



Union des associations européennes de football



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## ***European Club Forum meets in Barcelona***

### **UEFA confirms no change to implementation of UEFA Club Licensing System**

The Palacio de Congresos in Barcelona is the scenario for a two-day meeting of UEFA's European Club Forum during which the main items on the agenda for representatives from a hundred clubs are the implementation of UEFA's Club Licensing System, the proposals to reform the UEFA Cup and issues related to national team football.

"It is a pleasure to be in Barcelona," commented UEFA's Chief Executive, Lars-Christer Olsson, "and to meet the clubs in a positive and constructive atmosphere. It is also gratifying to see that the clubs recognise the need to introduce the Licensing System as soon as possible. Clubs should therefore be planning urgently to fulfil the necessary requirements to be granted a licence."

The Club Licensing System was the leading item on the agenda for the Monday afternoon session. UEFA confirmed that it will be implemented as from the 2004-05 season. In order for a club to be admitted to any of the UEFA club competitions, minimum standards in areas including sporting; infrastructure; personnel and administration; legal; and finance must be fulfilled.

With regard to financial criteria, UEFA confirmed to the clubs that for the 2004-05 season, they must prepare an annual statement for the financial year 2003, to be audited by independent and qualified auditors and that they must prove not to have any overdue payables towards other clubs with regard to transfer activities, nor any overdue payables towards their employees. Contrary to recent media reports in France, the financial criteria will be introduced as planned, as from the 2004-05 season.

The European Club Forum also opened debate on detailed propositions for the UEFA Cup, based on unanimous agreement that the time has come to re-brand the competition. Marketing questions need to be examined in detail in order to make concrete proposals to UEFA's Executive Committee and discussions will continue during the Tuesday session.

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