

THE TECHNICIAN

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the best!**

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**NEWSLETTER
FOR
COACHES**

**No. 26
NOVEMBER 2004**



BONGARTS

**FOLLOWING ON FROM HIS
WORLD CUP VICTORY WITH
BRAZIL, LUIZ FELIPE SCOLARI
REACHED THE FINAL OF
EURO 2004 WITH PORTUGAL.**



EMPICS

**MARKUS MERK
AND HIS REFEREE
COLLEAGUES
WERE EQUAL TO
THE TASK.**



COVER

● Otto Rehhagel knew how to get the best out of his team and led them to an unexpected title.

(PHOTO: AFP/POLAN)

IMPRESSUM

PRODUCTION

André Vieli
Atema Communication SA
Printed by Cavin SA

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**WAYNE ROONEY
MADE AN AMAZING DEBUT
ON THE EURO
STAGE BEFORE SUSTAINING
AN INJURY AGAINST
PORTUGAL.**

AFP/MARIT

Simply The Best

EDITORIAL

BY ANDY ROXBURGH,
UEFA TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

In the aftermath of EURO 2004 in Portugal, UEFA's CEO, Lars-Christer Olsson, declared: "This was the best European Championship ever." This was an informed opinion which was supported by many in the game, including Europe's leading coaches. But what made the event such a success? Fundamentally, ten key elements contributed to the excellent outcome:

- 1. A Wonderful Environment.** The quality of the stadiums, the weather, the behaviour of the supporters at the games, and the wonderful attitude of the Portuguese people, provided ideal conditions for the teams. The participating coaches were fulsome in their praise for the host country.
- 2. Public Interest.** Most matches were sold out (96% of all tickets were sold) and the atmosphere at most games was fantastic. In addition, the TV audience figures were remarkable. The global figures went into billions – 121 million watched the final, and 120 million saw France v England.
- 3. Intense Competition.** Pre-tournament, 50% of the teams were viewed as contenders for the title – Greece, the eventual champions, were not included in this group. As the competition came to a close, Gérard Houllier, the former Liverpool manager and a member of the UEFA Technical Team at EURO 2004, offered his view that "the European Championship is harder to win than the World Cup because at EURO there are no easy games and the general level is very high."

- 4. No Doping.** There were no positive doping cases and the testing arrangements, which included out-of-competition testing, were praised by the participants and by external experts.
- 5. Fair Play.** Markus Merk, the referee of the EURO 2004 final, complimented the players and the coaches in the tournament on their behaviour. Yes, there were a couple of disciplinary cases, but not for violence. In addition, only nine injuries were the result of foul play – the worst injury being suffered by the player who committed the foul.
- 6. Good Refereeing.** In general, the standard of refereeing was good. UEFA's policy of appointing refereeing teams and only choosing the best was a big success.
- 7. Some Surprises.** Greece winning the title and the big five nations going out before the semi-finals was unexpected. The Greek success will no doubt be an inspiration to other nations which see themselves as the underdog. It was also good to see a few young talents blossom on the EURO stage – Wayne Rooney of England, Cristiano Ronaldo of Portugal and Arjen Robben of the Netherlands, to name but three.
- 8. Quality Coaching.** Otto Rehhagel 'squeezed the lemon dry' to get the best out of his squad, and Luiz Felipe Scolari, the World Champion with Brazil, cleverly guided the host team to the silver medal. Incidentally, following Portugal 2004, 50% of the national coaches were no longer in their job – this despite the high standard of coaching.
- 9. Spectacle and Drama.** The marriage of speed and skill at EURO produced many high-tempo games (particularly those played in the evening) and some enthralling, top-class matches – for example, England v France, Czech Republic v Netherlands and England v Portugal.

- 10. Identity and Variety.** In an era when the top clubs have become multi-national teams, the national sides have become even more important in representing a country's culture and style of football. The different philosophies and mentalities seen during EURO 2004 reflected the national schools of football, and provided a fascinating variety of styles and approaches to the game.

EURO 2004 raised the status and value of national team football. Many contributed to the success – supporters, players, referees, coaches, media, organisers and officials. However, there was some concern that a few top players did not perform to their potential due to 'burnout' – physically or mentally, or both. This is an area which must be addressed because the best events should have the best players, in the best form and in the best condition. It is a question of R&R (recovery and regeneration), and that needs time. Yes, in many aspects, EURO 2004 was great, but the big question is: can we make the next one even better?



Cristiano Ronaldo, one of the young talents of EURO 2004.

INTERVIEW

BY ANDY ROXBURGH,
UEFA TECHNICAL DIRECTOR



AFTER A PLAYING CAREER WHICH INCLUDED A FRENCH CHAMPIONSHIP TITLE WITH RC STRASBOURG, ARSÈNE WENGER ENTERED THE COACHING PROFESSION AND WENT ON TO BECOME ONE OF THE GAME'S TOP TECHNICIANS. HE WAS VOTED MANAGER OF THE YEAR IN FRANCE, JAPAN AND ENGLAND, AND WAS AWARDED UEFA'S FAIR PLAY AWARD IN 1999. WITH AS MONACO HE WON THE CUP AND THE CHAMPIONSHIP; WITH GRAMPUS EIGHT NAGOYA HE LIFTED THE EMPEROR'S CUP AND JAPANESE SUPER CUP; AND WITH ARSENAL FC HE HAS EARNED THREE ENGLISH CUP WINNERS' MEDALS AND THREE ENGLISH PREMIERSHIP TITLES. ARSÈNE IS A TOP COACH, A GREAT THINKER ABOUT THE GAME, AND A WONDERFUL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE FRENCH COACHING SYSTEM. LIKE HIS STAR PLAYER THIERRY HENRY, HE HAS STYLE AND A GIFT FOR SIMPLIFYING THE GAME. AS THE HEAD COACH OF ARSENAL FC, HIS NAME IS SYNONYMOUS WITH QUALITY AND SUCCESS. HE IS...

ARSÈNE WENGER

1 • Arsène, you have recently beaten the record for the number of unbeaten games in the English championship – what has that meant to you?

Well, I'm very proud of it – the most difficult thing at the top level is to be consistent. I believe this has shown our spirit and attitude towards the game – happiness about playing football. You cannot achieve this by just wanting to win and having a war every week; you can only achieve it if the players enjoy playing. Therefore, I'm very happy that our players have that kind of feeling. You make a small step, then another, but when you look backwards you are amazed by what you have done. Two years ago, I said I wanted to go a season unbeaten – people said I was crazy. But we'll never know to what extent that sowed a seed in the brains of the team. The psychological element is very important.

2 • As a coach at the top of your profession, what motivates you to face the demanding challenges of managing and coaching a club like Arsenal FC?

I think it is to do with my love of the game, a love of winning and a hate of losing as well. When you enter a new season, you must love the game and want to share with the players a certain way of life, a way of seeing football. It is a strong experience to play football when you are a child, and when you have such an emotional experience you want to repeat it again and again. Sometimes you lose that joy in the professional game and you must try to get it into the hearts of the players. Sharing a passion for the game with the players is what motivates me.

3 • You have a great 'eye' for a player – what do you like to see in a young player?

Motivation and intelligence are the two main elements, because I believe you need minimal intelligence (do you know why you make a mistake?), and a desire to become better. The talent aspect is not enough, because what makes a career depends on how much you want to be somebody, and are you intelligent enough to understand what you can do with the talent you have? If you look around you, you will see that most top players are intelligent – they have to be because it is not easy to manage a career. Ideally you want to have a player who has everything. Our game at Arsenal is based on technique and movement – that means I look at the pace of the player and his technical level. These elements don't always go with power or physical commitment, but we want

**ARSÈNE WENGER
LISTENS TO WHAT THIERRY
HENRY HAS TO SAY.**



our game to be very mobile and very fast, therefore we need a good technique and to be able to move quickly. Of course, you want power and physical presence, but the priorities for me are pace and technique.

4 • How has the training process changed since you started as a professional coach?

It has changed tremendously. I remember a time when we were alone on the pitch. Today we have a staff around us, and this group is becoming bigger and bigger every day. The scientific approach to the team game has changed considerably, and that has had a tremendous effect. I don't think there is a successful manager in the game today who does not have a good support team around him. That means not only competent, but united. It is vital to have a unified team around you that can cope with all sorts of problems.

5 • Do you supervise the training or take the coaching session yourself?

Every day I am on the pitch coaching. I don't do the warm-ups, for example, but I coach the heart of the session. I grew up with my team alone and that is what I enjoy most, being on the pitch with my team. The satisfaction of my day is knowing that we did a good training session and the players enjoyed it – it is what I enjoy most in my daily life as a coach.

6 • What difficulties have you faced in blending together so many stars, particularly when they come from such diverse backgrounds (i.e. countries, cultures, languages, etc)?

The biggest difficulty is the communication within the group. When you have people who speak ten different languages in the dressing room it is very difficult to get them to speak together, apart from being very polite.



**ANDY ROXBURGH
PRESENTS A SET
OF UEFA COMPETITION
MEDALS TO
ARSÈNE WENGER.**

A group that doesn't communicate together has a very low dynamic. We make a lot of effort to get them to speak English, to talk together, and to have a real conversation – it is a modern problem. Before, you had a common culture because the players came from the same country. Now we have to create a culture within the club – to identify who we want to be. We tell them how we want to be perceived, how we must behave. You have to develop a mini culture and to get the players to identify with it.

7 • Why is it important for you to be calm on the bench?

I believe we have a job to do and not to jump around like a clown. When I was younger and I saw myself on TV, I thought I had no credit when I acted with such emotion. The job is so emotional and intense that sometimes we lose all sense of rationality, and then it affects our ability to analyse. We have to make a big effort to calm down. I must say I have managed that better since I have become more experienced. And I must say, it also depends on how much pressure you are under. I keep reminding myself about the need to keep calm. I even check my mental

state before a game, and prepare myself to cope with the particular situation.

8 • You often emphasise the mental strength of your team – is this a matter of selection or training?

Mental strength is something that certain players have, and you need four or five like that in your team to be successful. The one who never gives up and who can pull the others along with him. The younger they are, the less they are mentally strong, and so the balance in the team depends on some strong, experienced pros. We lost some experienced players recently, and although we still have great quality in the team, we need to see how these younger players will react when things go wrong.

9 • How would you describe your style of management in the dressing room and on the training pitch?

I make my decisions without consulting too much. My management style is based on respect for people, and belief in players – I have an optimistic view of human beings. I tell the players that I believe in their ability to do the job for me. If you are negative, you become more aggressive. If you look at people who are successful in management,

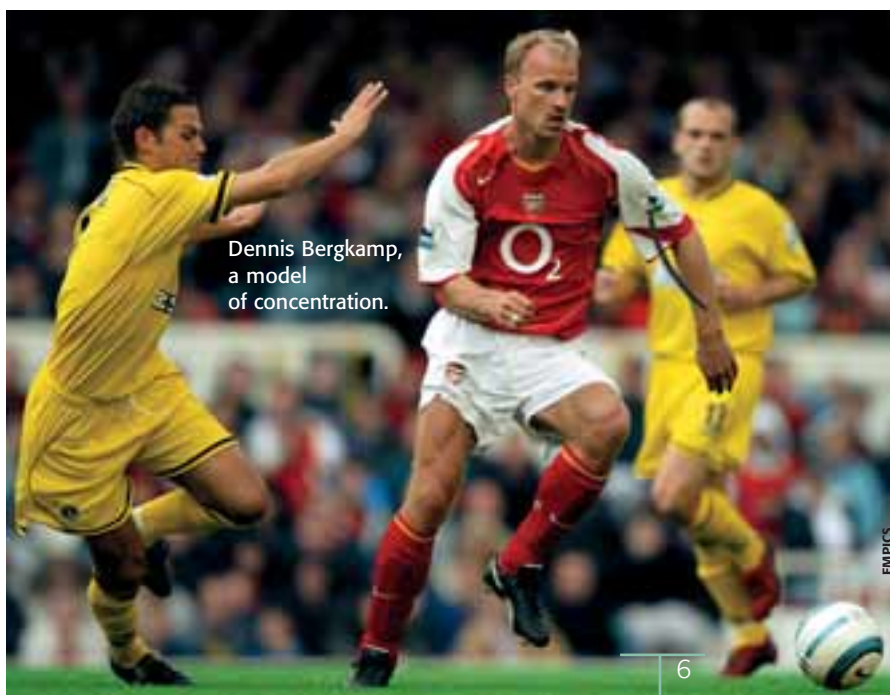
they are usually happy people – being an optimist is an important part of a manager's success. It is a self-fulfilling prophecy – you believe in people and they try to prove their worth to you.

10 • Do you have certain coaching principles that you refuse to compromise?

Many. I am always ready to defend players who have good commitment and attitude, but I cannot forgive those who don't love the game; there are a few of them in football today. There are two kinds of jobs now in top-level professional football: there are those who want to be winners and achieve everything; and there are those who live off football, who don't love the game enough, and give no credit to football. With people who don't respect the game, I don't compromise. For me, it is not forgivable if you don't practise properly (concentration is a must), or don't respect things like time-keeping. I am lucky as I have players like Dennis Bergkamp, 35 years old, who for nine years has never given anything less than full concentration. He provides a wonderful example to younger players. The principle of respect in the game is important – when you have to give the pass, you give the pass. Don't allow your ego as a player to get in the way of the game – that's something very important to me.

11 • You have worked in Japan, France and England – what are the major differences?

Culturally, they are very different. You get things easier in Japan than in France. But there are many common denominators. A child who grows up in Japan loves the ball as much as a child in France. To find that pleasure when you travel all over the world is something that, for me, is magical. That is why football is so successful all over the world. I try to give back that youthful joy to the players in training. If you give



Dennis Bergkamp, a model of concentration.

**ARSÈNE WENGER
CELEBRATES
ARSENAL'S CUP/
LEAGUE DOUBLE
IN 2002.**



Barcelona could be interesting to watch because of the quality of the players at their disposal.

14 • If you could change something in today's football, what would it be?

I am disturbed by the number of managers who lose their jobs despite putting their heart and soul into the game. I would ask those in authority to show a little more patience. Maybe there could be a transfer window for coaches, and not just for players.

15 • Who were the biggest influences on you as a developing coach?

I had one quality when I was younger – I always listened to people who had experience. I have been taught a lot by people who were knowledgeable about the game – people with intelligence and a willingness to help. It is not possible to be a player one day and become a coach the next – there needs to be a transition period. When you play, the game is all about you, when you coach it is about everyone else but you. It takes time to change mentality and to learn the coaching job.

16 • How do you see the game evolving in the next ten years or so?

Of course, the game has become faster, more technical and will continue to do so. But if you look back 10 or 20 years, I believe those in charge of our game have done a great job. Games are more offensive, there is greater protection for those who want to play, and things are fairer. I hope that the football bodies can maintain that kind of positive evolution, so that the game becomes even more attractive. The interest in football throughout the world today is the result of the decisions made by football leaders. It is the responsibility of those in power, and those with influence and experience, to take the game forward, to make it even more skilful and enjoyable in the next 10 to 20 years.

the players the possibility to express themselves, like when they were kids, they become happy, and they play. In Japan, they love the movement – they have a culture of looking for the perfect action. The Japanese will practise and practise, endlessly looking for the 'clean' movement. In England and France, it is more about commitment and challenge, and more about fighting, although in France there is a greater focus on technique than in England.

12 • How can the relationship between the clubs and the national teams be improved?

It is a problem that grows every year. The football bodies have to sit together to discuss this before it becomes a major crisis. At the end of the day, we are all happy if football in the world is respected and loved. There is a unity in football today, but if there was a split in the camps, it would harm the game, and FIFA and UEFA need to intervene before that happens. We need to sit together to sort out the problems that

face the clubs and the national teams. With too many games the quality will deteriorate. For example, with the national teams there are too many games in the groups, and the quality is affected. What is interesting is that the national teams still attract a huge TV audience, particularly when the matches are important. I don't want us to change that, but we need to find a compromise that produces more attractive games for the national teams and more rest for the players.

13 • Apart from Arsenal, which teams (clubs or national) have impressed you in recent years? Why?

Manchester United impressed me during my early years in English football – I loved the type of game that they played, with their offensive attitude. Looking further back, I loved Mönchengladbach in the 70s, and AC Milan in the 80s when they had their big team - although I think Milan have also played attractive football in recent years. If I had to look ahead to the rest of this season, I think



EMPICS/BUZZI

**MARCELLO LIPPI
IS CONCERNED TO SEE
SO MANY TOP PLAYERS
RETIRING FROM
NATIONAL TEAM FOOTBALL.**

STRAIGHT TALKING BY TOP COACHES

IN THEORY, THE SUMMER MONTHS GIVE TECHNICIANS A CHANCE TO STOP AND THINK – OR, ALTERNATIVELY, TO SWITCH BRIEFLY TO NON-FOOTBALLING WAVELENGTHS. BUT THE SUMMER OF 2004 NOT ONLY PROVED THAT THE ‘CLOSE SEASON’ BARELY EXISTS IN THE MODERN GAME BUT ALSO PROVIDED AN ABUNDANCE OF FOOD FOR THOUGHT, WITH ‘UNDERDOGS’ OCCUPYING THE PODIUM AT BOTH CLUB AND NATIONAL TEAM LEVELS.



UEFA

The elite club coaches in Nyon. Standing, left to right: Arsène Wenger (Arsenal FC), Javier Irureta (Deportivo La Coruña), Felix Magath (Bayern Munich), Vahid Halilhodzic (Paris St-Germain), Paul Le Guen (Olympique Lyonnais), José Mourinho (Chelsea FC), Andy Roxburgh (UEFA Technical Director). Front: Gérard Houllier (UEFA Technical Study Group), Fabio Capello (Juventus), Sir Alex Ferguson (Manchester United), Lars-Christer Olsson (UEFA Chief Executive), Carlo Ancelotti (AC Milan) and Claudio Ranieri (Valencia CF).

As mentioned elsewhere in *'uefadirect'*, one of the proposals to emerge from the 6th UEFA Conference for National Coaches was to unite club and national team coaches under a single UEFA umbrella. The idea is certainly seductive. But practicality is another matter. During September, the technicians from the top clubs met in Nyon for the

Elite Coaches Forum during a week when a significant percentage of their players were away on national team duty. And the national team coaches and technical directors met in Stockholm during a week when a vast majority of European countries were engaged in full programmes of midweek league and cup fixtures.

One could also argue that the two groups were running on different tracks, with the club coaches focusing on a review of the 2003/04 UEFA club competitions and the national team technicians drawing conclusions from EURO 2004. However, the two events confirmed that the two groups tread a great deal of common ground and are keen to address a number of shared preoccupations, such as:

Time, gentlemen, please

The UEFA Champions League coaches would welcome any move towards allowing them more preparation time for big matches. In a similar vein, the national team coaches asked for more preparation time before the major international tournaments.

In Stockholm, Marcello Lippi, who has just made the switch from club to national team, expressed his regret that an increasing number of players are 'resigning' from national teams at



**ZINEDINE ZIDANE –
AN ARTIST WHO WILL
BE SORELY
MISSED BY FRENCH
SUPPORTERS.**

The last-ever Silver Goal was scored in the EURO 2004 semi-final between Greece and the Czech Republic.

around 30. "I can understand that they might want to spend time with their families," he commented, "but it's a shame that the fans are deprived from seeing footballers like Zinedine Zidane, who are a joy to watch and an example for the younger generations. I think the time has come to examine workloads and maybe re-define their roles so that national team football doesn't become a 'burden' for them."

Should extra-time goals count double?

Question: Last season, with the Silver Goal ruling in force, regulations stipulated that away goals scored during extra time would not count double. Following the International Board's decision to abolish the Silver Goal and return to a full 30 minutes of extra time, regulations have also reverted to the previous situation where extra time away goals do count double. Is this correct?

Answer: A large majority of club coaches feel that, if two teams have



FLASH PRESS

**TACKLES
CONSIDERED AS VIOLENT
WILL STILL RESULT
IN A RED CARD FOR THE
LAST DEFENDER.**

been equal for 180 minutes, they should also be on equal terms during extra time. The national team coaches (faced with the same situation in play-off ties) also voted for away goals not to be given double value during extra time.

Red card and penalty

Question: Is a red card and a penalty too harsh a punishment for situations where the 'last defender' thwarts a clear scoring opportunity with a foul in the penalty area?

Answer: Yes! There was unanimous feeling that the penalty restored the goalscoring opportunity to the attacking side and that the dismissal and subsequent suspension of the offender represent an excessively severe punishment for the crime. A penalty and yellow card would therefore be sufficient. However, the red card would

be maintained for similar offences outside the penalty area and for deliberate handball in the area.

Passive offside

This was, once again, a major concern for the coaches in Nyon and Stockholm, who felt that even though explanatory video tapes of how referees were being instructed to interpret the rule had been helpful prior to EURO 2004, the concept of passive offside continued to generate doubts and uncertainty. More worryingly, the coaches felt there could be negative effects on the game.

The ruling was introduced with the laudable objective of preventing – to express it in its most simplistic form – a right-wing attacking move being ruined by a left-wing offside. But the 2003/04 club competitions and

EURO 2004 provided evidence that players and teams are beginning to exploit the 'loophole' which has been opened up by the interpretation of the law. The most striking examples were based on maintaining a player in a central offside position while play was being directed to the flanks. The problem for the technician is finding the antidote to this play. The fear expressed by some coaches is that there could be a trend towards the 'safety-first' solution of defending closer to the goal. Reluctance to push the defensive line forward would mean that the block would remain further back. In other words, there is a risk that exploitation of the passive offside rule will lead to more defensive football.

Top level, top marks

But, while both groups of coaches were keen to offer suggestions for the fine-tuning of the game, they were equally keen to express satisfaction with what they had seen during the 2003/04 campaign. The increased knock-out component had, as predicted, sown the seeds for surprises in the UEFA club competitions – and the 'romance' of the competition had provoked a massive response among the public.

EURO 2004, the coaches in Stockholm felt, had been a tremendous advertisement for national team football and there was a vote of thanks to the Portuguese public for their immense contribution to the success of the event. At the same time, massive TV viewing figures underlined the popularity of national team football. As Marcello Lippi commented, "the expression of a country's football is its national team, as the



BONGARTS

The Portuguese people contributed enormously to the success of EURO 2004.

**GIFTS FOR LUIZ FELIPE
SCOLARI AND OTTO REHHAGEL
AT THE CONFERENCE
IN STOCKHOLM TO MARK
THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS.**



BOZZANI



SABATINI

The goal scored by Angelos Charisteas for Greece in the EURO 2004 final.

top clubs no longer represent national identities in the way they used to."

Arsène Wenger, quite pessimistic about the future of national team football at one stage, was reassured by what he saw in Portugal and the way that the status of national team football was raised. "The supporters really underlined the value of their national teams, so what we have to do now is to make sure that clubs and countries can co-habit in the best way possible. Now is the moment to find the best possible solutions."

In the search for optimal solutions, some national team coaches expressed their malaise about players taking part in two major tournaments during the

same summer, feeling that participation in EURO 2004 or the Copa América followed by a long spell at the Olympic Games could represent an overload.

At the same time, the national team coaches admitted that the passion which surrounds national team football has been translated into even greater pressure. Even though the Stockholm conference took place barely eleven weeks after the Lisbon final, half of the 16 finalists had, for one reason or another, parted company with their coach. The ability to withstand intense pressure and negative comments – expressed by the public, ex-players and even other coaches via the media – has now become a basic require-

ment for national team coaches and, as Otto Rehhagel remarked, "respect and fair play within our own profession are more important than ever. During my career, if I have had to say anything about other coaches, I have tried to say something positive. We are lonesome cowboys and we know that if we win, we are surrounded by friends, but if we lose, we don't have any. That's why we should always be prepared to help each other."

The intensity and ferocity of the pressures mean that the position of national team coach is becoming an increasingly short-term occupation. But, as Sven-Göran Eriksson said, "I wouldn't stay in the job if I didn't enjoy it so much."



**ARMANDO UFARTE,
COACH OF SPAIN'S MEN'S
UNDER-19 TEAM.**

UEFA

PASO DOBLE

IN THE YEAR WHEN UEFA CELEBRATES ITS 50TH BIRTHDAY, ONE MIGHT BE EXCUSED FOR ASSUMING THAT EVERY CONCEIVABLE 'DOUBLE' HAD ALREADY BEEN ACHIEVED. BUT, IN AUGUST, SPAIN WENT INTO THE RECORDS BY DANCING A UNIQUE 'PASO DOBLE' IN THE UNDER-19 CHAMPIONSHIPS, TAKING THE MEN'S TITLE IN SWITZERLAND AND, 16 DAYS LATER, LIFTING THE WOMEN'S TROPHY IN FINLAND. IRONICALLY, THE SPANISH BOYS HAD PREVENTED THE GERMANS FROM COMPLETING THE DOUBLE BY BEATING THEM IN THE 2002 FINAL.

In the male game, Spain is an established power at youth level and, although the third European crown was the first for Armando Ufarte, he explains "this was really a triumph for continuity because I've been working with Juan Santisteban and the other coaches at the federation for seven years and maintaining our policy of searching for talent on a regional basis and then starting to nurture it from the Under-15 level."

So the real eyebrow-raiser was the 2-1 victory for Ignacio 'Nacho' Quereda's Spanish girls against a German team that had, en route to the Under-19 women's final, scored 23 goals in four games and had conceded none. "I think it was a watershed result," Nacho reflects. "A turning point. It will help to promote and develop women's football in Spain where, at the moment, we have only 1,900 registered players

at Under-19 level and something like 11,000 in all. Fortunately, our president, Angel Villar, has been a staunch supporter of the women's game and, for example, I was given the green light to get the girls into training camp in Galicia a month before the tournament started. It was crucial tactically and it also helped to forge a group."

From the technician's standpoint, one of the salient features is that both teams faced, in the final, opponents they had met days earlier in the group phase of the competition. "In the first match," Armando Ufarte recalls, "our boys had looked very comfortable against Turkey – and we probably deserved more than a 3-2 win. But when you meet again, it's on different terms. As losers, they were more motivated and, whereas we hardly knew each other when the tournament started, they'd had time to study us. I modified the system slightly by bringing in a second striker, but we struggled to break through – in fact it was a late goal by a sub that won it for us."

Nacho Quereda tells a similar but different story – if that doesn't sound



Turkey's Orhan Sam (left) battles with Spain's Victor in the final.

UEFA

**'NACHO' QUEREDA,
COACH OF SPAIN'S WOMEN'S
UNDER-19 TEAM.**



Spain's U-19 women's team celebrate victory.

like a contradiction in terms. After his girls had beaten Switzerland and Finland in the opening two group games "I called them together and discussed the physical and mental demands of a match schedule that could give us five games in 13 days. We agreed to share the workload and I made seven changes for the final group match against Germany." The Spaniards were beaten 7-0.

German football had been commemorating the 50th anniversary of the 1954 World Cup win against a Hungarian side that had defeated them 8-3 in the group phase. Silvia Neid and her girls were able to testify how far the psychological pendulum could swing. "Compared with the Spaniards," Silvia admitted afterwards, "we lacked fire and heart."

"We were extremely motivated," says Nacho Quereda, "and we thought they might be lulled into complacency by the earlier result. I fielded the first-choice team and changed from a 4-4-2 to a 4-3-2-1, which gave us more attacking options and helped us to close down the Germans' supply routes along the flanks. We cut out the diagonal balls into the centre and we operated as a compact block with tight marking, especially on their No. 10, who was a key figure." But after taking the lead, the Spaniards were dealt a psychological blow by conceding an equaliser with the last kick of the first half.

"It was a rebound from a corner," Nacho remembers, "so my message was that the goal had been an accident and that the Germans hadn't been able to play their way through us.

We talked about being more attentive and about the importance of scoring another goal. When the girls went out, I was convinced they had the mental strength and the confidence to win the game. And those qualities were important because, after we'd gone 2-1 up from a free kick, the Germans put us under a lot of pressure. German teams don't exactly give up, do they? But they struggled to find the right response and they were uncomfortable about being so tightly marked and having their approach routes blocked."

The Spanish girls, beaten by the Germans in the 2000 final, produced a stout defence of their lead to take the women's Under-19 crown for the first time and to complete Spain's *paso doble* with a historic flourish.



**THE FRENCH
HAVE A WELL-DEVELOPED
YOUTH PROGRAMME.**



THE WAY AHEAD

NAMES CAN BE MISLEADING. UEFA'S 'GOLDEN JUBILEE YOUTH FOOTBALL CELEBRATION' MIGHT SOUND LIKE A PARTY, BUT IT WAS IN FACT AN OCCASION TO PUT ON THINKING CAPS RATHER THAN PAPER HATS. THE IDEA WAS TO DISCUSS WAYS OF DEVELOPING YOUTH FOOTBALL IN THE FUTURE – AND THAT ENTAILED QUESTIONING CURRENT STRUCTURES AND LOOKING FOR WAYS OF UPGRADING DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES.

First of all, UEFA asked the representatives from all 52 member associations whether the current competition structures met their needs and whether there might be a case for reverting to an Under-18 tournament. However, the response was that the current format offered optimal chances within a progressive structure for youngsters to develop an understanding of international football. There was a call for dates to be rationalised with a view to facilitating the release of players, including a proposal to peg Under-19 fixtures to Under-21 and 'A' international dates.

Youth football has, like the senior game, experienced a sudden burst of activity over the last decade or so, and concerns for the future are focused on environmental elements in addition to the basic ABC of the game itself. All of the guests at the Jubilee celebra-

tion expressed concern about the number of agents on the international youth scene, the role they play, and the way they handle situations crucial to the development of their young 'clients'. The levels of sporting and financial expectations have been raised, with the result that many young players would benefit from 'life-style management' or greater attention to spiritual, rather than material, aspects of the game. This inevitably involves parents (whose expectations have also risen) and 'parental guidance' has, in the view of many participants, become a desirable part of the youth development curriculum.

Going further along the same road, coaching requirements in the future need to embrace specialised guidance in mental and psychological areas as well as on the more traditional

topics, such as physical preparation and medical care. Obviously this will require a greater number of specialised coaches in youth development programmes.

What's more, the shift towards character development as well as skill-education cannot be left to national associations who see the players for a limited number of days per year. Solid, all-round youth programmes will require closer cooperation between officials and coaches and between national associations and clubs, so that joint objectives can be set and, hopefully, attained. More academies – especially in the smaller countries – could be a step in the right direction.

However, the Jubilee guests pinpointed some trends that could have a negative effect on future generations of foot-



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IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE EUROPEAN
UNDER-19 CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL.**

ment time-line, which is not beneficial to the longer-term interests of the players.

However, the Jubilee 'think-tank' didn't focus exclusively on philosophy. Some of the more pragmatic points to be raised included the use of artificial turf for youth matches and tournaments, the size of squads for age-limit tournaments, the standard of refereeing at youth levels, and the desirability of a specialised youth coaching licence. Before they left Nyon, the Jubilee guests had the good grace to thank UEFA for their financial support via schemes such as the HatTrick programme and for their assistance in coach education. A lot may have changed in the past 50 years, but UEFA goes into its second half-century equally determined to safeguard the future of the game by stressing the importance of youth development.

ballers. There was concern about the clubs who recruit too many young players and therefore cannot offer them the ideal framework for progressing and maturing. And youngsters are being lured to foreign countries increasingly early – at ages when there is a serious risk of disrupting their education and their family life as well as their prospects of a successful career. It was a subject of serious debate as to whether the correct antidote should be guidance or legislation, or both.

In this environment, the quality of youth coaching is a crucial factor in the equation – and, with so many financial carrots being dangled in front of their noses, young players now demand quality coaching. At the same time, coaches can be equally keen to get to the top. This can lead to a lack of continuity along the youth develop-

AGENDA 2004

November 3
UEFA Futsal Committee • Nyon

November 8
Medical Committee • Nyon

November 23/24
UEFA Champions League
Matchday 5

November 30
Youth & Amateur Committee • Nyon
Draw U-17 and U-19 • Nyon

December 1
Youth Football Workshop • Nyon

December 7/8
UEFA Champions League
Matchday 6

December 9
Disability Football Panel • Nyon

February 4 – 11 2005
5th UEFA Meridian Cup • Turkey



A trip down memory lane for the Nyon seminar participants.

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