

TECHNICIAN

Editorial:
Forward Thinking

Interview:
Lippi and Capello

**Game, Set
and Match
in Women's Cup**

**Winning Coach:
Martina Voss**

**Coaches and
Groundsmen:
The Grassroots
Approach**

**Professional
Amateurs**



**NEWSLETTER
FOR COACHES**
No 43
AUGUST 2009





IMPRESSUM

EDITORIAL GROUP

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Graham Turner

PRODUCTION

André Vieli
Dominique Maurer
Atema Communication SA
Printed by Artgraphic Cavin SA

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Hélène Fors
Mattias Grafström

COVER

The smile, the sense of joy,
the affectionate hand on the head...
Josep Guardiola was by no
means the only one to appreciate
Andrés Iniesta's contribution to
the 2008/09 UEFA Champions League
campaign which culminated
in FC Barcelona's midfielder planting
a kiss on the trophy
after the final in Rome.

(Photo: Getty Images)

After making an impact
in the Werder Bremen first team,
20-year-old Mesut Özil
played an inspirational role
for the German Under-21
team which took the
European title for the first time
at the finals in Sweden.

FORWARD THINKING

EDITORIAL

BY ANDY ROXBURGH,
UEFA TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

In the middle of June, when Peter Rudbaek crossed the Øresundsbron, the bridge which connects Denmark and Sweden, he was, in a sense, journeying into the future. As the technical director of the Danish Football Association, Peter was on his way to work with the next generation of Danish professional-level coaches who were gathering in Halmstad for a study visit during the European Under-21 Championship final round. In addition, he was in Sweden to contribute to the activities of UEFA's technical team which had the task of producing a technical report on the U21 championships – an event for identifying tactical tendencies and for spotting players with the potential to become tomorrow's international stars. The aim of all his forward thinking is, according to Peter, "to do something positive for the future of football". So, we could make the distinction that while front-line coaches try to win the next game, technical directors, such as Peter Rudbaek, try to win the next decade. But what specifically do the latter group of technicians do in their quest to influence the future of the game?

The technical director should not be confused with the sports director, the kind you see in Germany who deals with business and transfer deals, or the director of football role which flourishes in England and is concerned with recruitment and technical advice to the board. A technical director, either

at a club or at a national association, is primarily responsible for leading and implementing a technical development programme. For example, Gérard Houllier, the technical boss of the French Football Federation, says: "I have three main areas of responsibility – coach education, grassroots and national teams." Of course, Gérard no longer manages the teams directly, but he does control the programme and he offers every support to the national coaching staff. Coach education, player development, and the promotion of grassroots activities are therefore fundamental aspects of a technical director's job description. It is also necessary for the coaching leader to organise courses/events, to facilitate meetings, to produce materials and publications, to give presentations, to represent the organisation on technical matters, to coordinate the various development schemes, and to be a football thinker – a "seeker of ideas" according to Peter Rudbaek.

To be successful as a technical director, it is necessary to have credibility within the football community. This means having an extensive background in the game. If you have not coached teams or developed young players, it is difficult to sell your message or to know the subtleties of the business. Communication skills, organisational ability, coaching expertise, patience, the power to influence, personality, vision, decisiveness and curiosity are also key features for someone in this position of technical influence. They must have the same mentality as Liverpool's Rafa Benítez, who once declared: "I am always questioning, always looking for new solutions, new ways to proceed." Above all, there must be a sense of humility, because the technical director serves the game and helps others to realise their dreams, to satisfy their ambitions.

In my view, every national association and top professional club should have a technical director, someone who can play a vital role in improving the game through coach education, player development and grassroots promotion. In training the next generation and supporting those on today's front line, the technical director needs to keep up with the trends in football and to push everyone – coaches, players and grassroots leaders – to a higher level. It means pointing the way forward and, like Peter Rudbaek crossing over the Øresundsbron bridge, it means creating a link between today and the future of the game.



Sportsfile

Technical directors discuss details of a practical session involving youth players during the 17th UEFA Course for Coach Educators staged in Lisbon in 2008.

INTERVIEW

BY ANDY ROXBURGH,
UEFA TECHNICAL DIRECTOR



Marcello Lippi
assesses the Italian team's
performance during
a 2010 FIFA World Cup
qualifier in Bari.

PA Wire/PA Images

THEY ARE BOTH ITALIAN, BOTH GRADUATES OF THE ITALIAN FOOTBALL FEDERATION'S COACHING SCHOOL IN FLORENCE, BOTH SERIE A COACH OF THE YEAR RECIPIENTS, BOTH UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE WINNERS, AND BOTH CURRENTLY MANAGING INTERNATIONAL TEAMS.

MARCELLO LIPPI, THE WORLD CHAMPION IN 2006, IS IN HIS SECOND SPELL AS ITALY'S HEAD COACH, WHILE FABIO CAPELLO, TWO YEARS HIS SENIOR, HAS BEEN IN CHARGE OF THE ENGLAND NATIONAL TEAM SINCE DECEMBER 2007. THE FORMER, A TOP PLAYER AT SAMPDORIA, HAS LED CLUBS SUCH AS NAPOLI, JUVENTUS AND INTER MILAN, WINNING THE SCUDETTO FIVE TIMES, THE UEFA SUPER CUP, THE INTERCONTINENTAL CUP, AS WELL AS THE UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE (1996); THE LATTER, WHO SCORED THE WINNING GOAL FOR ITALY AGAINST ENGLAND AT WEMBLEY IN 1973, HAS WON DOMESTIC LEAGUE TITLES WITH EVERY CLUB HE HAS MANAGED (AC MILAN, REAL MADRID, ROMA AND JUVENTUS), INCLUDING FOUR SERIE A TITLES AND TWO LA LIGA SUCCESSES, NOT TO MENTION THE UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE AND UEFA SUPER CUP TRIUMPHS WITH AC MILAN IN 1994.

MARCELLO AND FABIO ARE RECOGNISED THROUGHOUT FOOTBALL AS TWO OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST COACHES. THEY ARE SUCCESSFUL, TOP-LEVEL PROFESSIONALS AND ARE EXTREMELY WISE – THEY ARE THE MASTER COACHES...

LIPPI AND CAPELLO

1 • What impressed you most about this season's UEFA Champions League?

Lippi: I was very impressed by the high quality of technical play, in particular FC Barcelona, but also the power and the winning mentality of Manchester United throughout the season. Both of these clubs were worthy of reaching the final. Something that did strike me was the reduced number of centre forwards or target players. In general, we only saw one main attacker and he was left detached when the others went into defensive mode. The great speed, the intense velocity of the attacking play, was the main feature for me from a technical/tactical point of view.

Capello: I would like to highlight the ability of a coach such as Guus Hiddink, who played against FC Barcelona and



Fabio Capello keeps a close eye on his players at an England training session.

caused great difficulties for them – in fact he nearly eliminated them. Guus underlined the need to know your opponent and to plan the game in the right way. It is said that sometimes great players can make the difference, but they can only do that if the game is properly planned by the coach. Another team that really impressed me was Liverpool FC – they are really made for the Champions League and their performance against Real Madrid was great. That is why I was very surprised when they were knocked out by Chelsea. Normally, when Liverpool play at home, it is really difficult for opponents to get a result, but they were not able to play their normal game in this instance. Both Guus Hiddink and Pep Guardiola, especially in the final, were able to cause problems for their opponents, and it is the

MARCELLO LIPPI WITH THE 2006 WORLD CUP TROPHY.

STF/AFP/Getty Images



Getty Images

coach's ability which I would like to highlight on this occasion.

2 • Was there anything from a tactical perspective that was important?

Lippi: From a playing point of view, Barcelona's ability to keep possession of the ball was outstanding and, because of this and their good organisation, they had very little expenditure of energy – it is 'chasing the ball' that is demanding on fitness. And then tactically, as Fabio mentioned, it was the great ability that was shown in denying space, for example, Chelsea against Barcelona in a tie that lasted 180 minutes. Chelsea were a little unlucky and this clash was probably the only negative experience for Barcelona during the Champions League season. The tradition, the great technical skill, the way of playing, the football culture

of Spanish players, their strong midfield players – they even played like that when they were children – are things we always knew about. But now they have added the capacity to win, because until EURO, Spain were not able to deliver the prize. These players have definitely grown up and they believe they can win.

Capello: I believe that this victory by Barcelona will be very important, but it must be assessed in the right way. I hope English players or German players will not try to copy the Spanish players. Every team has its own features. Some coaches came to England, for example, successful coaches such as Juande Ramos and Phil Scolari, and they tried to bring their type of game to their English clubs in a short time, but it did not really work out because it is difficult to introduce a style which

does not suit the characteristics of the players you take over. The top four clubs in England have different approaches – Liverpool's way is different from Arsenal's because Arsène Wenger has a similar approach to Barcelona's passing game. It was more of an issue about defending for Arsenal this time around than one of style. In the future, the key for coaches will be to understand what they have in their hands and how to get the best out of what is available.

3 • What are your expectations for the 2010 World Cup in South Africa?

Lippi: Well, first of all, we have to qualify for it. We have not qualified yet but we are hopeful. Whenever big teams like Italy, England, the Netherlands, Argentina, Brazil and France take part in major events, they do not take part just to participate or to look good –



FABIO CAPELLO RAISES HIS ARMS AS HIS SHOT BEATS PETER SHILTON TO EARN ITALY A 1-0 WIN OVER ENGLAND ON 14 NOVEMBER 1973.

they go to the tournament to win. But the process that leads to victory is a long one. First you need to qualify and, in my case, I need to rebuild the team, making sure I do not throw away too much of what we have. We have some very good players on the team, even though a few are getting older. Then I have to find some good new players to fill the vacancies. So my objective is to try and recreate a group that has the same psychological attitude as my former group which won the 2006 FIFA World Cup in Germany. My aim is clear: to try to win the World Cup.

Capello: Well this is a question that the whole of England has been asking for years. We will try and get as far as possible in the tournament but, before we can think about that, we have to qualify, as Marcello said. The England team is a good team, but we all know that in football there is a fine line between the ball hitting the post and going into the net or the ball going wide of the goal. So, sometimes there is a tiny difference between a positive and a negative result, but we will certainly try and reach the final in South Africa.

4 • What are the difficulties of managing a national team?

Lippi: The main difficulty is a lack of time in order to deliver to your players everything that you have in your heart and in your brain. That is, trying to deliver messages – messages which can build up a team. Today, we cannot afford to overlook everything that goes into building up a team. The national team is not representative of the best players of a nation – I am not even sure that I took the best players, technically speaking, to Germany. Maybe some very good ones stayed at home, but certainly I had super players in terms of belonging to a group, and all the positive effects that come with that. So the difficulty is you have very little time available, but you have to produce this sense of belonging, this team spirit, and you have to do it quickly.

Capello: To me, it was something really new. I was used to working every day as all the club coaches do. I had to address all the problems and constantly talk to the players – I spent a lot of time with them in happy times and

difficult times. So creating a group with the national team was really a new experience because there is simply no time available. Also, you have to listen to the clubs' needs, especially when there are friendly matches. They may have some requests and you have to understand them, because we use the players, but they pay them. And the difficulty I have is that I need to prepare a match and immediately afterwards to say goodbye. Then maybe 40 days later they reappear and you have prepared everything for the next game, and the two players you need to talk to most are injured and not with you. Often all the work you have done needs to be scrapped and you start from scratch all over again. So, as a national coach, I agree with Marcello, it is more of a psychological thing than tactical, because you cannot do much in four days. There may be some new players and you need to instruct them. But the important thing is to set up the group and to have players who can express their personality. I had an experience in England at the first training when I thought: 'they are wonderful, they play very well technically, with the ball moving at great speed'. Then we played against Switzerland at Wembley and it was a different scene. They showed fear, were lacking in self-confidence and were not positive. It was a totally different scenario, so it was a mental thing, a burden for them, due to the importance associated with the national team.

Lippi: Referring to what Fabio said, during my first spell with the national team, after we had qualified, we went to play a friendly match in the Netherlands. It was a wonderful game against a very good side, and we won 3-1. But there was a problem because it was November, and I was not due to see them again until the following March, three and a half months later, when we had to play against Germany in Florence. So I remember that I told the players that we would stay in touch and talk about the national team, about our qualities, our strengths,



Fabio Capello and Marcel Desailly punch the Athens air after AC Milan's 4-0 win against FC Barcelona in the 1994 UEFA Champions League final.

**FABIO CAPELLO AND MARCELLO LIPPI EXCHANGE
VIEWS WITH ARSÈNE WENGER AT THE UEFA ELITE CLUB
COACHES FORUM HELD IN SEPTEMBER 2006.**



UEFA-pjwoodsch



Getty Images

"If you need to talk to me, I am here for you."
Marcello Lippi converses with his players at a training session in Coverciano in June 2009.

and the fact that we had grown up as a group. We did not want to lose everything we had built because we were forced to be apart for so long. When we met in Coverciano, our technical centre in Florence, the day before the match against Germany, I said to our players: 'I believe we will play a very good match against Germany, just as we did last week against the Netherlands'. They looked at me and I said: 'Do not worry, I have not gone mad, but I believe we will play as if we had just played last week'. And, indeed, we did play a wonderful game, and at that point I knew

we had grown up as a group and that this was a very important team.

5 • Talking about Coverciano, what did you gain from being a student coach at the Italian FA centre in Florence?

Lippi: Well, your training in Coverciano basically gives you everything you need to be a coach. As a player, if you feel inclined to go into coaching after your playing career, you think you know football – you have discussed tactics with your coach, you have experienced the

fitness training programme, etc. After three months at Coverciano, you realise that you are doing things that you never thought about before. All the knowledge you accumulated throughout your career needs to be bound together, and this can be done by studying sports science, physical preparation, technical and tactical training, methods and so forth. The Coverciano experience is useful for organising all the things you picked up as a professional player.

Capello: When you are a player, all you have to do is think about your own game, your fitness, your diet etc. – you train, you go home, and that is it. But when you become a manager, you have to think about the physical and mental preparation of the whole squad, building up team spirit, being aware of medical issues. Above all, you have to develop your leadership skills. You also realise that you do not focus on yourself, or an individual player, but on the team as a whole. So you are taught all these concepts in Coverciano and this is extremely helpful. Of course, results also depend on luck, but luck is only one element. You are chosen for the job because of your coaching know-how and the training at Coverciano gives you that.

6 • How would you describe your style of leadership?

Lippi: There is a difference between coaching with a club and with a national team. Fabio may not have reached this stage yet, but when you prepare the squad for the World Cup, not just a qualifying match, you have 50 days to deliver something and you spend a lot of time on the field. I believe there are a lot of similarities between Fabio and myself in terms of management. I think players from big teams do not want a father figure, but rather a strong guide, a competent coach who can lead them to the objective they have to achieve – which is winning. Then, whether the coach is nice or not is not very important. When I talk to my players I say: 'I am not your father or your older brother but,



MARCELLO LIPI WITH HIS PLAYERS AFTER THE 2006 WORLD CUP FINAL.

of course, if you need to talk to me, I am here for you. What you need in this role as head coach are the necessary competencies in terms of tactics and skills. But I believe that managing human resources is fundamental today to train at the top level.

Capello: Well, I totally agree with what Marcello said; and he is right, we are very similar. I would also say that as a trainer, every day you have 23 or 25 players, depending on whether it is a national squad or a club, and each one is judging you. You are always under the spotlight in every moment – your reactions when you win, your reactions when you lose. How you manage this, how you manage that, and the way you work on the field. I have not won the World Cup like Marcello, but I think there are certain things which you learn that can be transferred from the club environment to the national team. For example, we lost against France and naturally everyone was very unhappy because of this sad result. But I said: 'Hi guys, today I am very happy'. They all stared at me because they thought I was mad. I went on and said: 'Yes,

I am very happy with the way we played the first 30 minutes against the runners-up of the 2006 World Cup. We played at a very high level and we made their lives very difficult. These 30 minutes can provide us with a basis and in the future we will need to extend this 30-minute performance into the full 90-minute match'. From that time forward, we started with a different way of thinking on the field.

7 • How has the game changed since you started coaching?

Lippi: What has changed today is the fact that you have to play in different ways depending on the characteristics of the players you have. In the past, there was usually a common way of playing by most teams. All you had to do was pick the best players for the formation. But now, you need to select good technical players, players who are very strong mentally. In Italy, the teams play in different ways, with various formations, and at national level I need to choose the best formation for the players I select. In general, coaches today need to use different systems

to best exploit the skills and characteristics of the players that are available at that particular time.

Capello: I think there have been certain changes, certain evolutions. When I was a player, the Netherlands started playing in a way that resembles modern football. Then Arrigo Sacchi made an impact as an innovator, and we have been following that development for a number of years. As Marcello was saying, I think today you need to consider different formations which you can use against different opponents. You also must be flexible and be able to change, even within a particular game. You need to be able to alter your players' positions in order to hit your opponents at their weakest points. So, as a national coach, you have to pick the best players, the fittest players, but above all you have to be able to create a basic group. This can then be added to, as we did with Theo Walcott who played against Croatia. When the journalists saw the line-up and saw that I was going to play this 20-year-old, they thought I had gone mad. But, in fact, he was the fittest in that role for England at the time, so it was the right thing to do. You need to be flexible, to find the best players for the job, and to make brave decisions.

8 • What is your assessment of Italian football today?

Lippi: I really believe that the real expression of a country's football is not given by the club teams but by the national side. We are still in the process of building up our squad for next year. We are the world champions, our Under-21s are strong, and there are a number of good youth players coming through, so I think there is a very positive future for Italian football.

Capello: We are now having players born in Italy whose families came from other countries, like Mario Balotelli of Inter Milan, which was not the case in the past. Players like that could be



Fabio Capello watches the England team in World Cup qualifying action in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

THE TECHNICIAN WOMEN'S

GAME, SET AND MATCH IN WOMEN'S CUP

THE UEFA WOMEN'S CUP IS NO MORE. THE COMPETITION IS ABOUT TO BE REBORN AS THE UEFA WOMEN'S CHAMPIONS LEAGUE IN WHICH, FOR THE FIRST TIME, THE RUNNERS-UP FROM EUROPE'S TOP EIGHT NATIONS WILL BE ON THE STARTING GRID AMID 53 CONTENDERS FROM 44 NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS.

From the end of September, 32 teams will contest home-and-away ties which will lead two of them into the first final to be twinned with the men's UEFA Champions League. It is scheduled to be played (as a single match instead of the current home-and-away format) in Madrid on Thursday 20 May, two days before the climax of the men's competition at the Estadio Santiago Bernabéu.

The imminence of such radical changes offered an opportunity to assess the state of play in Europe's premier women's club competition. But, even though the eighth final produced a fifth victory for a German team, the rest of the script added up to a tale of the unexpected.

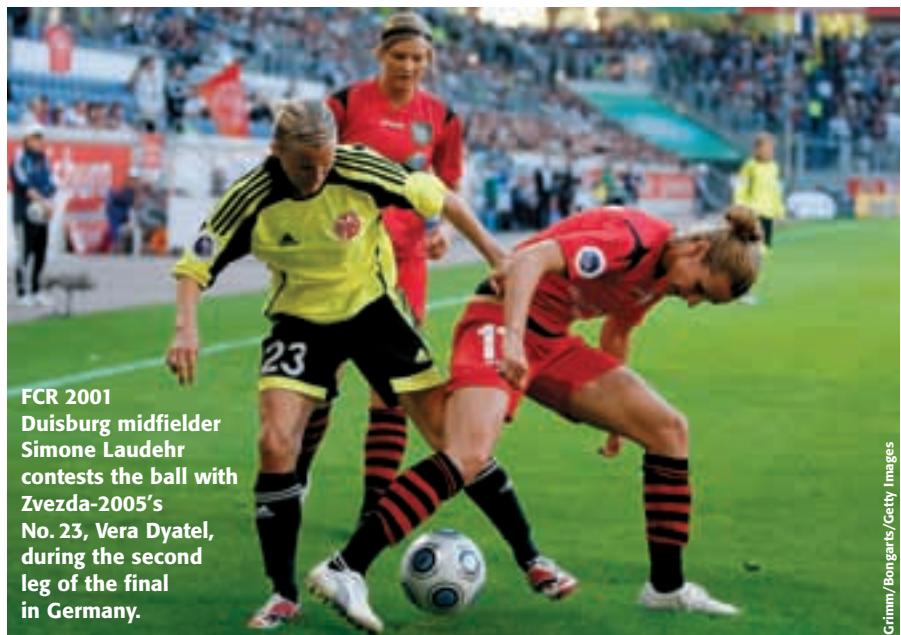
In the first leg, Russian champions Zvezda-2005, who had claimed some illustrious scalps on their way to the club's first final, were due to entertain fellow debutants FCR 2001 Duisburg of Germany. For head coach Aleksandr Grigoryan, the first challenge was to prepare for a match which, as the club's home pitch in Perm was an artificial surface which didn't conform to UEFA standards, was to be played 700km away in Kazan – about halfway to Moscow. He refused to allow fatigue derived from a 12-hour drive to become an excuse, arguing that the German visitors also faced a long trip. With hindsight, however, he considered

he had overdone his efforts to make the players feel relaxed. "If I were given another opportunity," he commented, "I would definitely work on raising the tension before the final." His other regret was the decision to take the game to the Germans. A more cautious approach would have been appropriate and we could have focused on a counterattacking game as, in the event, we had very little possession. Afterwards, I realised that eight of players hadn't really been able to get into the game."

The tale of the unexpected came in the second half of a game where the Germans went in with a 1-0 lead.

Their coach, former international Martina Voss, stressed the importance of not conceding, as Zvezda had looked dangerous with direct long passing to their attackers. She emphasised the need for compact defending, diagonal passing to switch play, and dominance in 1 v 1 duels. Her expectations were exceeded when the Russian net was ruffled five times in the closing half-hour.

The 6-0 defeat after a long victorious run had traumatic effects. Three days later, Aleksandr Grigoryan handed in his resignation and the team travelled to Germany for the return leg with



FCR 2001 Duisburg midfielder Simone Laudehr contests the ball with Zvezda-2005's No. 23, Vera Dyatel, during the second leg of the final in Germany.



THE EXPRESSIONS AND THE WORD ON THE BOARD SAY IT ALL. THE FCR 2001 DUISBURG PLAYERS CELEBRATE VICTORY AT THE MSV ARENA

sports director Stanislav Kharitonov at the helm.

Maren Meinert, the former German international who currently coaches the country's Under-19 and Under-20 sides, had been approached by The Technician to cast a technical observer's eye over the return leg in Duisburg – and found herself watching the second instalment of an unexpectedly foregone conclusion. "It was strange because it was influenced by external factors," she commented. "A record crowd of over 28,000 created an excellent atmosphere, but it made the Duisburg players nervous and encouraged them to try to shine as individuals instead of as a team. Zvezda's expectations of winning the title were obviously low, yet they were highly motivated in terms of avoiding another bad or humiliating result."

She saw the home team stick to the 4-2-3-1 formation which had served them well in Kazan, with Marina Hegering and Annemieke Kiesel operating in the midfield screening roles, Simone Laudehr and Fatmire Bajramaj

on the flanks, and Femke Maes in the slipstream of the most advanced striker, Inka Grings. Zvezda fielded a compact, classic 4-4-2, with Natalia Barbashina playing a deeper withdrawn role behind the sole striker Dariya Apanashchenko.

"Duisburg found it difficult to launch incisive attacks," Maren comments. "They were disciplined and hard-running but a combination of nerves and a very compact Russian team meant that they very often looked for the direct ball to Grings, who would then try to play it wide to the wingers. But they were sometimes overstretched in the depth with a lot of space between departments. At their best, Duisburg have a good mix of attacking options, with the central midfielders sparking off short-passing combination moves. When Jennifer Oster and Turid Knaak provided some fresh legs on the wings in the second half there was a more consistent supply of crosses into the box. But, of course, the result in Russia meant that they didn't have to take risks – so it was sufficient to deny Zvezda chances to score."

The challenge facing Stanislav Kharitonov was to restore confidence with a dignified result – and that objective was achieved by a 1-1 draw. "Not surprisingly," Maren reports, "the emphasis was on compact defensive activity, with two or even three players crowding out Grings as soon as she received the ball. Understandably, they had very quick transitions into deep defence to avoid the ball being played behind their back line. Their most direct counters were based on a long pass to Barbashina, who would try to play the ball on to the fast-running striker Apanashchenko. She was one of the Zvezda players who caught the eye: she was fast, made good runs behind the back line, and showed good 1 v 1 skills when she scored the goal. I was also impressed by two midfielders. Valentina Savchenkova looked comfortable on the ball and never lost it. She was always available and her passing was top-class. The right-side midfielder Vera Dyatel made some good runs on the wing, got in some good crosses, and, technically, had a nice clean pair of feet."

"Apart from Grings, who led the line very well, I thought two other Duisburg players were major influences in the game," Maren adds. "Annike Krahn was a good organiser in the centre of the defence, had good pace, defended very competently, and went up to score the equaliser from a corner. Annemieke Kiesel also did well as the ball winner in midfield. She worked very hard and she had good ideas about how to use the ball when she won it. For a technician, the result in the first leg made it a game where it was difficult to draw conclusions. But I think Duisburg were very worthy winners and it was a positive display to offer to a very big crowd and a large television audience."

The new UEFA Women's Champions League now represents a golden opportunity for Europe's top club competition to step on to an even bigger stage.



Annemieke Kiesel, who shrugs off a challenge from Vera Dyatel, "did well as the ball winner in midfield" for the champions.



Before the return leg in Duisburg, Martina Voss tries not to look at the trophy she would be able to lift 90 minutes later.

Grimm/Bongarts/Getty Images

Winning coach **Martina Voss** rates the UEFA Women's Cup as “The best team-building event we have had”

THE 7-1 AGGREGATE WIN OVER ZVEZDA-2005 IN THE 2009 FINAL WAS AN ESPECIALLY SWEET SUCCESS FOR MARTINA VOSS. CAPPED 125 TIMES BY GERMANY AS AN ATTACKING MIDFIELDER, SHE BECAME HEAD COACH OF HER HOME-CITY CLUB, FCR 2001 DUISBURG, AFTER A DECADE WITH THE TEAM AS A PLAYER AND, JUST AS JOSEP GUARDIOLA HAS DONE WITH FC BARCELONA IN THE MEN'S GAME, HAS GAINED SPECIAL SATISFACTION FROM LEADING 'THE CLUB OF HER LIFE' TO THE TOP OF THE EUROPEAN TREE.

The 0-6 scoreline in Kazan might give the impression that the Women's Cup is an easy competition to win. Is that the case?

No title on this earth is easy to win. The result of the first leg in Russia is misleading because, on that day, we produced periods of world-class football whereas, in earlier games, our performances could have been rated as 'good' or maybe 'very good'. For Zvezda it was the other way round because they had played ten UEFA Women's Cup matches without losing and had beaten former champions. On the day, they didn't express their true selves and, of course, it's not good for a final to be won by such a margin. We began to see the real Zvezda in the return game, when they performed much better.

How did you motivate your players for the return leg when everybody felt that the final was already over?

I didn't need to. We agreed we wanted to put up a great performance in front of a crowd of 28,000 spectators. There was another reason. It was the first time the fans had come to watch only us. For the German cup final, they come to watch the men's final as well because it is played after ours. So this motivated the players naturally and I didn't need to do anything special.

Do you think that your players learned valuable lessons on the way to the final?

They learned a lot for sure. Not only on the pitch but also off it. They were confronted with new, unknown situations and had to adapt. In the national league you know your opponents. At international level, you hardly know your opponents and you have to adapt very quickly to new situations during games. We succeeded very well and became better and better as the UEFA Women's Cup went on. The second aspect is self-confidence. You learn that you do not need to know your opponent to be good and that you only need to be good yourself, to perform well in order to achieve something.

Did you encounter many different playing styles during your run to the final?

We got to know two or three different playing styles. Naturally, the teams which we clearly dominated were obliged to adopt a defensive style and we only needed to make a pre-meditated change to our tactical approach once. This was in Lyon where we effectively played with three defensive midfielders because we wanted to prevent Ingvild Stensland from organising their attacking game. We made another slight

change during the match aimed at a more offensive approach and, thank goodness, we managed to come back to 1-1. This was a necessary change but, basically, we stick to the same style.

You mentioned games where you were expected to dominate and the Bundesliga is generally regarded as the strongest national league in Europe. How does domestic competition compare with the Women's Cup?
I think that teams who play internationally could perform in the Bundesliga. In our league there are already big differ-



Linda Bresonik nudges the ball away from FC Bayern's Nicole Banecki during the Bundesliga summit in Munich, won 4-0 by the new champions of Europe.

Kupper/Bongarts/Getty Images



**THE COMPETITION HAS NOW
BEEN RE-LAUNCHED AND RE-BRANDED,
WITH 28 TEAMS COMPETING IN
THE QUALIFYING ROUND OF THE INAUGURAL
UEFA WOMEN'S CHAMPIONS LEAGUE.**

ences and the top four or five teams play at a higher level than the rest. It's always difficult to speculate on how a team would perform in another league but the German league is, at the moment, probably one of the best or maybe the best. The success of German teams in the UEFA Women's Cup illustrates this.

What is your overall impression of the Women's Cup and do you think that the transition to a Women's Champions League is a step forward?

The Women's Cup is, for us, only a positive experience. We have had so many great moments. Getting to the final was the best team-building event we have had. We had the impression of being part of something special during the whole tournament, playing matches abroad and living a fantastic experience. It was new and, for our young players, totally different from matches in the Bundesliga. The Women's Cup leaves us with positive memories. It was the top for us and the development of the team.



Frimm/Bongarts/Getty Images

FCR 2001 Duisburg's central defender Annike Krahn grits her teeth and hooks the ball away from Zvezda-2005 striker Dariya Apanashchenko.

The Women's Champions League name is definitely an improvement! The men's Champions League has a high value and a better image so the profile will be higher and it will be easier to promote. Allowing runners-up as well as champions to participate is also clearly good for the competition. It will be more attractive in name and in substance. The thing that will need to be tested is playing the final at a neutral venue. There'll have to be a lot of media work and publicity to encourage the public to come to the stadium to see top-class women's football. It will also create opportunities to trigger interest in countries where the public is not yet aware of the quality of women's football. The final should be a showcase. I am an optimist by nature and I believe it is worth a try. Then we can see what can be improved or we can change back. I trust UEFA to make the right decisions.

The plan to stage the final just before the men's Champions League final is something that you have been doing in Germany for some years – do you think it is a successful policy?

We have to try it. But if there is no spectator interest, we should have the courage to change back. Or maybe play at a venue not linked to the men's final. In Germany, both cup finals have, in recent years, been played at the same place on the same day. But we are changing this. The DFB women's cup will be played at an independent neutral venue as of next year to give it new momentum.

You talk about a showcase event but what can be done to improve women's club football in the rest of Europe to bring it up to 'German' standards of club football?

Structures have to be improved and this can be done by demonstrating that women's football is very exciting that women can play very good football, and that the physical characteristics

tics of the players have evolved. Women's football has good chances to improve. In England, for example, national team players are 'contracted' by the football association, which gives them development possibilities and some money so that they can concentrate on their training. However, one has to be careful that the gap between the national team players and the others doesn't become too big. And the media need to be encouraged to promote our game.

You've mentioned training opportunities – something especially important in the women's game. What would be a typical weekly schedule at your club?

We usually play Bundesliga matches on Sundays. On Monday we have recovery training, with the substitutes and the players who didn't play for the second team training a bit more with me. On Tuesday we train twice, morning and evening – in the morning with the players who are professionals or work for sports clubs or for their parents and can participate. On Wednesday, the national team players have physical training in Cologne with the coach of the women's national team. On Thursday, we again train twice – with those who can in the morning and the others in the evening. On Friday we train once and usually Saturday is free or we are travelling. So, in general, the national team players train seven times a week.

What aspects do you emphasise during training?

It depends on what we have to prepare for the weekend. If we have opposition that we need to surprise in midfield, we focus on the tactical side of the game. Otherwise we try to train movements in both directions. We always try to train technique under a lot of pressure, in small spaces at high tempo. This is always in match form to keep the concentration high and also to increase the fun factor. They always want to win.

**IN THE COMPANY OF UEFA TECHNICAL DIRECTOR
ANDY ROXBURGH, SIR ALEX FERGUSON,
FRANK RIJKAARD, MARCELLO LIPPI, JUANDE RAMOS
AND FABIO CAPELLO LINE-UP WITH THE
UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE AND UEFA CUP TROPHIES
THEY HAVE JOINTLY WON SEVEN TIMES.**



UEFA-Piwoods.ch

in Marcello's team in the future. It is the same in England where I have some very good Under-21 players and will include them in the national side when the time is right. With regard to football in Italy, and I am sorry to say this, I think that we lack continuity in our way of playing because, in my opinion, though we have great referees, they are obliged to stop the game too often in the Italian league. We are used to a refereeing style which is very strict and this means when any player falls down, the game is stopped. It takes time for our teams to adjust to the European approach. It is the Italian audience, the Italian spectators, who ask for this rigid refereeing – if anything happens and the referee does not stop the game, he will be criticised. We need to improve a lot in this aspect of the game. Italian football is a very good environment for young talents and the young players are really good. So I firmly believe that the future will be a positive one for the national team, but whether it is one, two or three Italian clubs doing well in the UEFA Champions League, we will have to wait and see.

Lippi: Yes, I agree. And I recognise that there is sometimes a bad attitude by the players towards referees and their assistants in Italy. In international football, the referees do not accept certain types of behaviour from the players, things which sometimes happen in Italy, so they expel them and then the players are suspended.

Capello: Yes, indeed. This is something which I have seen in England and is very important. Players used to contest everything that the referee decided. The public, the journalists and the managers wanted this to stop, they wanted to see more respect, and this has more or less happened. I think FIFA and UEFA should really push the idea of respect for the referees. It is really disappointing to see all the players crowding around the

referee and being abusive. We have to realise that referees can also make mistakes, and this 'attacking the referee' is a very bad example for young players, and stopping it should be official policy.

9 • Is there something that you would like to change or improve in today's football?

Lippi: There are probably many things that could be changed or improved. But for me, it is vitally important that countries maintain their football characteristics. Clearly, South American football has become a bit more European in the sense that they try to be more practical, more organised than before. Meanwhile, European football has acquired some South American elements, in particular technical quality with the ball. But it is important for each country to stay faithful to its 'footballing tradition'. I think English football will always be English at its core, but its national team will be the best expression of that. Regarding Italian football, I think improvements can be made, especially when it comes to attitude.

Capello: If we talk about innovation, I think the use of additional referees beside the goals could prove to be an important development. Also, it is a positive move that we play with the same model of ball in a particular competition – something that has been promoted in the UEFA Champions League. Improved technology has continued to have an impact on the game. When we consider football even seven or eight years ago, it was almost unthinkable to shoot from the kind of distances which are commonplace today. Ronaldo's long-range efforts immediately come to mind. So certainly progress has been made thanks to technology, but I think there is still some work to be done in terms of attitude towards the referee and in minimising the number of mistakes made by the referees themselves, especially in the penalty area, for example, with handling of the ball. We have seen some teams suffer because of these mistakes. With all the efforts that are put in throughout a season, we should try as much as possible to avoid penalising teams because of such errors. It is really frustrating for a coach to see his work spoiled in this way as he strives to reach the finishing line.



Getty Images

Marcello Lippi tells his players what he expects from a national team training session in Florence.



Empics Sport

COACHES AND GROUNDSMEN THE GRASSROOTS APPROACH

HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW YOUR GROUNDSMAN? HOW WELL DO THE PLAYERS KNOW HIM?

DO YOU CONSIDER HIM TO BE A MEMBER OF YOUR BACKROOM STAFF?

DOES HE HAVE ACCESS TO THE DRESSING ROOM?

The questions are by no means rhetorical. Two years ago, the technical report on the UEFA Champions League commented: 'the coaches' strong feeling is that the importance of the playing surface is often underrated. A fast and true surface can make an invaluable contribution to the match as a spectacle. If the pitch is not in perfect condition, there is a negative effect on technique and the fluency of attacking moves. The glitter can easily be taken off the show because the speed of combination play is a critical factor in top-level games where space is at a premium.'

UEFA's commitment to providing the performers with an optimal stage was demonstrated when the entire pitch in Basle was relaid in record time between Portugal's games against Switzerland and Germany after torrential rain during EURO 2008. And there are signs that the decision-makers at the top clubs are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of the surfaces that their teams play on – to the extent that there have already been cases of 'international transfers' involving groundsmen who have built reputations for keeping pitches in optimal condition come rain,

shine, bulky fixture lists or heavy summer schedules of pop concerts. At UEFA, there is often reference to the importance of genuine 'pitch people' in the game of football and there is now a positive trend in terms of the respect afforded to the pitch people who, literally, take care of the pitch.

The UEFA Champions League final in Rome showcased the importance of the playing surface – and not just in terms of billiard-table flatness or the height of the grass. FC Barcelona and Manchester United FC are among the elite teams whose game is based on high-tempo passing combinations which require the ball to skim across the playing surface. In Liverpool's game, passes are often driven rather than stroked.

Some journalists were taken aback when Josep Guardiola, at his pre-final press conference in Rome, raised pitch-watering as an issue which, amid all the media hype surrounding Cristiano Ronaldo, Lionel Messi et al, seemed trivial. But the Barça boss was genuinely concerned that high temperatures and low humidity would combine to produce a slow Stadio Olimpico pitch which could have been prejudicial to the slick ball-playing traditions of the two contestants – and the millions of spectators who were following the match in about 200 countries.



Getty Images

Manchester United's No. 10 Wayne Rooney gets to grips with FC Barcelona's Lionel Messi during the UEFA Champions League final in Rome, with Michael Carrick forming the other half of the sandwich.

**ATTENTION TO DETAIL HAS ASSUMED
PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE AS PLAYERS AND COACHES
DEMAND TOP-QUALITY PLAYING SURFACES.**



Empics Sport



The grass is meticulously cut to 'regulation height' at the Stadio Olimpico on the morning of the final in Rome.

Empics Sport

His worries about the playing surface were understandable, bearing in mind what he and his players have become used to at home in the Camp Nou. The team's footballing credo is based on fluent combination play, much of it one-touch, played at incessantly high tempo. Controlling the ball is often less important than instantly playing it. A reliable surface therefore becomes a crucial element, as does the speed of the ball as it kicks off the grass.

The Catalan club is by no means alone in treating the condition of the pitch as an integral part of the tactical preparations for any given match. And, as training sessions are geared to match conditions, training pitches are required to meet the same exacting standards.

At the Camp Nou, preparations are meticulous. On the morning of a match, a pitchside weather station measures evaporation levels, wind speed and direction, and humidity. Data is then dovetailed with predicted rainfall and drainage capacities to automatically calculate the number of minutes of watering required to produce the playing surface and texture which the players, the coaches and the playing style demand. Between 75 and 60 minutes before kick-off, the pitch is freshened up with enough water to guarantee optimal ball speed off the surface.

Liquid assets have been poured into an automated system based on 52 individual watering points, 28 of them within the confines of the playing area. A remote control system allows the groundsman to activate one, two or as many as six irrigation points at the same time, by hitting the touch buttons on a device no bigger than a mobile phone while standing on the touchline. It means that, on matchdays, watering can go ahead without upsetting TV crews or photographers and can even go ahead while match officials are inspecting the pitch or warming up. Watering at this stage is nothing to do with offering nutrition to the grass – it simply moistens the leaves and increases the speed at which the ball skims off the surface.

The same applies during training sessions, where the groundsman is able to hit the right buttons as soon as the players or coaching staff tell him that a specific area – maybe where the sun is hitting hardest – needs a few drops of water. At the Camp Nou, it's not an uncommon sight for the players to be working in one sector of the pitch while the sprinklers are moistening the area where they plan to execute the next part of the training session. The groundsman is an active member of the backroom team.

It means that, on matchday, there's no question of him watering the pitch before kick-off and heading home. The players want the conditions to remain relatively constant throughout the game and only if humidity levels are around 70% can it be assumed that further attention might not be needed. Lower humidity coupled with high winds can produce radical changes during the two hours between the end of the warm-up and the final whistle of the match. So, at Spanish league matches, one of the captain's duties is to have a few words with the groundsman as he leads the team off the pitch at the end of the warm-up. The groundsman is also expected to head for the dressing room at half-time, armed with an up-to-the-minute local weather forecast based on satellite information. Consultation with the captain and a member of the coaching staff then leads to a decision on how much watering – if any – is required during the interval.

It may be significant that seven of FC Barcelona's starters at the UEFA Champions League final in Rome had emerged from the club's academy, where their technique had been honed to standards high enough to slot into the first team's trademark passing game. In order to achieve this, the aim is for training pitches and the surfaces used for second-team games to reach the same standard as the playing surface in the main stadium.

It's a statement of the obvious that not every club on planet earth can match the benchmarks set by Barça and the other top European clubs. But their example is perhaps one to be cited by technicians when trying to influence the club's other decision-makers in terms of investment in pitch care. How many teams' ambitions, in terms of playing style, are hampered by the lack of an appropriate playing surface? How high should this item feature on the technician's priority list? And how important is it to make the groundsman feel he is a valuable member of the backroom staff?



JAVIER YEPES IS THROWN INTO THE CROATIAN AIR AFTER HIS CASTILLA Y LEÓN SIDE'S VICTORY IN THE 2009 UEFA REGIONS' CUP.

PROFESSIONAL AMATEURS

LUBOMIR BOHUN, SLOBODAN CRNADAK, SRETNEN CUK, DMITRY GOLUBEV, FRANCIS JADOULLE, SORINEL PATRASCU, GERRY SMITH AND JAVIER YEPES WILL PROBABLY BE SURPRISED TO SEE THEIR NAMES IN THE TECHNICIAN. THEY ARE HIGHLIGHTED AS THE HEAD COACHES OF, RESPECTIVELY, BRATISLAVA FROM SLOVAKIA, SLAVEZ GRADISKA OF BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA, ZAGREB OF CROATIA, PRIVOLZHIE FROM RUSSIA, KEMPEN FROM BELGIUM, OLTEANIA OF ROMANIA, REGION 1 FROM THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND AND CASTILLA Y LEÓN FROM SPAIN – THE EIGHT AMATEUR TEAMS WHO CONTESTED, IN PICTURESQUE SETTINGS JUST OUTSIDE ZAGREB, THE FINALS OF THE UEFA REGIONS' CUP.

With respect to coaching, the competition presents special challenges. The starting grid featured 43 regional sides, with 20-man squads containing players from a large number of different teams, many of them spread over a wide geographical area. For example, the Castilla y León squad which emerged as winners of the competition were selected from as many as nine Spanish provinces. In training-ground terms, the job is com-

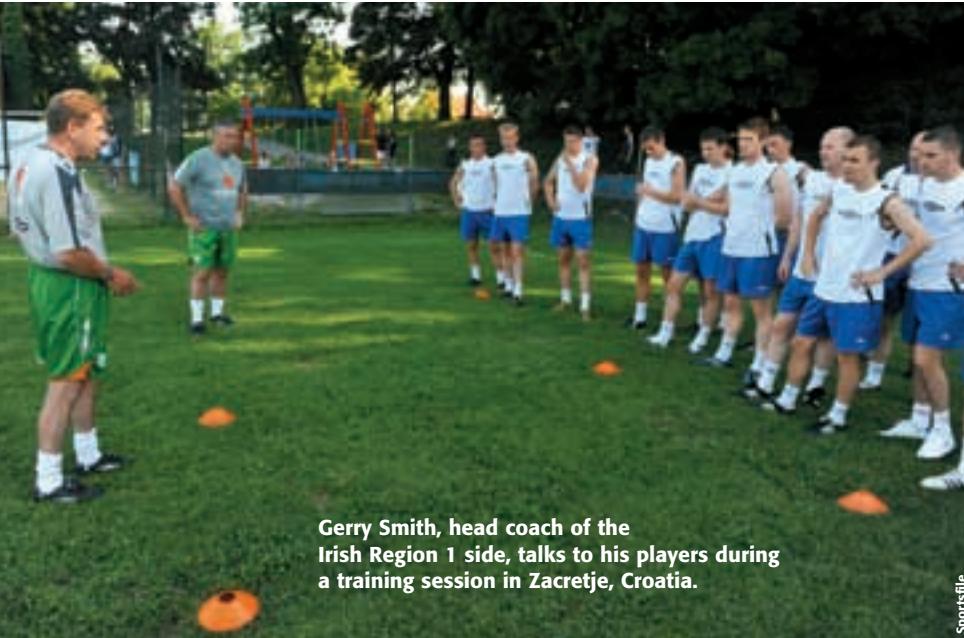
parable to the preparation of a national team in the sense that team-building generally has to be performed in short-duration get-togethers – but with significantly fewer resources available.

Having said that, there were certain 'luxuries'. For instance Javier Yepes, whose title win in Croatia earns him another mention in the roll of honour which appears elsewhere in this issue,

had been able to build his side on the squad fielded in matches played by Spain's autonomous regions. The positional and tactical understanding of his back four (who conceded only one goal at the finals and in qualifying matches) was widely praised during the final tournament. "They were a real family," he commented, "and it has to be said that, in our case, they've been playing together as a unit for the last three years."

Gerry Smith, the head coach of the Irish finalists selected from players in the Leinster and Munster provinces, was able to prepare his side by taking them to a pre-tournament training camp in Portugal (to become acclimatised to the sultry, humid conditions they were likely to encounter – and did – in Croatia) and to play preparation matches against a couple of teams from Italy's Serie C. He was also meticulous in doing as much research as possible on the other finalists – but the general rule in the UEFA Regions' Cup is that opponents tend to be relatively unknown quantities.

Gerry Smith, head coach of the Irish Region 1 side, talks to his players during a training session in Zaretje, Croatia.



Sportsfile

Sorinel Patrascu, head coach of the Romanian side which narrowly lost the final to the Spaniards, also enjoyed support from his national association in the form

**SORINEL PATRASCU, HEAD COACH
OF SILVER MEDALLISTS OLTEANIA POINTS HIS
PLAYERS IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.**



of Florin Halagian, one of the 'gurus' among Romania's coaching fraternity, who travelled to the finals as technical advisor.

However, it has to be said that there were subtractions as well as additions. Francis Jadoule, for example, had brought the Kempen team, culled from the Antwerp and Limburg areas, through the qualifying rounds in tandem with Stanny Meskens who, unfortunately, couldn't take time out to travel to Croatia. Zagreb coach Sreten Cuk had to make do without his top scorer Igor Hajduk, who'd just moved to a new job and was also unable to take time off. In other words, there were certain problems which the Marcello Lippis of this world don't usually encounter...

On the other hand, there are no Lippi-level pressures to contend with. At the finals, conviviality was the name of the game, with players and coaches more than willing to convert the tournament into a memorable social gathering. On a slightly more formal level, there were two round-table discussion sessions involving the coaches and members of UEFA's admin team at the event, aimed at debating the competition in particular and regional amateur football in general.

But, on the pitch, the football was highly competitive – as Erich Rutemöller (another coaching and coach education 'guru' during a lengthy career at the German FA) can testify. "I have to say from the start," he reported, "that the tournament was excellently organised by UEFA and the Croatian hosts. The matches were played in superb conditions in terms of stadiums, pitches, dressing rooms, safety, player liaison and support. I also have to say that, in the matches I saw, the refereeing performances were flawless."

UEFA's philosophy is that the Regions' Cup should be an amateur tournament staged at professional standards. As Erich commented, the same could be applied to the coaching. "The level was remark-

able. All the teams were very well prepared and went into their matches with great – but not excessive – ambition and determination. Games were played with great tactical discipline and, overall, there was an impressive balance between defensive and attacking qualities. The most popular basic formation was a flexible 4-4-2 with well-drilled flat back fours, rational zonal distributions in midfield, and support from deep for the two attackers. There was a nice variety of playing styles



Despite the desperate challenge by Oltenia defender Ionut Stoica, Antonio Ramírez shoots Castilla y León ahead during the final in Zapresic.

and philosophies. Some exploited more direct attacking with long and diagonal passing. But the general desire was to move the ball around the park with fast short-passing combinations. This was particularly the case with the Romanian and Spanish teams, whose technical competence quickly marked them as favourites and who made it to the final. The Spaniards, especially, seemed to draw inspiration from their EURO 2008 side and deservedly won the tournament."

"I can only have words of commendation for the coaches," he added. "They had evidently prepared their teams well, they were good at the tactical structuring of their games, and they successfully adapted to specific match situations. Apart from their footballing skills, the players demonstrated good overall fitness levels – not easy for the finalists to

play four games in eight days – and, both on and off the pitch, you could sense their pleasure and pride at participating in a European tournament."

As the Bratislava coach, Lubomir Bohun, remarked "watching players who want to enjoy the game and play attractive football is tremendously positive and made the finals a huge experience for everyone." At the same time, there was a 'serious' undertone

to the general happiness of the event. Quite a few scouts were among those who turned out to watch games – and the Belgian representatives' coach, Francis Jadoule, could understand why. "It gives us all a chance to have a look at players at the Under-26 level who might have been good enough to earn a professional contract but who, for some reason – maybe education, choice of occupation or simply cases of slipping through the net – found themselves at lower level!"

The UEFA Regions' Cup, launched just before the turn of the century as a successor to the amateur competitions of the 1960s and 1970s, not only provides a showcase for 'near-professional' players but also offers an opportunity to recognise the work of all the highly competent coaches currently in the amateur game.



**THE GERMAN UNDER-17 TEAM
CELEBRATES A DRAMATIC EXTRA-TIME
VICTORY OVER THE NETHERLANDS
IN THIS YEAR'S EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP
FINAL IN MAGDEBURG.**

NEW KIDS AND OLDER KIDS

A YEAR AGO THE LIST OF TITLE WINNERS WAS LABELLED 'AN ODE TO EXPERIENCE' WITH LUÍS ARAGONÉS (70), JUAN SANTISTEBAN (71), SIR ALEX FERGUSON (66) AND DICK ADVOCAT (60) STRIKING GOLD IN CLUB AND NATIONAL TEAM COMPETITIONS. THE 2008/09 SEASON INDICATED THAT THE EXPERIENCED CAMPAIGNERS ARE BEING CHALLENGED BY SOME RELATIVELY NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK.

The final in Rome was Josep Guardiola's 13th UEFA Champions League match on the FC Barcelona bench – the small matter of 140 fewer than his opponent on the night, Sir Alex Ferguson. Emulating his much-admired colleague by winning the league, cup and European treble which United had achieved a decade earlier allowed

38-year-old 'Pep', in his first season of coaching at senior level, to illustrate a picturesque Spanish phrase traditionally applied to successful newcomers: 'arriving and kissing the saint'. A German version could serve as a citation for Marco Pezzaioli another newcomer who, at 40, led the Under-17s to their first European title, while his compatriot Martina Voss, just a few months older, was on the bench when FCR 2001 Duisburg won the last edition of the UEFA Women's Cup, now to be reborn as the UEFA Women's Champions League.

But it would be wrong to suggest that the voice of experience is not still being heard loud and clear. Mircea Lucescu, 63, masterminded FC Shakhtar Donetsk's run to the first European victory for a club from the independent Ukraine (following in the footsteps of Valeri Lobanovskyi's FC Dynamo Kyiv sides of the 1970s and 1980s). But maybe the most heartwarming image was revealed before a much smaller audience when Javier Yépes led a side from Castilla y León to victory in the UEFA Regions' Cup final – his last match in a 45-year career at amateur levels. "I said it would be a dream to win this tournament," he said after the final in Croatia, "and the dream is reality. It's a great



PA Wire/PA Images

Mircea Lucescu oozes satisfaction and pride after leading FC Shakhtar Donetsk to a historic win for Ukraine in the last edition of the UEFA Cup.

way to end my career after so many years of coaching in amateur football – a wonderful way to say goodbye and retire as a satisfied man." Javier, it's good to see you on this season's roll of honour.

UEFA Champions League

in Rome

FC Barcelona

v Manchester United FC 2-0

Gold: Josep Guardiola

Silver: Sir Alex Ferguson

UEFA Cup

in Istanbul

FC Shakhtar Donetsk

v Werder Bremen 2-1 after extra time

Gold: Mircea Lucescu

Silver: Thomas Schaaf

UEFA Women's Cup

FCR 2001 Duisburg v Zvezda-2005

7-1 on aggregate

(6-0 in Kazan; 1-1 in Duisburg)

Gold: Martina Voss

Silver: Aleksandr Grigoryan / Stanislav Kharitonov

UEFA Regions' Cup

in Croatia

Castilla y León (Spain)

v Oltenia (Romania) 2-1

Gold: Javier Yépes

Silver: Sorin Patrascu

European Under-21 Championship

in Sweden

Germany v England 4-0

Gold: Horst Hrubesch

Silver: Stuart Pearce

European Under-17 Championship

in Germany

Germany v Netherlands

2-1 after extra time

Gold: Marco Pezzaioli

Silver: Albert Stuivenberg

European Women's Under-17 Championship

in Switzerland

Germany v Spain 7-0

Gold: Ralf Peter

Silver: Angel Vilda



TRAINING ROUTINE

BY JÖRGEN LENNARTSSON
Under-21 Coach, Sweden

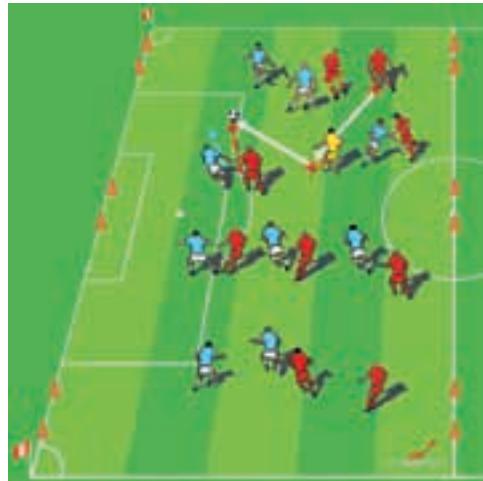
Position-related Possession Training

Aim

- To develop the quality of possession play with the players in their normal positions and roles.

Numbers

- 9 v 9 (4-3-2) + 1 central midfielder who belongs to the team in possession.



Area

- Half field.

Rules

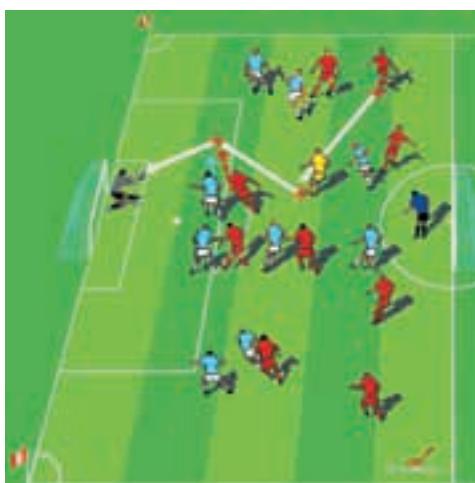
- The teams try to keep the ball and to work on their possession play.
- When they get a good opportunity for attack, they can score in any of the three small goals. You cannot score from further than five metres away.
- If there is not a good opportunity to score, keep possession.
- Maximum two or three touches.
- Variation – only ball on the ground.

Coaching Points

- Fast, accurate passes
 - Quality pass with speed
- Communication – spoken and body language
- Variation between long and short passes
- Patience if necessary
- Work with your own patterns between players, for example:
 - Building up from behind
 - Cooperation of strikers
 - Cooperation of fullbacks and wingers
 - Combination of players; how you want them to pass and move together

Development

- With normal goals and goalkeepers instead of small goals
- Offside only in last 16 metres
- This progression gives you more opportunity to coach your way of attacking, with possession and pattern.



Pavel Pogrebnyak heads FC Zenit 1-0 up against Manchester United in last year's UEFA Super Cup which, this time round, pits FC Barcelona against FC Shakhtar Donetsk.

AGENDA

2009

23 August – 10 September

- Women's EURO 2009 (Finland)

28 August

- UEFA Super Cup (Monaco)

3/4 September

- 11th Elite Club Coaches Forum (Nyon)

21 – 23 September

- 8th UEFA Workshop for Coach Educations Directors (Athens)

30 November – 2 December

- UEFA Workshop for Women's National Coaches (Nyon)



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européennes de football

