOLVES OUTFOX LYON

"We put in a masterly tactical performance" was the explanation offered by VfL Wolfsburg's head coach, Ralf Kellermann, after his team's 1-0 victory over defending champions Olympique Lyonnais in the UEFA Women's Champions League final played before a crowd of 19,258 at the Stamford Bridge stadium in London on 23 May.



Die Wölfinnen (the She-Wolves) started as underdogs against the French side which was making history by playing a fourth successive final. The German club's cause was further hampered by three absences – one per line – due to illness, injury and suspension. Understandably, Kellermann's strategy was "to play deep, sit back and then go for it on the counterattack". The overall complexion of the game was reflected by statistics: Lyon had 19 goal attempts to Wolfsburg's eight. The Germans' focus on well-organised defending was understandable against opponents who had gone 120 games without being defeated over 90 minutes. But Nadine Kessler – one of four Wolfsburg players who had been champions of Europe with other clubs – hinted at the possibility of an upset when, after only four minutes, her audacious volley went narrowly wide of the Lyon goal.

Great job

But, with Lyon's Swedish striker Lotta Schelin opening up spaces with intelligent runs, the black shirts poured towards the German goal – only to find it outstandingly well defended by the Wolfsburg goalkeeper Alisa Vetterlein. The French team launched wave after wave of attacks but, as the game wore on, the She-Wolves gained greater control in the midfield area, to the extent that Lena Goessling, who would normally have started in the back line, was singled out for UEFA's player of the match award. "She dictated the tempo of the game and did a great job," Kellermann acknowledged afterwards, "but I don't want to praise just one player – we were a real unit and that's what won us the match."

The Lyon coach, Patrice Lair, admitted "I wasn't overly concerned at half-time. But, when you don't score, you can always be punished." He sent on Swiss forward Lara Dickenmann to replace American winger Megan Rapinoe after the break and Lyon's assault on Vetterlein's goal continued. But Lair's fears materialised in the 73rd minute, when a cross from the Wolfsburg right narrowly cleared the head of leaping central defender Wendie Renard and a surprised Laura Georges made contact... with her arm. Martina Müller stepped up and confidently struck the penalty powerfully past goalkeeper Sarah Bouhaddi, one of five Lyon players to be contesting their fourth consecutive final.



Exceptional season

With the supporters who had made the trip from France urging them on, Lyon launched a final onslaught, during which Bouhaddi was obliged to make a couple of fine saves as Wolfsburg replied with fast counterattacks. Vetterlein and her resolute team-mates held on till the final whistle and allowed Wolfsburg to become the fourth German debutantes to take the women's title. After Nadine Kessler had jubilantly received the trophy from the UEFA President, the equally jubilant Kellermann said "the main thing is that our plan worked; we have a trophy; and we have beaten the best team."

The triumph rounded off an exceptional season for the German team which, at Stamford Bridge, completed a treble of league, cup and UEFA Women's Champions League. Not bad for a club which, only seven years ago, was in the second division... ●

The Germans played with team discipline in order to get the better of Lyon

23 May 2013

Stamford Bridge, London – 19,258 spectators

Vfl Wolfsburg – Olympique Lyonnais 1-0 (0-0)

Goal: Martina Müller 73p (1-0)

Referee: Teodora Albon (Romania)

SHOOT-OUT DECIDES THE UNDER-17 TITLE IN SLOVAKIA

History repeated itself when Russia won the 12th European Under-17 Championship in a penalty shoot-out. But, when the Russians took the title for the first time in 2006, only nine spot kicks were required to give them victory over the Czech Republic after the 80 minutes and extra time had produced a 2-2 draw.



In 2013, it took 14 penalties to give Dmitri Khomukha's team a 5-4 shoot-out victory over Italy after the final played in Zilina had produced the fifth goalless draw of the 15-match final tournament. What's more, the fourth game to end without troubling the scoreboard operator had been the Russians' semi-final against Sweden and, on that occasion, it had taken 22 spot kicks to determine the winner.



The decisive penalty by Sergei Makarov

An atypical event

There is more statistical evidence to suggest that the final tournament, staged in Slovakia for the first time, was an atypical event. The fact that eight matches ended as draws meant that, apart from the champions, Croatia, Italy and Sweden went home undefeated but unrewarded. The tournament also went into the record books as the lowest-scoring of all time, with just 24 goals in 15 matches. And a quiz question of the future might be to ask which team has lifted a trophy after winning only one match in normal time – which is what the Russians did in Slovakia.

The event was very successfully staged from 5–17 May, using four venues in two centres separated by some 200km. Group B fixtures were played in Zlate Moravce and Nitra, while the Group A matches were staged in Dubnica nad Vahom and Zilina – the latter taking over as sole

venue for the semi-finals and the finals. The 4,312 spectators who watched the final between Italy and Russia brought the total attendance figure for the tournament to 43,757, the largest crowd having been recorded for the hosts' second fixture, against Switzerland, watched by 8,327. Nine of the 15 matches, including both semi-finals and the final, were screened on a pan-European basis by Eurosport.

Tickets for the U-17 World Cup

It has to be said that the final tournament was marked by absences, as traditionally major forces such as England, France, Germany, Portugal and Spain had been eliminated during the qualifying stage along with the Netherlands, who were champions in 2011 and 2012. None of the eight finalists who had been in Slovenia a year earlier made the trip to Slovakia. This offered opportunities to competitors such as Austria, Sweden and Ukraine, who had not been regular performers at previous final rounds and, as a knock-on effect, opened doors to the FIFA U-17 World Cup, given that the top three in each group would earn places at the tournament which kicks off in the United Arab Emirates in October.

When the ball started rolling in Slovakia, it became evident that qualification for the U-17 World Cup was a conditioning factor, with teams tending towards risk management rather than "caution to the wind" attacking play. In Group A, the hosts produced an added-time goal to defeat Austria 1-0 while Sweden's powerful counterattacking gave them the same result against the Swiss. In the other group, the Italians expressed satisfaction after holding Croatia, the pre-tournament favourites, to a 0-0 draw, while Russia survived a shaky first half and went on to beat Ukraine 3-0. At that stage, nobody would have predicted that it would be their only normal-time win of the tournament or that they would score only one goal in their subsequent four games.

The second matchday yielded three draws plus a 2-1 win for Italy, who came back with late goals which eliminated the Ukrainians. However, Ukraine still had a World Cup berth to play for – and it did not appear to be mission impossible when Viktor Tsygankov put them, once again, a goal ahead. Like the Italians, however, Croatia fought back to beat them 2-1 – which turned out to be a hollow victory for Ivan Gudelj's team. Although they were one of three teams with five

points, the competition regulations consigned them to third place in light of the 1-1 scoreline between Russia and Italy. In Group A, Austria earned a World Cup place with a 2-1 win against the Swiss, while the goalless draw between the hosts and Sweden sent both into the semi-finals. Switzerland and Ukraine were the two final round participants who missed out on the trip to the Emirates.

In the first semi-final, Slovakia had the misfortune to fall behind in the third minute but kept a skilful Italian side at bay until central defender Elio Capradossi (one of only four players to score more than once during the tournament) sealed a 2-0 win 16 minutes before the end. The end of the other semi-final seemed as though it would never arrive. The match seemed to tilt in Russia's favour when Sweden had midfielder Erdal Rakip dismissed just eight minutes into the second half. But Roland Larsson's well-organised side denied them a goal and, in the penalty shoot-out, were at "match point". Yet Russian keeper Anton Mitryushkin saved the ninth spot-kick and, after 11 successful strikes in sudden death, Isak Sewankambo shot high, allowing Ramil Sheydaev to seal victory with the 22nd penalty of a marathon shoot-out.

Repetition

It meant that the final would be a rematch of the Group B game between the Russians and the Italians – and, once again, the outcome was to be a draw. This time goalless, thanks to Russian resolution and self-belief. Daniele Zoratto's team probed relentlessly, using midfield dominance as a platform for through passes which obliged the Russians to stretch their athletic qualities to make interceptions or hook the ball away from the would-be finisher. When all else failed, Mitryushkin was on inspired form between the posts, to frustrate Italy's dangerous striking partnership of Luca Vido and the towering Alberto Cerri. The Russian team's stamina allowed them to enjoy spells of territorial domination during the second half but, when Greek referee Anastasios Sidiropoulos blew the final whistle, the match statistics revealed that the Russians had not managed an on-target goal attempt during the 80 minutes.

But their mental strength was once again to prove decisive. They might have been excused for relaxing when Mitryushkin saved two of Italy's first three penalties. Other teams might have buckled psychologically when his Italian counterpart, Simone Scuffet, made two saves which allowed his team to claw back to 3-3 and then take a 4-3 lead. But Mitryushkin dived to his left to make another magnificent save and

RESULTS

Group A

5 May	Slovakia – Austria	1-0
5 May	Switzerland – Sweden	0-1
8 May	Austria – Sweden	1-1
8 May	Slovakia – Switzerland	2-2
11 May	Sweden – Slovakia	0-0
11 May	Austria – Switzerland	2-1

Group B

5 May	Russia – Ukraine	3-0
5 May	Croatia – Italy	0-0
8 May	Russia – Croatia	0-0
8 May	Ukraine – Italy	1-2
11 May	Italy – Russia	1-1
11 May	Ukraine – Croatia	1-2

Semi-finals

14 May	Slovakia – Italy	0-2
14 May	Russia – Sweden	0-0*

* Russia win 10-9 on penalties

Final

17 May	Italy – Russia	0-0*
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* Russia win 5-4 on penalties

allow Sergei Makarov to confidently fire in the spot-kick which sparked off Russian celebrations.

"My coaching staff managed to choose the lads who can withstand pressure and show their strength in such stressful situations," said their head coach Dmitri Khomukha afterwards. "This is an invaluable experience and there is no substitute for it. As European champions, we'll definitely try to win the World Cup now." ●



The Russians won the trophy on penalties to add to their victory in 2006

A FASCINATION WITH FOOTBALL

A new Comenius educational project running from 2012 to 2014 aims to encourage the young people of Europe to adopt a healthy lifestyle.

The first Comenius projects were launched seven years ago, and this new programme features several schools that were involved in previous initiatives – schools in Seredzius (Lithuania), Izmir (Turkey), Hunedoara (Romania) and Vaslui (Romania) – as well as new schools in Germany (Viersen), Estonia (Antsla), Spain (Burgos), Italy (Amelia), Poland (Jaworzno) and Hungary (Gyula).

A healthy lifestyle

A healthy lifestyle means a balance between intellectual and physical activities, a healthy diet, a wide range of outdoor activities, and intellectual pursuits combining recreation and creativity. In addition to the specific primary aim of encouraging young people to adopt a healthy lifestyle, the

popular at their schools and which sports stars were the most popular. Unsurprisingly, children in all nine countries reported that football was the most popular sport.

The London Olympics and the sports stars that shone there made a strong impression on the children, but top footballers still dominated the polls when it came to popularity. Marco Reus, Mario Götze, Mesut Özil, Manuel Neuer and Mario Gomez all got plenty of votes in Viersen. Despite having gone to play in Australia, Alessandro Del Piero remained one of the most popular players in his country, with Gianluigi Buffon, Riccardo Montolivo, Mario Balotelli and Antonio Cassano also receiving large numbers of votes from the children of Amelia. While the graceful gymnasts Sandra Izbaşa and Cătălina Ponor topped the list in Romania, the talented Romanian player Adrian Mutu came fourth. In Turkey, the most popular sportsperson was Club Atlético de Madrid player Arda Turan. And Borussia Dortmund's Polish players Robert Lewandowski and Jakub Błaszczykowski and FC Dinamo Moskva's Hungarian player Balázs Dzsudzsák also proved to be very popular in their respective countries.

The Spanish children, used to seeing their national football team win, tended to opt for other sports stars: David Cal, Fernando Alonso, Rafael Nadal and David Ferrer all got more votes than Iker Casillas or Andrés Iniesta, the most popular footballers in the country.



The touring exhibition and the team in charge of the programme

project also has more general objectives: fostering multiculturalism and communication between young people through foreign languages and advances in modern information techniques.

Besides the option of spending a couple of happy hours in the fresh air in the stands of a football stadium, young people can also play the game themselves, having fun and keeping fit at the same time. It is fine for matches to be played in a competitive spirit, but discussions after games should be restricted to tactical and technical aspects – and, of course, recuperation.

Questionnaire

One of the main activities of the first part of the project (2012/13) was a questionnaire asking the pupils which sporting activities were the most



Photos: G. Gîscă

On the initiative of Heinrich Schneider, the coordinator of the project, the sports stars who were most popular among the pupils participating in the project were immortalised in posters. Those posters are the subject of a travelling exhibition, which began its journey in Viersen and will end in Hungary and Poland. ●

George Gîscă

CONFERENCE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN'S FOOTBALL

After the UEFA Women's Champions League final at Stamford Bridge in London, the spotlight will fall on women's football again in Sweden, where Europe's top national teams, split into three groups of four, will begin their quest for the title of European champions on 10 July.

This major women's football gathering will include an important off-the-pitch element, since a conference on the development of women's football will be held in Stockholm from 26 to 28 July, finishing on the day of the final.

This conference will be attended by women's football representatives from all UEFA member associations, the UEFA Women's Football Committee, the members of the Women's EURO 2013 technical study group, guests from Europe and other continents and, on the third day, the general secretaries of the UEFA member associations.

The general secretaries will examine the key aspects of women's football and prepare for the strategy meeting of presidents and general secretaries to be held in Dubrovnik in September.

WOMEN'S U19 FINAL ROUND IN WALES

For the first time, Wales will host the final round of a UEFA competition when the eight finalists of the European Women's Under-19 Championship compete for the title from 19 to 31 August.



The draw to determine the composition of the two groups was held at half-time during the Welsh Women's Cup final in Llanelli on 7 May.

The teams were divided as follows:

Group A: Wales, Denmark, England, France

Group B: Sweden, Finland, Germany, Norway

The matches will be played in Llanelli, Carmarthen and Haverfordwest. The top two teams in each group will contest the semi-finals on 28 August, with the final to be staged in Llanelli three days later.

Last year's winners were Sweden.

In addition, the four semi-finalists will book their places at the FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup, which will be held in Canada in August 2014. ●



■ In the men's European Under-19 Championship, the qualifying matches concluded in mid-June and the seven group winners will join hosts Lithuania at the final tournament from 20 July to 1 August. The results of the draw for the final round groups, conducted in Kaunas on 14 June, are available on UEFA.com. ●



Sweden and Iceland are among the finalists in Sweden

Beforehand, in a series of discussion groups, interactive sessions and presentations, the participants will consider issues such as recruitment, the development of female players' loyalty to the game, grassroots football, the professionalisation of football, transfers, club development, UEFA competitions, public authority support, marketing and sponsorship. ●

SWEDEN TOP FAIR PLAY RANKINGS

Based on all the matches played in UEFA national team and club competitions, UEFA's annual fair play ranking system rewards each of the three national associations with the best fair play records by allowing them to enter one additional team each for the UEFA Europa League qualifying stage.

For the 2012/13 season, the rankings took into account all 1,712 UEFA matches played between 1 May 2012 and 30 April 2013. Points were awarded by the UEFA match delegates based on criteria laid down in the competition regulations and taking into account yellow and red cards, positive play, respect for opponents and referees, and the conduct of team officials and supporters.

In order for an association to win an additional place in the UEFA Europa League, its teams must have played at least a certain number of matches, calculated by dividing the total number of UEFA matches played during the season by the number of national associations (53), i.e. 32 matches for the 2012/13 season.

Sweden (with 8,299 points), Norway (8,288) and Finland (8,227), who were ranked first, second and third respectively, will each therefore be allowed to enter one additional team, in principle the team that won its respective country's own domestic fair play competition. ●

A PRECIOUS CONTRIBUTION TO FOOTBALL

The value of research has been reinforced by the UEFA Research Grant Programme (RGP), and the invaluable findings that are helping UEFA and the European football family to take more informed decisions and work more effectively. UEFA's move to engage more closely with the academic community in recent years has paid handsome dividends.



The UEFA research grant jury members and researchers awarded 2013/14 project grants

As a result of the RGP, UEFA has emphasised its commitment to backing the ongoing work of doctoral and postdoctoral researchers who are investigating European football. The core mission of UEFA is to develop European football at all levels, and to promote the principles of unity and solidarity. Consequently, the research being undertaken as part of the programme is shedding new light on football and its relationship with society – thereby helping UEFA to fulfil its mission.

“The UEFA Research Grant Programme is an excellent opportunity to encourage the work of both prominent and aspiring researchers working within the field of European football,” said UEFA General Secretary Gianni Infantino. The objective of the RGP is to award a series of grants on an annual basis, with an upper limit of €20,000 each, to support the valuable work of researchers studying European football. The disciplines involved are law, economics, history, management, political science, sociology and medical sciences.

Priority topics

Although all research proposals are welcome, proposals addressing UEFA's priority topics are encouraged:

- governance and regulation in European football;
- the specificity and autonomy of sport;
- the financial sustainability of professional football;
- the evolution of the game (tactics, competition formats, rules, player characteristics, etc.);
- women's football;

- grassroots football and the development of youth players (e.g. models encouraging young people to play football);
- the labour market (e.g. third-party ownership of players);
- social and ethnic integration through football;
- the appropriate number of games per season for a football player;
- football in extreme conditions (e.g. cold or heat);
- links between medical conditions and playing football.

Candidates applying for a grant must either have obtained a doctorate and hold a research position at a university or equivalent institution, or be enrolled as a doctoral student at a university or equivalent institution and be preparing a doctoral thesis. The proposed research project must have a clear link with the field of research of the doctoral thesis. Potential researchers have to send their applications to UEFA by the end of March each year to be considered for the subsequent RGP cycle.

Presentation to a jury

Applications that comply with UEFA's requirements are examined by the UEFA research grant jury, which comprises a chairman, four representatives of the European football family and four academics known internationally for their work in the field of European football. The jury will decide how many grants to award and the level of funding in each case.

Applicants are informed of the jury's decision by the end of May each year, and the final report must be submitted by the end of March in the year following the approval of the grant. Final reports are then presented at UEFA's House of European Football in Nyon.

The recently approved grants for 2013/14 suggest that the research reports which UEFA will be receiving next spring will again prove significant in helping UEFA to govern the European game. *“It is great to see that some proposals really have the potential to help UEFA in its activities and mission,”* said William Gaillard, chairman of the research grant jury.

A list of all research projects approved is available on UEFA.com.

A summary of a different research project will be provided in each future issue of UEFA•direct – starting, in the current issue, with a summary of Jean Williams' research on the professionalisation of women's football. ●

PROFESSIONALISM AMONG FEMALE FOOTBALL PLAYERS

We know that women have played football for over a century. However, Europe-wide growth in the women's game has been particularly noteworthy since 1971.

Thanks to a university research grant from UEFA, my most recent book, "Globalizing Women's Football", will be published by Peter Lang to coincide with the UEFA Women's EURO in Sweden in July 2013. This research conceptualised the period between 1971 and 2011 as having three overlapping stages of professionalism for female football players: micro, meso and macro levels of growth. Micro-professionalism refers to important individual pioneer players; meso-professionalism indicates greater international opportunities presented by European competitions and the establishment of a FIFA Women's World Cup; and macro-professionalism involves a multiplicity of international competitions and tournaments where women can showcase their football talent. Most notably, the FIFA Women's World Cup in Germany in 2011, the London Olympic Games of 2012 and the UEFA Women's Champions League final at Stamford Bridge in 2013 have been important milestones in helping to showcase women's football as an international spectacle. It is important to emphasise, however, that these phases describe a growing infrastructure of opportunities for women generally, while cross-European variation in developing and core countries for women's football complicates the picture.

The research concludes that, overall, we can be encouraged by an emergent professionalisation across Europe, with significant structural and sociocultural improvements at interna-

tional level by comparison with 1971. However, in some European countries, football for women is still neglected in civil society and by the media. The organisation of semi-professional leagues consequently means that the current opportunities for women are some way off full professionalism. This cautionary note about the use of the three-part model should also contextualise it as a point of departure for describing women's professional football. While presently we can estimate with some confidence that few women earn a full-time living wage entirely from their football playing career in Europe, it is also possible to see that the ancillary occupations around the sport (coaching, sports development, public relations, administration, physiotherapy and sports psychology, for instance) enable women to increasingly support themselves using related earnings.

Finally, the research developed an analysis of the status of women's football across all of UEFA's national associations in order to begin to analyse how aspects of European identity are reflected in the sport. This broadly comparative section should provide the basis for future studies reaching more sophisticated conclusions about the "push" factors that make women move from one country to another and the "pull" factors motivating them in the developing markets for their talents as football professionals. ●

Jean Williams



Jean Williams is a senior research fellow at the International Centre for Sports History and Culture at De Montfort University. She is the author of "A Game For Rough Girls? A History of Women's Football in England" (Routledge, 2003) and "A Beautiful Game: International Perspectives on Women's Football" (Berg, 2007). ●

An ever more professional setting for the women's game



CHANGE OF STYLE AT THE BELGIAN FA

Steven Martens, who has been the general secretary of the Royal Belgian Football Association since June 2011, having moved across from the world of tennis, is breathing new life into Belgian football – without a revolution, but with plenty of determination.



Steven Martens (right) with the president of the Royal Belgian Football Association, François de Keersmaecker

Steven Martens' appointment as general secretary of the Royal Belgian Football Association surprised a few people. However, careful observers were less taken aback, given his CV and profile. A little over two years ago, the Belgian FA broke with the past, commissioning a headhunter to unearth someone who could modernise its organisation. Steven Martens was the person who emerged victorious at the end of that gruelling process, having seen off around 40 other candidates. "It was an intense process. I had undergone something similar before being appointed by the Lawn Tennis Association, but the process in Belgium was even more exacting, even tougher."

Steven Martens has experience at all levels of tennis, both in Belgium and on the international stage. He developed a reputation for helping players – of all abilities – to progress, as well as

working to improve infrastructure. He was there during the golden age of Belgian tennis, but never got carried away in the euphoria. While Justine Henin and Kim Clijsters were busy collecting trophies, regularly contesting all-Belgian finals, he was focusing on the future: "The women's success led to an explosion in club membership, but we had to be realistic: Belgium was not going to have another Kim Clijsters any time soon, no more than Switzerland would have another Roger Federer. The United States can hope to have new stars coming through more quickly, as they have a huge player base. We had to support the grassroots, the existing infrastructure, make tennis more accessible, less expensive, and improve coaching. In Great Britain, the LTA wanted – like the Belgian FA subsequently – a complete reorganisation. It had an antiquated image and the press were highly critical of it: the country lacked good players, and although England had the world's finest tennis tournament, people were hardly crazy about tennis. In my time there, I learned to manage a large organisation with intense media coverage and prestigious events such as Wimbledon and the men's Masters. I rubbed shoulders with international experts. The English approach is uncompromising; you have to back yourself to take decisions and move forward. Ultimately, moving across to football was not a particularly big step."

Comparisons

Although tennis is an individual sport, it is tempting to draw a few comparisons between the two. "The market for footballers is enormous. It goes right down to the third division, and even the fourth division. But the market for coaches is very limited and populated by volunteers. The tennis market is more limited. The majority of players earn relatively little, especially when you consider their enormous costs – the cost of travel, accommodation, etc. However, wherever you look, the standard of grassroots coaching is excellent. Some people combine coaching and playing. There is also a better balance between men and women. Tennis is a social activity and can be played for much longer than football. And finally, there is no aggressiveness in tennis. That has nothing to do with the ferocity of the game. Rugby is a tough sport, but is based on an ethical code. There is no malicious fouling, and no dissent." Women's football will have Martens' full attention, as will the many other aspects of the game – which he lists – that have been neglected to date.

STEVEN MARTENS' CAREER IN BRIEF

- 1987: Becomes a tennis coach, going on to work with players such as Kim Clijsters
- 1998-2005: Technical coordinator at the training centre run by the Flemish Tennis Federation (VTV)
- 1993-98: Captain of the Belgian Fed Cup team
- 2001-05: Captain of the Belgian Davis Cup team
- 2004: Coach at the Athens Olympics
- 2006: Becomes the technical director (and later player director) of the Lawn Tennis Association in the United Kingdom
- Since 2011: General secretary of the Royal Belgian Football Association

Promoting football

"I represent Belgian football's governing body, but I am also responsible for promoting the sport, for positioning it better. Football has an enormous shop window: there are many tournaments and large numbers of spectators and supporters. In contrast, minor sports have to fight to attract members and spectators and secure sponsorship agreements. I should emphasise that tennis has nothing to complain about. In Great Britain, it is one of the five most popular sports. The problem with football is that it does not challenge itself. It is a monolith. I am more like the head of a company than a general secretary. This position, like that of president, still features in a great many organisational structures, but this is a sluggish system and is very slow to react. Recently the Scottish Premier League discussed a few modernisation projects, but was ultimately unwilling to go ahead with them."

Steven Martens advocates evolution, not revolution. After gaining an overview of the situation, he has taken things one step at a time. He stresses that he was concerned by football's relative indifference towards its supporters. A man of his time, he is also alert to the demands of social networking, which allows everyone to offer an opinion and thereby exert influence. He has brought in specialists, both in this field and in others. Martens also wants to emphasise the positives, to invest in areas where he can make gains. *"We need to cultivate and expand the grassroots, increasing numbers of supporters and players. For that, we need quality, top referees and results. The main challenge is to kick start a new dynamic and very quickly improve those elements that we retain. I am focusing on the national team – but on the team itself, not the campaign. My project goes beyond the question of qualification for the FIFA World Cup. We need to involve the supporters. My previous experience has taught me the importance of that: the connection between tennis players and their fans is uniquely intense. And cyclists get extremely close to their supporters. In football, those links are less strong: the spectators are further away from the pitch, and there are gates and fences. We have decided to try an innovative new policy."*

And the next challenge after that? *"Everyday football – the grassroots. We need to give shape to those things that work well at grassroots level, to support clubs' efforts."* ●

Pascale Pierard

The Red Devils, (Moussa Dembélé seen here against the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) have the full attention of the Belgian FA's general secretary





Street football day

On 22 May, the children's and youth football department of the Football Association of Albania (FShF) organised its annual street football day. This year, it was held in the city of Durres, Albania's main port. The event has already become a firm fixture in the calendar, being organised on UEFA Grassroots Day, which is celebrated across Europe. Almost 150 nine and ten-year olds from local teams in Durres attended the event this year.

The event, which lasted several hours, was held on the city's main boulevard, where three makeshift pitches attracted the attention of passers-by.

This was the first time that the street football day had taken place in Durres, having been held in Tirana and Elbasan in the past. As in previous years, the participants were members of various local teams.

The regional football office in Durres, which helped the aforementioned FShF department

to organise the event, is also responsible for promoting and managing regional championships at youth level. Other activities planned for this year are also expected to have a significant impact on the perception of football, raising the game's profile and making it attractive to children of all ages.

"This event was important for the old and historic city of Durres, which has a long footballing tradition and has played a very significant role in the history of Albanian football. These kinds of events have a considerable impact and increase the children's passion for football. It makes them feel more connected to this magical game."

"In accordance with the principles of UEFA's grassroots project, the Football Association of



Football pitches on the main boulevard in Durres

Albania will continue with its series of other events, with the aim of creating as many football fans as possible," said Millan Baçi, the head of children's and youth football at the FShF.

● Tritan Kokona



Armenian Pro licence course participants' second study trip to Germany

In May 2012, the Football Federation of Armenia (FFA) launched its first ever UEFA Pro licence coaching course. Twelve Armenian coaches are taking part in the course, supervised by UEFA instructor Flemming Serritslev. They are Armenian national team head coach Vardan Minasyan, U21 head coach Rafayel Nazaryan, U19 head coach Abraham Khashmanyanyan, head coaches of Armenian Premier League clubs Sevada Arzumanyan and Vardan Bichakhchyan, and FFA instructors Armen Sanamyan, Suren Chakhalyan, Ashot Barseghyan, Varazdat Avetisyan, Ashot Avetisyan, Albert Safaryan and Slava Gabrielyan.



Some of Armenia's Pro licence candidates

In summer 2012, the participants were given the chance to watch and analyse six EURO 2012 matches in Poland.

This year, the students made their second study trip to Cologne within the framework of the FFA's UEFA-approved Pro licence course. From 22 to 28 April, the Armenian coaches had the opportunity to attend the training sessions of two German clubs (Bayer 04 Leverkusen and VfL Borussia Mönchengladbach), to meet head coaches and technical directors, and to see the infrastructure of both clubs. At the same time, the coaches were able to attend and analyse matches of the top two divisions of the Bundesliga. The participants were very enthusiastic about this study trip, stressing the huge importance and contribution of such high-level meetings to their further professional development. The FFA's UEFA-approved Pro licence course will continue until October.

● Tigran Israelyan



Extra time for Projekt12

"From talented youngster to national team player" – this is the slogan with which the Austrian Football Association (ÖFB) launched the individual coaching model Projekt12 in 2009 in cooperation with the Austrian federal ministry for sport and the Austrian Bundesliga. The concept is specifically aimed at developing talented young players aged between 15 and 21 in the areas of sports medicine and sports psychology, as well as involving individual coaches. The first three years of the programme have been a resounding success: David Alaba, Aleksandar Dragovic and Andreas Weimann are just three of nine Projekt12 players in the current Austrian national squad. The decision to continue the successful project until 2015 was therefore an easy one for the ÖFB. "Der Kaiser", Franz Beckenbauer, was immediately convinced by the project and has been a public

ambassador since its inception in 2009, a role he is set to continue in the coming years.

"Individual training is the key to success. Football is becoming more and more scientific, but that is precisely what is doing the sport good. For the ÖFB, there is no better reference than the successful work of the last three years." This success can also be seen in youth squads. Valentino Lazaro is just 17 years old, but made his debut for FC Salzburg in the Austrian Bundesliga at 16. And as if that was not enough, he also represented Austria in the recent final round of the European Under-17 Championship in Slovakia, through which the team qualified for the FIFA U-17 World Cup in the United Arab Emirates. Following David Alaba in 2009, Lazaro is now the face of the Projekt12 brochure, representing a total of 51 players (10 young women and 41 young men) currently enrolled in the programme.

● Christoph Walter



ÖFB president Leo Windtner presents a brochure for Projekt12, flanked by Franz Beckenbauer, Valentino Lazaro and, on the left, technical director Willi Rutensteiner

FK Željezničar defend title

FK Željezničar have managed to defend their Bosnian and Herzegovinian Premier League title. They secured first place ahead of city rivals FK Sarajevo with three rounds of the season remaining. This is the sixth time that the team from Grbavica have officially been crowned national champions (1998, 2001, 2002, 2010, 2012 and 2013), and the club has also sent a request to the Bosnia and Herzegovina Football Federation (NFSBiH) to award them the Bosnian championship in 1946, the year of the first championship when Željezničar, as champions, qualified for the federal league of the former Yugoslavia.

Meanwhile, NK GOŠK Gabela and NK Gradina were relegated from the top division, and the season's top scorer was Emir Hadžić with 20 goals.

Despite being the most successful club in the country, Željezničar failed to defend their double crown from last season. In the final of the Bosnian and Herzegovinian Cup, after the two legs had ended 1-1, first in Grbavica and then in Pecara, NK Široki Brijeg eventually won on 5-4 on penalties. The final was a repeat of last year's cup final, except that this time the winners were NK Široki Brijeg, who picked up the trophy for a second time after their first triumph in 2007.

In the women's cup, SFK 2000 Sarajevo beat ZNK Mladost Nevic Polje 3-0 in the final played in Zenica. It was the tenth time that the team from Sarajevo had won the women's cup.

NK Široki Brijeg added a second piece of silverware to their trophy cabinet courtesy



Željezničar celebrate winning another title

of their youth team, who beat the team from Slavija Sarajevo in each leg of the final (2-1, 1-0) to take the national youth cup.

Great success has also been achieved by the futsal players of KMF Tango Istočno Sarajevo who, just two years after the club was formed, managed to win the championship. In the final tournament, which, as last year, included the two best teams from the federal league and one from the Football Association of Republika Srpska Bosnia and Herzegovina (FF RS BiH), Tango won all four of their matches against Brotnjo Citluk and Center Sarajevo.

The NFSBiH held a general meeting on 9 May, where one of the key decisions was the adoption of a new competition system for women's football and futsal. Unified leagues for futsal and women's football will be established from the start of the 2013/14 season: the Bosnian and Herzegovinian futsal premier league will have 12 clubs – eight from the Football Association of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FF F BiH) and four from the FF RS BiH. The women's premier league will have eight teams, five from the FF F BiH and three from the FF RS BiH.

A match for Stiliyan Petrov

A team of former Bulgarian internationals defeated Aston Villa's "Old Stars" 4-2 in a charity match dedicated to former Bulgaria and Aston Villa captain Stiliyan Petrov, and organised by the Bulgarian Football Union to honour the most capped Bulgarian national team player ever with 106 games.

Fulham FC striker Dimitar Berbatov scored twice for the Bulgarian all-star team, while veteran winger Martin Petrov and former Bulgaria international Petar Mihtarski netted once each. Martin Carruthers scored twice for Aston Villa.

The game was played as part of the Support Stan campaign to raise money for the treatment of children diagnosed with leukaemia. The likes

of Hristo Stoichkov, Krasimir Balakov and Lyuboslav Penev played for Bulgaria, while the Aston Villa squad featured Mark Kinsella, Lee Hendrie and Tony Daley, among others.

Some 11,000 spectators witnessed the charity game at the Vasil Levski National Stadium in the Bulgarian capital, Sofia. Revenues from ticket sales will go towards the treatment of Bulgarian children suffering from leukaemia.

Petrov announced earlier in May that he was quitting professional football as he continues to fight the disease. He is now in remission after being diagnosed with the illness in March last year. Petrov himself was not able to jet home to his native country for the legends match because doctors have advised him not to fly until he is stronger.

● Dimitar Trenev



Footballers show their support for "Stan" Petrov

In other news, the women's national Under-17 team finished second in a UEFA development tournament in Strumica (Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia).

As has become a tradition in the week before the UEFA Champions League final, UEFA organised its Grassroots Day on 22 May. In Bosnia and Herzegovina the day was marked by an event at Glinac Sokolac stadium. The programme was attended by over 800 boys and girls aged 8 to 10, who played seven-a-side and four-a-side matches and competed in other footballing disciplines. The event was opened by the general secretary of the NFSBiH, Jasmin Bakovic, and the participants were greeted by the mayor of Sokolac, Milovan Bjelica. All participants received a UEFA grassroots certificate.

● Fuad Krvavac

Grassroots activities throughout Croatia

May was a busy month for the grassroots programme of the Croatian Football Federation (HNS), with several activities celebrating the game's foundations.



The president of the HNS, Davor Šuker (centre), with the winners of the Under-14 competition, NK Zadar

UEFA Grassroots Day activities were organised at Maksimir stadium in Zagreb before the Croatian Cup final between NK Lokomotiva Zagreb and HNK Hajduk Split. It was a great occasion to introduce grassroots activities to thousands of fans from the two cities.

Youngsters had a chance to participate in different skills lessons and training sessions with professional coaches.

Away from Zagreb, the HNS also organised football festivals in Split and Varazdin during May, with a series of football activities for youngsters, putting a special emphasis on girls and their football experience.

"Having grassroots activities associated with the biggest senior matches like the cup final shows how top players, referees, football professionals and fans originate from the grassroots," said HNS grassroots manager, Nina Pavlovic.

The HNS president, Davor Šuker, was on site to award medals and a trophy to NK Zadar, winners of an Under-14 competition in Vukovar. It was an 11th edition of the Croatian war veterans' memorial tournament, which showcases the brightest young talent in Croatia while also teaching youngsters about an important part of Croatian history.

● Tomislav Pacak



First title in 30 years for Győri ETO FC

The tendency for teams from outside Budapest to be more successful than those from the capital continued this season, as Győri ETO FC (formerly Rába ETO Győr) won the Hungarian league for the first time in 30 years, clinching a place in the qualifying rounds of the UEFA Champions League. Győr – coached by Attila Pintér, who previously led Ferencvárosi TC to the Hungarian title – had a great year, not only winning the title, but also reaching the final of the Hungarian Cup.

That trophy, however, remains in the possession of Debreceni VSC. After Elemér Kondás' side won both major trophies last season, Debrecen secured a place in the qualifying rounds of the UEFA Europa League, by beating Győr 2-1 in the cup final in May thanks to two goals from French forward Adamo Coulibaly. In 2010/11, Debrecen



mlsz.hu / G. Baricza

A Debreceni VSC forward is surrounded by several Győri ETO FC players in the Hungarian Cup final

made it to the group stage of the UEFA Europa League.

Hungary's third trophy, the league cup, went to Ferencváros, with Ricardo Moniz's side

beating Videoton FC 5-1 in April in a spectacular final to win their first trophy in eight years.

● Márton Dinnyés



Preparing for the future

The Israel Football Association (IFA) and Athena are celebrating the end of another successful season for the elite Athena Junior girls' football team. The final weekly practice session of the eight-month 2012/13 season took place in May.

In 2011, the IFA and Athena – the public council for the promotion of girls' and women's sport – established the elite Athena Junior team for girls aged 10 to 13.

The team's coaches, Netanela Hajjaj and Aya Cohen, have trained the girls for the past two years, establishing a large group of talented players.

The 25 girls chosen for the team were identified as having the potential to form the nucleus of future Israeli national teams, with the youngest player being just nine years old.

The IFA considers these girls to be the next generation of Israeli women's football.



IFA

More and more girls in Israel are playing football

In addition to training, the girls are given medical cover, as well as informative workshops, lectures on nutrition, and so on. The Athena Junior team is an innovative model that aims to create a unique top-quality team, which is managed in a professional manner and caters for the needs of girls in this age group. The most talented girls will be included in the training programmes for the Israeli national teams, while enjoying a unique educational experience.

The principle that sport is important forms the basis for this project. Indeed, sport has proved to be an effective way of improving a whole range of capabilities – including self-confidence, leadership skills and motivation.

Over the last year, women's football has been one of the fastest growing sports in Israel, with more and more girls across the country playing football and enjoying an excellent sporting experience.

● Michal Grundland



Encouraging girls to play football

"It's dead easy! Just come along." With this friendly invitation, the Liechtenstein Football Association (LFV) continued this year, as it had in 2012, to encourage all girls with an interest in football to attend a taster afternoon training session.

After the fantastic success of last year, when more than 80 girls participated, this time almost 60 girls found it "dead easy" to see what it would be like to play football in their free time. Although the number of participants was down by more than 20 compared with last year, there was no reason for the organisers to be any less pleased. The main reason why not quite as many girls took part this time was, purely and simply, this spring's miserable weather, which

Liechtenstein has also been unable to escape.

And so there was plenty of delight on the country's football pitches when, in spite of the rain and cold temperatures, a large number of girls were not put off attending a taster training session. Come rain or shine, they wanted to try their hand at football and showed with their positive attitude right from the beginning that they had what it takes.

In the run-up to the taster afternoon, the LFV had, like last year, publicised the event with posters, flyers and radio advertisements. The aim was, in cooperation with the clubs, to encourage as many girls as possible to have a go at playing football, to overcome their reservations and, where possible, to find a new hobby – with absolutely no strings attached. The LFV remains firmly committed to creating a broader basis for women's football in Liechten-



LFV

An introduction to football for girls in Liechtenstein

stein, in the hope of participating in international competitions in the not-too-distant future.

● Anton Banzer

Rescued dog becomes national team mascot

A story in one of Malta's newspapers about a shivering and soaking wet dog that had spent two days abandoned in an uninhabited part of the island caught the public's imagination. The dog, which had been cruelly tied to a wooden fence, was spotted by a hunter, who promptly called Noah's Ark, a local animal sanctuary.

This news item prompted the Malta Football Association (MFA) to enquire about the poor animal. The MFA's president, Norman Darmanin Demajo, called personally to enquire about the possibility of adopting the one-year-old dog as a mascot for Malta's national teams.

The public's reaction to this idea was immediate and positive, with numerous individuals offering to look after the dog on behalf of the MFA. This showed the benefits of the association's policy of exploiting the popularity of football to raise awareness of humanitarian issues, such as the prevention of cruelty to animals.

A competition was later launched by the MFA, inviting children to suggest a name for the new mascot.

This heart-warming episode is a striking example of the MFA's readiness to apply the principles of respect and fair play – universally promoted by UEFA and FIFA – to all kinds of human behaviour.



The new live mascot of the Maltese national teams

The MFA officially presented its new mascot to the public at a recent national team event.

This novel idea has not only proved to be very popular, but has also helped to foster noble concepts of social responsibility through football.

● Alex Vella

FC Tiraspol win Moldovan Cup

The 22nd Moldovan Cup final on 26 May in Chisinau pitted FC Veris against FC Tiraspol. Interestingly, neither team had ever reached the final before. After a dramatic match, FC Tiraspol came out on top with a final score of 6-4 after penalty kicks.

The first half proved a nervous affair without a clear chance. Tiraspol striker Alexandru Grosu Sr made it 1-0 just before the hour, but Cristian Cîrlan saved Veris with a fierce free-kick three minutes from time.

Veris were ahead just before the sides changed ends in extra time when Djibril Paye headed into his own net and Andrey Novikov's Tiraspol penalty was saved by Sergiu Diaconu. However, Anatol Cheptine turned the ball in to force a shoot-out in which Bulgarian goalkeeper Georgi Georgiev proved the hero with two saves.



FC Tiraspol, winners of the Moldovan Cup

At the official ceremony after the match, FC Tiraspol captain Georgiev was presented with the trophy by the president of the Football Association of Moldova, Pavel Cebanu.

"We are very happy to have won the final and earned the first trophy in the history of our club. I hope we will have more good games and trophies in the future," said FC Tiraspol's coach, Vlad Goian.

● Press office

UEFA Europa League final in Warsaw

The UEFA Executive Committee has decided that Warsaw will host the Europa League final in 2015. "This is a great success for us," said Zbigniew Boniek, the president of the Polish Football Federation (PZPN). Two of Europe's best teams will meet at the National Stadium in Warsaw in May 2015 to fight for the UEFA Europa League trophy.

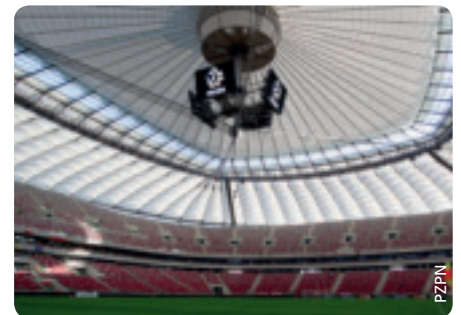
That decision can be seen as yet another expression of gratitude and appreciation after a successful EURO 2012. Thanks to UEFA, Poland – and especially Warsaw – has been given an amazing opportunity to gain international recognition once again.

"I don't think I have to tell you how important and prestigious this event is. This is a great way of promoting the Polish Football Federation, the city of Warsaw, our country, our culture and our society. Being awarded the opportunity to host the final of the Europa League in 2015 requires a large amount of trust on the part of UEFA's managerial body," Zbigniew Boniek said.

After hosting EURO 2012, Poland has been given another great chance to show that it can successfully organise major football events. Poland has never hosted the final of a European club competition before.

"The Polish Football Federation did a great job. We worked very hard to present our application to UEFA in the best way possible. I would like to thank everyone who participated in this project," the PZPN president added.

● Jakub Kwiatkowski



The National Stadium in Warsaw will host the 2015 UEFA Europa League final

Five-a-side football tournament

Over 160 young footballers from across Northern Ireland descended on the Valley Leisure Centre in Newtownabbey for the 2013 Coca-Cola Special FA Cup. This competition is a five-a-side football tournament for schools catering for young people with learning disabilities and this year, 22 teams competed in the two categories (Under-15 and Over-15). With 50 matches on four pitches, the action was non-stop with plenty of skills and goals on display.



The players of Tor Bank, winners in the Over-15 category

In the Under-15 section, Knockavoe (Strabane) beat Roddensvale (Larne) to pick up the cup, with Parkview (Lisburn) finishing third. In the Over-15 section, Tor Bank (Belfast) picked up the cup after defeating Sandelford (Coleraine), with Knockevin (Downpatrick) finishing third.

Alan Crooks, the Irish FA's development manager for disability football, said: "We are delighted to continue the partnership with Coca-Cola in hosting this event. This tournament gives young people the opportunity to play competitive football against players of similar ability. Well done to the winners – Knockavoe and Tor Bank – and to all the teams who took part and all the players who played so well. It is a pleasure to organise this event."

Katie Hutchinson, events team manager for Coca-Cola HBC Northern Ireland added: "Today has been a fantastic display of the passion, pride and talent that we have among the teams in the Coca-Cola Special FA Cup. We are delighted to continue our sponsorship of this tournament and would like to congratulate everyone who took part."

● Sueann Harrison



UEFA Grassroots Day in Romania

The UEFA Grassroots Day on 22 May was celebrated in a special way by the Romanian Football Federation (FRF) and its partners.

The first event of the day took place in the morning at the FRF's national football centre in Buftea, in cooperation with Special Olympics Romania. "We are here at a centre where the best Romanian internationals train. This means that today we are also the best," said one of the children with learning disabilities in a TV interview. A regular pitch with artificial turf was divided into several mini-pitches, and eight teams (representing special schools from Bucharest and two other cities) competed against each other in a tournament. The children were aged between 12 and 15, and one of the teams included three girls. It was a special morning, and the main aim was for the children to enjoy themselves, with all of them receiving prizes. However, the tournament still needed a winner. The two groups were won by the Bucharest Art and Profession School and the Filipeştii de Targ Special School (from Prahova County) respectively, with the final being won by the team from Bucharest.

Some of the children who competed in Buftea had already been selected for Romania's Special Olympics team, which will take part in the European Unified Football Tournament between 5 and 9 June in Warsaw. That competition will determine the European teams that play in the Special Olympics World Cup next year in Brazil.

But what happened in Buftea was not the only activity in this regard. Between 16 and 23 May, tournaments were organised in several Romanian cities as part of Special Olympics Week. The largest of those was held at the new Cluj Arena, with 16 boys' teams and four girls' teams participating.

The second part of the UEFA Grassroots Day activities was organised on a pitch belonging to the club Bucharest Chelsea in one of the largest parks in the capital. A total of 140 children and parents took part, showing great enthusiasm. Children of all ages were entertained by a variety of challenges, such as trying to shoot the ball through a hole in a goal, running around small poles and shooting, all sorts of ball juggling, and three and four-a-side matches. However, the real highlights were two other kinds of match: games contested by mixed teams of two fathers and their respective children, and matches between mixed teams of two mothers and their children.

The special atmosphere was topped off with special prizes, including T-shirts and national team kits for children, balls, football boots and tickets for both the Romanian Cup final (on 1 June) and the friendly between Romania and Trinidad and Tobago (at Bucharest's National Arena, which hosted the UEFA Europa League final in 2012).

● Paul Zaharia



There was plenty of enthusiastic football on UEFA Grassroots Day



One National Plan

The Scottish FA recently took the opportunity to highlight One National Plan – a historic strategy agreed by all the nationwide associations and member leagues that lead the non-professional game, which aims to ensure that the country's most popular participatory sport continues to develop.

The vision of the plan is to grow the national game through developing a culture of improved performance at all levels, to take the game to a wider audience and expand on the benefits, enjoyment and value football can bring to everyone across the country.

The plan has six main objectives:

- to increase participation
- to create an attractive modern game
- to improve coach education and development
- to create a vibrant volunteer workforce
- to develop club and school football
- to produce more talented young players.

Scottish FA football development director Jim Fleeting said: "The One National Plan is a significant step forward in the development of our grassroots game."

"It is the product of a fantastic collaboration between all bodies involved in the non-professional game, and sets out a unified vision for how grassroots football can grow."

"Football has the capacity to be a wonderful force for good in communities across Scotland and I believe this One National Plan encapsulates all of the fine work being done to ensure grassroots football has a bright future."



Scottish women's national team coach Anna Signeul and UEFA women's football ambassador Steffi Jones unveil the nationwide programme

UEFA ambassador and former German national women's team star Steffi Jones visited Scotland on UEFA Grassroots Day to see up close the girls' and women's football programmes on offer. She said: "The girls' and women's game is growing all the time."

"I think One National Plan can only be a good thing for the grassroots game because it brings together everyone with a passion for football."

"You need people working together for a sport to develop and I'm sure everything is being done in Scotland for that to happen with football."

● Andrew Harris



Youth teams achieve great success

Sweden's national youth teams are doing better than ever. The women's Under-17 and Under-19 teams have both qualified for the final rounds of competitions this summer. The men's Under-19s played in the elite round of their competition, and the men's Under-17s made it to the semi-finals in their first ever appearance at the final round of the European Under-17 Championship, winning a spot at the U-17 World Cup in the process.

Oddly, this unprecedented success has coincided with criticism in Sweden regarding talent development and the selection of young players. The media have reported extensively on a study that showed that the majority of players picked for regional associations' Under-16 teams did not go on to play professional football as adults, and that selection was heavily influenced by the relative age effect (RAE).

Claes Eriksson, the Swedish Football Association's player development manager, gave the following response in reply to that criticism:

"RAE has been a well-known and researched fact for more than 20 years. It's not news to anyone in football, and it is something that the Swedish FA is working hard to counter. RAE is definitely a factor early on, but the effect



The Swedish Under-17s will compete for the FIFA U-17 World Cup in the autumn

diminishes by the year. And if you look at Sweden's senior national team, it's practically gone. The hypothesis of the study – that selection for an Under-16 side means that you're earmarked for a professional career – is also plain wrong. No one can accurately predict whether a promising 15-year-old will make it all the way or not. We do pick about 25 players for the national Under-16 team, but we also make special efforts to work with another 60 to 70 players in that age group every year. I think the study really shows that we've got it right; the late bloomers do get their chance to make it, too."

● Andreas Nilsson

Peter Gilliéron re-elected as president

On 13 June 2009, Peter Gilliéron – then general secretary – became president of the Swiss Football Association, succeeding Ralph Zloczower, who was appointed honorary president. Qualification for the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa gave him his first major achievement as president, following various successes during his time as general secretary. They included qualification for the 1994 World Cup in the United States, EURO '96 in England, EURO 2004 in Portugal and the 2006 World Cup in Germany, as well as numerous achievements by Switzerland's youth teams. And we should not, of course, forget

EURO 2008 in Switzerland and Austria, where Peter Gilliéron played a key role on the organising committee.

There was never any doubt that the association's delegates, meeting in Berne's Kursaal, would grant him another term of office, and hearty applause by the 101 delegates from the association's three sections confirmed his position at the head of Swiss football. Following his resounding re-election, Peter Gilliéron, who has been a member of the UEFA Executive Committee since 2011, said that qualification for the 2014 FIFA World Cup in Brazil was his top priority, but he also highlighted the importance of grassroots football. "In my job, there is at least one highlight every day," said Gilliéron, who comes from Berne and began his successful



A new term of office for Swiss FA president Peter Gilliéron

career in administration in 1992 as president of a local club. "We will continue to support the work of the clubs, as well as our many volunteers and the referees, as we need all of them in order to make football a success at all levels in this country."

● Pierre Benoît

Additional assistant referee system for 2013/14

The Turkish Football Federation (TFF) has decided to introduce the additional assistant referees system for the start of the 2013/14 season in Turkey.

The TFF's referees committee shared information about the scope of the system with the media and the public. A seminar on the system was held on 27 May at the Grand Tarabya hotel, Istanbul.

After the welcome speech by Zekeriya Alp, head of the TFF referees committee, UEFA Referees Committee Member Jaap Uilenberg gave a presentation on the additional assistant referee system.

In addition to UEFA mentor and trainer Jørn West Larsen, and UEFA assistant referee trainer and TFF referees committee assistant referee training consultant Giovanni Stevanato, the TFF's top referees and assistant referees also attended the seminar, which was open to the media and broadcast live on TV.



An introduction to the additional assistant referee system

On the pitch, the FIFA U-20 World Cup, which is being held in Turkey, will start on 21 June with the opening game between South Korea and Cuba in Kayseri.

The tournament is organised in seven cities – Antalya, Bursa, Gaziantep, Istanbul, Kayseri, Rize and Trabzon.

Twenty-four teams are participating in six groups, making this the biggest football tournament that Turkey has ever hosted.

The FIFA U-20 World Cup will be broadcast in 190 countries all over the world and the tournament will finish on 13 July, with the final to be played at the Ali Sami Yen Arena, Istanbul.

● Aydın Güvenir

Craig Bellamy Foundation in Sierra Leone

Wales international star Craig Bellamy has recently launched the next stage in the development of his international school and football academy in Sierra Leone.

The Cardiff City FC forward was on site at his charitable foundation, alongside special guests, to welcome the new generation of students and to unveil new academy buildings, which include school facilities, student dormitories and staff accommodation. These facilities will further enhance the Craig Bellamy Foundation's ability to provide opportunities for talented young children across Sierra Leone to achieve their potential in the fields of education and sport.

Craig's time in Sierra Leone was not only focused on the new, however. He was also checking on the progress of the first generation of boys, who entered the academy in 2010. Peter Kargbo from Makeni is one of those boys. Now 15, Peter is working hard on both his academic and his football priorities in the hope of securing a scholarship to study abroad in either the United Kingdom or the United States, following in the footsteps of the foundation's first graduate – Sahid Conteh – who is currently excelling while on a full scholarship at the highly respected Dunn School in California.

● Ceri Stennett

Turkey win the Bannikov Memorial

The 12th international football tournament in memory of Viktor Bannikov, the first president of the Football Federation of Ukraine (FFU), was held in Kyiv from 15 to 19 May.

The national youth teams of eight countries participated in the tournament: Ukraine, Russia,



Turkey win the Bannikov Memorial

Belarus, Serbia, Turkey, Poland, Latvia and the Czech Republic.

On 19 May, Turkey and Russia contested the final of the tournament at Kyiv's Bannikov Stadium. Turkey beat Russia 1-0 to win the Bannikov Memorial for the third time. The game's only goal was scored by Turkish forward Unal in the 58th minute.

Earlier that day, Ukraine played Serbia in the third place play-off. Ukraine opened the scoring in the 18th minute when Sautin headed to Mykhailichenko, who put the ball in the bottom right-hand corner. Jović equalised after 79 minutes, but Ukraine prevailed in the ensuing penalty shoot-out, winning 6-5 (including two penalties that they had to score to avoid defeat).

In the fifth-place play-off in Borispol, the Czech Republic beat Poland 5-4 on penalties after the match had ended 1-1. And in the seventh-place play off in Obukhiv, Latvia defeated Belarus 6-5 on penalties, their match also having ended 1-1.

● Yuri Maznychenko



Craig Bellamy closely follows the work of his foundation in Sierra Leone

BIRTHDAYS IN JULY

Frédéric Thiriez (France, 1 July)
Antonie Marinus Verhagen (Netherlands, 1 July) ☆☆☆ 60th
 Frank De Bleeckere (Belgium, 1 July)
 Marinus Koopman (Netherlands, 2 July)
 Pjetur Sigurðsson (Iceland, 2 July)
 Peadar Ryan (Republic of Ireland, 3 July)
 Bertrand Layec (France, 3 July)
 Antonio Matarrese (Italy, 4 July)
 Neale Barry (England, 4 July)
 Valentin Ivanov (Russia, 4 July)

Roland Ospelt (Liechtenstein, 4 July)

☆☆☆ 50th

Massimo Cumbo (Italy, 4 July)
 Patrick Nelson (Northern Ireland, 5 July)
 Tiago Craveiro (Portugal, 5 July)
 Hans Schelling (Netherlands, 7 July)
 Martin Maleck (Switzerland, 8 July)
 Holger Blask (Germany, 8 July)
 Anna Bordiugova (Ukraine, 8 July)
 Paul Allaerts (Belgium, 9 July)
 Murad Mammadov (Azerbaijan, 10 July)
 Thomas Christensen (Norway, 10 July)
 Nina Hedlund (Norway, 11 July)
 Ilija Stoilov (FYR Macedonia, 11 July)
 Edo Trivković (Croatia, 11 July)
 Günter Benkö (Austria, 12 July)
 Filip Popovski (FYR Macedonia, 12 July)
Carlo Tavecchio (Italy, 13 July) ☆☆☆ 70th
 Maria Teresa Costa (Portugal, 13 July)
 Alex Horne (England, 13 July)
 Elke Günthner (Germany, 14 July)
 Vladimir Petr (Slovakia, 15 July)
 Ben Veenbrink (Netherlands, 15 July)
 Johannes Malka (Germany, 16 July)
 Ernst Nigg (Liechtenstein, 16 July)
 Lars Lagerbäck (Sweden, 16 July)
 Jiří Ulrich (Czech Republic, 16 July)

Michail Anagnostou (Greece, 16 July)

☆☆☆ 40th

Giuseppe Mifsud-Bonnici (Malta, 17 July)
 Antonia Kokotou (Greece, 17 July)
 Vicente Muñoz Castillo (Spain, 19 July)
 Kari Luell (Norway, 19 July)
 Alfredo Trentalange (Italy, 19 July)
 Tormod Larsen (Norway, 20 July)
 Vladimir Radionov (Russia, 21 July)
 Michel Wuilleret (Switzerland, 22 July)
 Nico Romeijn (Netherlands, 22 July)
 Balázs Makray (Hungary, 22 July)
 Bontcho Todorov (Bulgaria, 23 July)
 Pavel Malovič (Slovakia, 23 July)
 Marcelino Santiago Maté Martínez (Spain, 23 July)
 Gijs de Jong (Netherlands, 24 July)

Mario Gallavotti (Italy, 25 July)
 Ferenc Ragadics (Hungary, 25 July)
 Nenad Radivojević (Serbia, 25 July)
 Jacob Erel (Israel, 26 July)
 Alfred Ludwig (Austria, 26 July)
 David Bowen (Northern Ireland, 26 July)
 Jeff Davis (England, 27 July)
 Björn Ahlberg (Sweden, 28 July)
 Stefan Tivold (Slovenia, 28 July)

Karl Espen Eriksen (Norway, 28 July)
 Peter Stadelmann (Switzerland, 29 July)
 João Leal (Portugal, 30 July)
 Des Casey (Republic of Ireland, 31 July)
 Tugomir Frajman (Slovenia, 31 July)
 Jozef De Ryck (Belgium, 31 July)
 Joël Wolff (Luxembourg, 31 July)
 Duncan Fraser (Scotland, 31 July)
 Cenk Cem (Turkey, 31 July)

BIRTHDAYS IN AUGUST

Sheila Begbie (Scotland, 1 August)
Alf Hansen (Norway, 1 August) ☆☆☆ 50th
 Kimmo Lipponen (Finland, 1 August)
 Luciano Luci (Italy, 2 August)
 Johan van Kouterik (Netherlands, 2 August)
 Mehmet Süheyl Önen (Turkey, 2 August)
 Andreas Schluchter (Switzerland, 3 August)
 Zdravko Jokić (Serbia, 4 August)
 Sergey Sidorovskiy (Russia, 4 August)
 David Gill (England, 5 August)
 Yves Wehrlé (France, 5 August)
 Aleh Chykun (Belarus, 5 August)
 Piet Hubers (Netherlands, 6 August)
 Pierino Lardi (Switzerland, 7 August)
 Marcel Vanelshocht (Belgium, 8 August)
 Plarent Kotherja (Albania, 8 August)
 Olivier Henry (Belgium, 8 August)
 Florin Prunea (Romania, 8 August)
 Nico de Pauw (Belgium, 8 August)
 Odd Flattum (Norway, 9 August)
 Roy Hodgson (England, 9 August)
 Nick Nicolaou (Cyprus, 9 August)
 Dr Urs Vogel (Switzerland, 11 August)
 Domenico Messina (Italy, 12 August)
 Eva Ödlund (Sweden, 12 August)
 Emil Kostadinov (Bulgaria, 12 August)
 Roger Vanden Stock (Belgium, 13 August)
 Joseph Mifsud (Malta, 13 August)
 Cornel Cristian Bivolaru (Romania, 13 August)
 Patrick Willemarck (Belgium, 13 August)
 George Pandelea-Dobrovicescu (Romania, 14 August)
 Jevgenijs Milevskis (Latvia, 15 August)
 Jacques Lagnier (France, 16 August)
 Victor Beceiro (Spain, 16 August)
 Sergey Pryadkin (Russia, 17 August)
 Bente Ovedie Skogvang (Norway, 17 August)
 Dane Jošt (Slovenia, 18 August)

Vitālijs Liholajs (Latvia, 19 August)

☆☆☆ 70th

Mordechai Shpigler (Israel, 19 August)
 Patricia Gregory (England, 19 August)
 Johannes Reijgwart (Netherlands, 19 August)
 František Laurinec (Slovakia, 19 August)
 Graham Hover (England, 19 August)
 Per Ravn Omdal (Norway, 20 August)
 Carmel Bartolo (Malta, 21 August)
 Hasan Ceylan (Turkey, 22 August)
 Kazimierz Oleszek (Poland, 22 August)
 Geoffrey Thompson (England, 23 August)
 Ioannis Economides (Greece, 23 August)
 Demetrio Albertini (Italy, 23 August)
 Luis Manuel Rubiales Béjar (Spain, 23 August)
 Enrique González Ruano (Spain, 24 August)
David Delferiere (Belgium, 24 August)
 ☆☆☆ 60th
 Nicolae Grigorescu (Romania, 24 August)
 Pavel Kolev (Bulgaria, 24 August)
 Bert Andersson (Sweden, 25 August)
 Giancarlo Abete (Italy, 26 August)
 Regina Konink-Belksma (Netherlands, 26 August)
 Karen Nalbandyan (Armenia, 27 August)
 Karl Hopfner (Germany, 28 August)
 Joseph McGlue (Republic of Ireland, 28 August)
 Vincent Egbers (Netherlands, 29 August)
 Denni Strich (Germany, 29 August)
 Scilla Gennaro (Italy, 29 August)
 Leo Windtner (Austria, 30 August)
 Charles John Grundie (Northern Ireland, 30 August)
 Christer Fällström (Sweden, 31 August)
 Cristel Brorsson (Sweden, 31 August)
 Pedro Dias (Portugal, 31 August)
 Christoph Kollmeier (Germany, 31 August)

EVENTS IN JULY

Meetings

3 July, in Nyon

European Futsal Championship:
play-off draw

4 July, in Nyon

UEFA Futsal Cup:
preliminary and main round draws

19 July, in Nyon

UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa
League: qualifying round draws

26–28 July, in Stockholm

Women's football development conference

Competitions

2/3 July

UEFA Champions League:
first qualifying round (first legs)

4 July

UEFA Europa League:
first qualifying round (first legs)

9/10 July

UEFA Champions League:
first qualifying round (return legs)

10–28 July, in Sweden

European Women's Championship:
final tournament

11 July

UEFA Europa League:
first qualifying round (return legs)

16/17 July

UEFA Champions League:
second qualifying round (first legs)

18 July

UEFA Europa League:
second qualifying round (first legs)

20 July–1 August, in Lithuania

European Under-19 Championship:
final round

23/24 July

UEFA Champions League:
second qualifying round (return legs)

25 July

UEFA Europa League:
second qualifying round (return legs)

30/31 July

UEFA Champions League:
third qualifying round (first legs)

EVENTS IN AUGUST

Meetings

9 August, in Nyon

UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa
League: play-off draws

15 August, in Nyon

European Women's Under-17 Champion-
ship: second qualifying round draw

29 August, in Monaco

Club Competitions Committee
UEFA Champions League: group stage draw

30 August, in Monaco

UEFA Europa League: group stage draw

Competitions

1 August

UEFA Europa League:
third qualifying round (first legs)

6/7 August

UEFA Champions League:
third qualifying round (return legs)

8 August

UEFA Europa League:
third qualifying round (return legs)

8–13 August

UEFA Women's Champions League:
qualifying round

19–31 August, in Wales

European Women's Under-19
Championship: final round

20/21 August

UEFA Champions League:
play-offs (first legs)

22 August

UEFA Europa League:
play-offs (first legs)

27/28 August

UEFA Champions League:
play-offs (return legs)

27 August–1 September

UEFA Futsal Cup:
preliminary round

29 August

UEFA Europa League:
play-offs (return legs)

30 August, in Prague

UEFA Super Cup

NOTICES

- On 25 March, Matthias Voigt was re-elected president of the Liechtenstein Football Association.
- On 26 March, Aivar Pohlak was re-elected president of the Estonian Football Association.
- On 11 May, Peter Gilliéron, member of the UEFA Executive Committee, was re-elected president of the Swiss Football Association.
- The Football Association of Finland has appointed Marco Casagrande as its general secretary. He will take up his post in August, with Timo Huttunen serving as acting general secretary in the meantime.
- The new address of the Croatian Football Federation is:
Vukovarska 269A
10000 Zagreb - Croatia
- The Association of Football Federations of Azerbaijan has new telephone and fax numbers:
telephone: +994 12 404 27 77/78/79
fax: +994 12 404 27 72

OBITUARIES

The former president of the Austrian Football Association, **Hans Reitingger**, passed away on 28 May at the age of 86. He was a member of the UEFA Sub-Committee for Non-Amateur Football from 1976 to 1978, then of the UEFA Committee for Non-Amateur and Professional Football from 1978 to 1996, serving as vice-chairman of this body from 1992 to 1996. A member of the circle of former UEFA committee members, he received the UEFA Order of Merit in Ruby in 2007.

On 4 June, **Pekka Hämäläinen**, former president of the Football Association of Finland, died at the age of 74. He was a member of the UEFA Committee for the European Championship from 1998 to 2000, vice-chairman of the Assistance Programmes Committee from 2000 to 2006, and chairman of the same committee from 2006 to 2007. He was also first vice-chairman of the UEFA Legal Committee from 2007 to 2011 and a member of the circle of former UEFA committee members.



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