

8.05

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**Germany retain
women's crown**

03

**2006 World Cup
qualifiers**

06

**Call for respect
in UEFA competitions**

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COVER

Germany's Birgit Prinz, named best player in the final, races towards goal. Once again, the Germans won one of the major competitions in women's football, the European Championship.

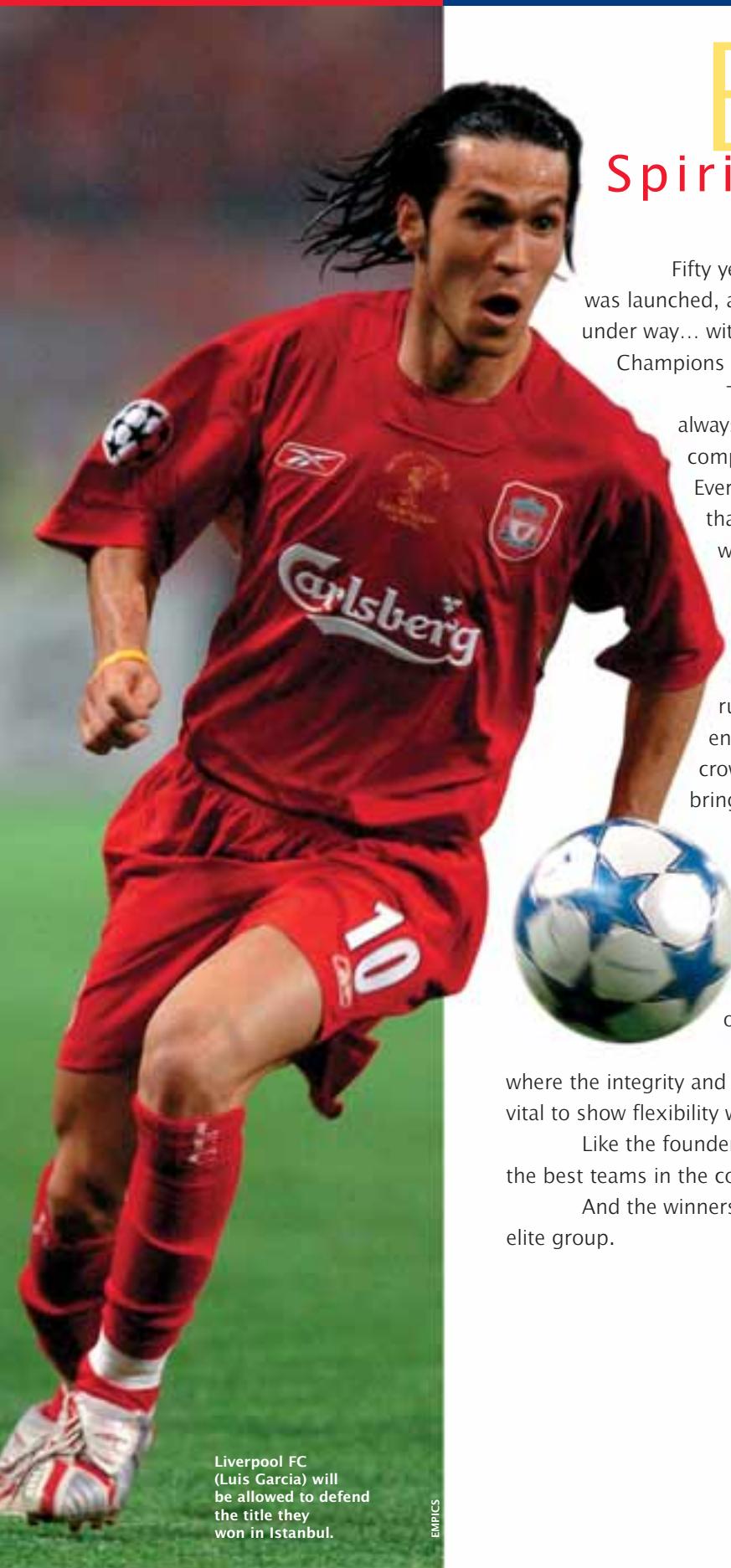
PHOTO: EMPICS

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Editorial

Spirit before the letter

Fifty years after the European Champion Clubs' Cup was launched, a new season of European club competitions is already under way... with Liverpool FC in the qualifying rounds of the UEFA Champions League.

The rulemakers of the UEFA club competitions have always thought that the winners of Europe's most prestigious competition should be allowed to defend their title.

Every previous champion has been given that opportunity and eight clubs – with Real Madrid at the top of the list – have gone on to lift the trophy in two or more consecutive seasons.

This year, a combination of circumstances showed that the rules were not sufficiently stringent to ensure that the reigning champions could defend their crown. We therefore faced a difficult dilemma: should we bring a long tradition to an end or amend the rules a little?



In a season in which we will be celebrating the 50th anniversary of the European club competitions, we chose the second option, while trying to keep any detrimental effect on the other participants to a minimum. Therefore, the rules have been amended in order to ensure that the same situation cannot occur again.

Just as it is important to hold strictly to the rules where the integrity and propriety of the competitions are at stake, it is equally vital to show flexibility when the letter of the law conflicts with its spirit.

Like the founders of the Champion Clubs' Cup 50 years ago, we wanted the best teams in the continent to be involved in the competition.

And the winners of the UEFA Champions League are surely part of that elite group.

*Lars-Christer Olsson
Chief Executive*

WE CARE ABOUT FOOTBALL



European Women's Championship

Germany stay unbeaten



BARKER/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

UNLIKE THE MEN'S EVENT A YEAR AGO, WOMEN'S EURO 2005 WAS RESPECTFUL TOWARDS THE FORM BOOK. GERMANY COMPLETED A QUARTET OF SUCCESSIVE VICTORIES IN A THRILLING FINAL AGAINST NORWAY, ALLOWING THEIR COACH, TINA THEUNE-MEYER, TO 'HANG UP HER BATON' IN STYLE AFTER LOGGING UP AN UNPARALLELED RUN OF SUCCESSES DURING ALMOST NINE YEARS AS CONDUCTOR OF THE GERMAN ORCHESTRA.

Yet, despite the widely predicted outcome, the final tournament ably staged from 5 to 19 June in the north-west of England hand in hand with The FA provoked a good deal of reflection on the current state of the women's game and, more especially, its future.

Over 70,000 spectators turned out to see the host nation's three games, and the television audience following the BBC's live



coverage of their thrilling five-goal opener against Finland peaked at 2.9 million. All of the remaining 14 games were also screened on a pan-European basis and audiences in Germany, for example, comfortably topped the two-million mark. Sponsors were deeply committed to the event, with commercial partners frequently identified with major UEFA events teaming up with England's Northwest Regional Development

Agency to complete an impressive line-up.

Spectacular tournament

Their reward was to be associated with a spectacular final tournament which produced only one goalless draw and where the 15 matches yielded no fewer than 50 goals at an average of 3.33 per game. Only one player was sent off and the yellow card was produced 32 times, at an average of 2.1 per game. At the men's event in Portugal, four teams averaged more than three yellow cards per match on their own.

In other words, the emphasis was on football - and the eight participants played it with different styles and different expectations, even though the 'Nordic Armada' account-



GETTY IMAGES

England's
Rachel Yankey
escapes
a challenge from
Dane Mariann
Knudsen.



GETTY IMAGES

One of the
tournament's
Scandinavian
duels:
Finland v Denmark.

ed for half the finalists. Sweden, for example, were disappointed to go home after the semi-finals; Finland were delighted to do the same. Leading his country into a final tournament for the first time, Michael Käld shrewdly designed a side capable of 'doing a Greece' by focusing on collective virtues and, even though there weren't exactly hundreds to choose from, playing to the strengths of a squad containing five girls who were playing their football with Swedish clubs. Team spirit was a crucial element, with skipper Anne Mäkinen playing her part by writing inspirational slogans on pieces of paper and

posting them next to the dressing-room door just before leading her team onto the field.

They were beaten by England during added time at the end of their first match; drew with Sweden; and made history by beating Denmark 2-1 to reach the semi-finals. But the midnight chimes ended their Cinderella story when defensive jitters allowed the Germans to go 3-0 up after only 12 minutes of the semi-final. *"It was like playing against men,"* Anne Mäkinen admitted afterwards. *"They were so strong and skilful. If you had to name an all-star team, you could just go for Germany's line-up."*

It was easy to agree. The goal scored by the Finns from an effectively rehearsed corner was the first the Germans had conceded in the tournament. But they were the only team to dominate in the group phase.

After two games, Group A was

headed by Denmark and England, both of whom were eliminated after losing to Finland and Sweden on a dramatic final match

day. A glance at the Group B table – rated by the critics as the tougher of the two – might suggest that Italy, the only team not to take a point, were outclassed. It was not the case.

Carolina Morace's side was technically gifted, well organised and scored some beautiful goals, but had the misfortune to fall behind early in each game and, obliged to take risks, struggled to cope with the high tempo imposed by three high-quality rivals. Much the same could be said of Elisabeth Loisel's French side, which

had enough virtues to be rated among the potential title-winners yet went home after the first week.

Immensely competitive game

In other words, the tournament demonstrated that the women's game has become immensely competitive and that levels of fitness and technique have improved dramatically in a relatively short space of time. England and Denmark, fallers after the opening three hurdles, proved that their young teams are on the verge of great things. And the contribution of players aged 16 or 17 (Karen Carney and Eniola Aluko of England, Louisa Necib of France, Isabell Herlovsen of Norway...) emphasised that the new generations are progressing rapidly.

The semi-finals and the final produced 14 goals. A day after the Germans had dropped the final curtain on the Finns, Sweden and Norway played out an epic battle between neighbours and rivals, with Marika Domanski Lyfors sadly writing the last chapter of a nine-year romance with the national team when the Norwegians sealed a thrilling



GETTY IMAGES

Heidi Kackur (11)
and Finland were
unable to stop a German
side including
Sandra Minnert (13)
in the semi-final.

Fair play award for Norway

Norway, the competition runners-up, won the fair play award. With an average of



8.492 points, they edged out France (8.476) and Germany (8.471).

Six of the participants obtained an excellent average of eight points or more.



GETTY IMAGES

Italian Elisa Campanese (10) tries to dispossess France's Sonia Bompastor.



Silver for Norway.

SVEN SIMON



EMPICS

Norway's Lise Klaveness battles with Germans Ariane Hingst and Britta Carlson in the final.

Results

Group A

						Referees
5 June	Blackpool	Sweden – Denmark	1-1	(1-1)	Seitz (USA)	
5 June	Manchester	England – Finland	3-2	(2-0)	Gaal (HUN)	
8 June	Blackburn	Denmark – England	2-1	(0-0)	Ihringova (SVK)	
8 June	Blackpool	Sweden – Finland	0-0		Damkova (CZE)	
11 June	Blackburn	England – Sweden	0-1	(0-1)	Petignat (SUI)	
11 June	Blackpool	Finland – Denmark	2-1	(2-1)	Ihringova (SVK)	
1. Sweden			0	2	1	5
2. Finland			1	4	4	4
3. Denmark			1	4	4	4
4. England			2	4	5	3

Group B

						Referees
6 June	Warrington	Germany – Norway	1-0	(0-0)	Petignat (SUI)	
6 June	Preston	France – Italy	3-1	(3-0)	Toms (ENG)	
9 June	Preston	Italy – Germany	0-4	(0-2)	Seitz (USA)	
9 June	Warrington	France – Norway	1-1	(1-0)	Gaal (HUN)	
12 June	Warrington	Germany – France	3-0	(0-0)	Ionescu (ROU)	
12 June	Preston	Norway – Italy	5-3	(4-1)	Damkova (CZE)	
1. Germany			0	8	0	9
2. Norway			1	6	5	4
3. France			1	4	5	4
4. Italy			3	4	12	0

Semi-finals

15 June	Preston	Germany – Finland	4-1	(3-1)	Damkova (CZE)	
16 June	Warrington	Norway – Sweden	3-2*	(1-1)	Seitz (USA)	

* after extra time

Final

19 June	Blackburn	Germany – Norway	3-1	(2-1)	Ihringova (SVK)	
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3-2 win in the 19th minute of extra time. But Swedish disappointment represented joy for Bjarne Berntsen (one of the three male coaches at the finals), who had been at the helm of the Norwegian team for just over five months.

High overall standard

They went on to give Germany a much harder fight than the 3-1 scoreline might suggest during the final played to a crowd of over 20,000 at Ewood Park in Blackburn amid heavy rain showers and occasional background peals of thunder.



GETTY IMAGES

The matches involving England – seen here against Sweden – attracted big crowds.



Cristiano Ronaldo attacks the Slovakian defence: Portugal are living up to their role as favourites.



The Netherlands (Dirk Kuijt, left) beat Romania (Cosmin Contra) in both meetings.



Goalless draw between Turkey and Greece.

2006 World Cup Qualifiers

Germany beckons – for some more than others!

NONE OF THE EUROPEAN QUALIFYING GROUPS FOR THE 2006 WORLD CUP HAVE YET BEEN DECIDED.

BUT WHILE SOME TEAMS ARE VERY CLOSE TO SECURING THEIR TICKET FOR GERMANY, OTHERS ARE ALREADY OUT OF THE RUNNING. THE FINAL STRAIGHT LOOKS SET TO BE FULL OF EXCITEMENT, BOTH IN THE RACE TO TOP THE GROUPS AND IN THE CONTEST FOR BEST RUNNERS-UP AND PLAY-OFF PLACES.



Ukraine, led by Andriy Shevchenko, are on the brink of qualifying.

In Group 1, the Netherlands – who are unbeaten – are still in first place. Their record this spring was unblemished and included two wins over dangerous opponents Romania. However, the team coached by Marco van Basten cannot afford to rest on their laurels, since they are still being closely pursued by the Czech Republic, who have also enjoyed some excellent results in 2005, scoring an impressive 22 goals in four matches since the beginning of the year. Trailing the Dutch by a single point, the Czechs have certainly not given up hope of winning the group, especially as they will host the current leaders in October. Since the Netherlands and the Czech Republic are racing so far ahead, second place in this group is likely to mean automatic qualification for the finals as one of the two best runners-up. Romania have it all to do to close the gap, while Finland, FYR Macedonia, Armenia and Andorra are clearly too far behind.

Ukraine almost there

Apart from Germany of course, who have qualified automatically, Ukraine are probably the European team closest to qualifying. In Group 2, the Ukrainians have only dropped four points since the competition began and have a 100% record in 2005. Their excellent win over Greece on the European champions' own territory suggests that the hardest work is done. However, the battle for second place is an exciting one between two traditional rivals, Turkey and Greece, who are separated by just one point. After drawing in Istanbul, Otto Rehhagel's men appear to have an easier run-in than Turkey, who have terminated the contract of coach Ersun Yanal and replaced him with Fatih Terim. The disappointing Danes still have a theoretical chance of qualifying, but will have their work cut out in order to finish in one of the top two places. As for Albania, Georgia and Kazakhstan, they are now just playing for pride.

In Group 3, Portugal are living up to their favourites' tag. By holding Slovakia in their own country and beating them in Lisbon, the Portuguese have managed to keep their closest rivals at a distance. But with a match in hand in third place, Russia are certainly still in with a shout. The Russians still have a home match with Portugal to look forward to, but must also travel to Slovakia. Although they are bravely hanging



ISAKOVIC/AFP/GTETY IMAGES

Belgium kept themselves in the hunt with a draw against Serbia and Montenegro.



CAFFREY/AFP/GTETY IMAGES

Israel are still in the running after a draw in the Republic of Ireland.



DILKOFF/AFP/GTETY IMAGES

The Croatians, including Dado Prso (9), have performed well this year, including a win over Rossen Kirilov's Bulgaria.

in there, Latvia have a lot of ground to make up, while Estonia, Liechtenstein and Luxembourg are no longer in a position to qualify for Germany.

Very tight situation

In Group 4, the outcome is looking as clear as mud. The Republic of Ireland are currently top, one point clear of Switzerland, who have a game in hand. However, Israel and France are also very well placed. It would be foolish to try to pick a winner, although the Irish seem to be in a good position as they still have home matches to come with France and Switzerland, who also have to play each other. France will have to excel themselves to qualify since they have to travel to both Ireland and Switzerland. As for Cyprus and the Faroe Islands, their only ambition must be to finish the competition with more than the single point they have each won so far.

Although it is no surprise that Italy are dominating Group 5, the story is far from over. By holding Norway to a draw in Oslo, Italy managed to maintain a four-point lead over their Scandinavian rivals. Slovenia also trail the

Italians by four points, despite beating them in October 2004. In 2005, however, the Slovenians have struggled, failing to win a single match. Belarus, it has to be said, are proving a tough nut to crack, as demonstrated by their record of four draws, one win and just one defeat. Scotland, for their part, are still entertaining a faint hope of clinching the runners-up spot, while Moldova clearly lack the wherewithal to compete with the other teams in the group.

Duel

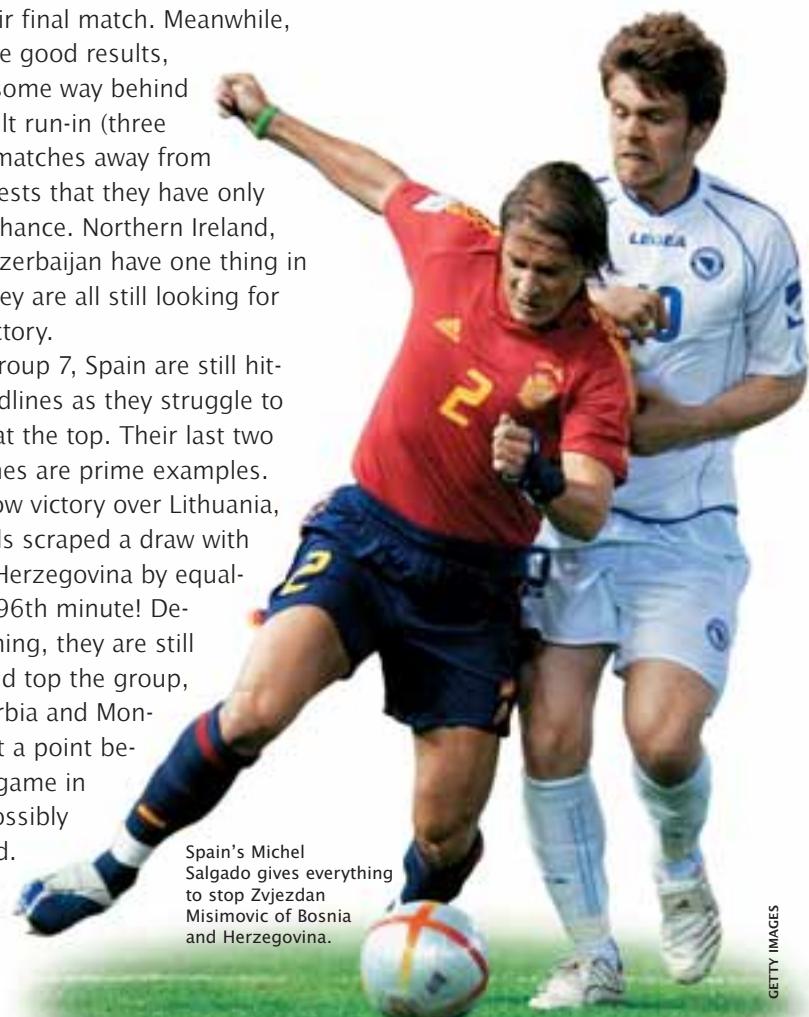
The duel between Poland and England at the top of Group 6 is fascinating, while the others in the group fight for the scraps. Although they lie second, two points behind the Poles, England are clearly in the strongest position. They have a game in hand and will face the current leaders at home in their final match. Meanwhile, despite some good results, Austria are some way behind and a difficult run-in (three out of four matches away from home) suggests that they have only an outside chance. Northern Ireland, Wales and Azerbaijan have one thing in common: they are all still looking for their first victory.

In Group 7, Spain are still hitting the headlines as they struggle to break clear at the top. Their last two home matches are prime examples. After a narrow victory over Lithuania, the Spaniards scraped a draw with Bosnia and Herzegovina by equalising in the 96th minute! Despite everything, they are still unbeaten and top the group, although Serbia and Montenegro, just a point behind with a game in hand, are possibly better placed. The latter are yet to lose or even concede a

goal! They still have to travel to Spain, however. Lithuania, Belgium and even Bosnia and Herzegovina are still in with a chance of qualifying, but San Marino are definitely out of the reckoning.

Croatia are in the driving seat in Group 8, which they lead a point ahead of Sweden. They have won their three matches in 2005 and have only dropped two points overall. In order to overtake the Croatians, Sweden will need to exact revenge for their earlier defeat by beating them on their own soil. It is hard to imagine how Hungary, who lie six and five points behind the top two respectively, can trouble Croatia and Sweden. Similarly, Bulgaria, Iceland and Malta only have bit parts to play.

André Winckler



Spain's Michel Salgado gives everything to stop Zvjezdan Misimovic of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

GETTY IMAGES



Switzerland v Faroe Islands: the international calendar has to be respected.



PA/EMPICS

Longer winter break Pros and cons

METEOROLOGISTS ALL AGREE: THE EARTH IS GETTING WARMER. LAST WINTER SEEMED TO SUGGEST OTHERWISE THOUGH.

RAIN AND SNOW SWEPT DOWN ON THE WHOLE OF EUROPE, CAUSING NUMEROUS MATCHES TO BE POSTPONED.

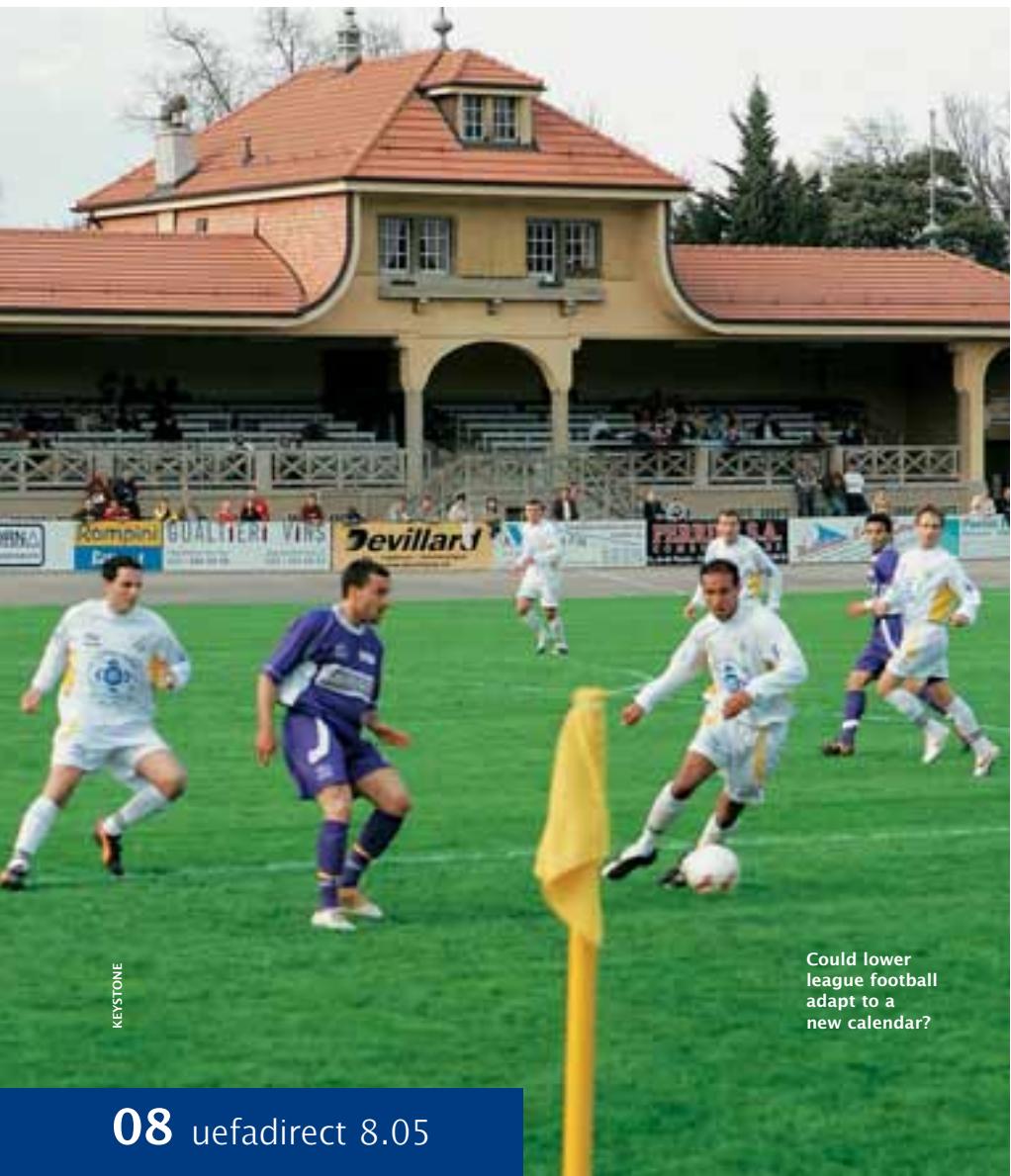
The Alpine country of Switzerland was hit particularly hard by the phenomenal snowfall. Neuchâtel-Xamax, whose stadium is being rebuilt, have been renting a stadium situated at an altitude of 1,000 metres. The club had planned to use a special pitch cover like those common in France, but it exploded, buried under several metres of snow. For the first time in a decade, two full programmes of league matches as well as a host of other individual games were postponed in Switzerland. On two occa-

sions already, the Swiss Football League has looked into the possibility of a summer championship like that in the Scandinavian countries. It decided against the idea both times, on the grounds that the disadvantages outweighed the benefits. Last winter has reopened the debate. Edmond Isoz, director of the SFL, is cautious not to overreact to what was probably an exceptional situation: *"It is important to take some time to think. In three or four years' time, first-division pitches will be synthetic.*

We waited for the agreement of FIFA and UEFA before giving it the green light. A few years ago, we started the season around 5-7 July, but that was not the answer because we still had to play matches at the end of February/beginning of March, which is the most difficult time. A Scandinavian-style championship from March to November would affect all levels of Swiss football, including the amateurs, because of the relegation and promotion system. The amateur season reaches its climax in June, when numerous special events are held. The weather is good and the crowds are large. That would not be the case in November, which would result in severe financial losses. It would also be necessary to play a transitional 18-month season in order to reorganise all our competitions."

Importance of the international calendar

Edmond Isoz believes the main problem lies with the international calendar: *"League matches could not be played if the national team qualified for the World Cup, for example. It is also unthinkable for a country as centrally located as Switzerland. Swiss fans do not have far to travel to get to other countries. We would be unable to cope with such competition. In fact, in my opinion, the dates set aside for international matches in June are a big problem. I would prefer it if they were moved to the beginning of May, as this would enable us to play for longer in June and catch up with all the postponed matches. At the moment, it would be absurd to resume the championship for one or two matches after a ten-day gap."*



KEystone

Could lower league football adapt to a new calendar?

Maintaining pitches: one of the toughest problems in winter.



SIMON/AP/GETTY IMAGES
Spectators love attending matches when the weather is good.



DENNIS/AP/GETTY IMAGES
Southampton v Middlesbrough last December: English teams play right through the winter.

We therefore have no option but to ensure the league season ends in May. Before adopting the Scandinavian system, we need to look at the impact on transfers, whether it is compatible with the international calendar and the statistics, since this is the first time I have experienced such a bad winter since I have been in this job".

Belgium had planned to start its championship season at the end of July, but decided to stick to the usual date in August. Jean-Marie Phillips, director of the Belgian professional league, describes the commercial and sporting problems linked to an earlier start: "If we start too late, our clubs in Europe have problems with their preparation. Starting earlier also has its drawbacks: the Belgians are on holiday, a lot of companies are closed and the start of the school year can be an expensive time. Supporters cannot afford to pay for all these things at the same time. We would have to bring forward the World Cup and European Championship so that international players could have a break. The championship would therefore have to finish earlier, since FIFA requires pre-tournament preparation time. When would we play? The problems always come between mid-January and mid-February, but the players are keen to hold on to their Christmas break. The current system is therefore the only one possible."

Synthetic pitches

France was not spared the rigours of winter. With 20 teams in its championship, it has to start very early in the summer, but does not seem to lose out financially as a result. Jean-Yves Le Houede, FFF commercial director, says: "I have played on some pitches that were barely playable. Football is not ballet! The amateurs start later, in September, unless they are involved in national competitions. This means the players and volunteers can enjoy their

family holidays. The French climate is rather temperate, although there are differences between the north and the south. The League has asked the professional clubs to make sure they are well equipped to stage matches. I think artificial pitches are the real solution. The latest designs are just as good as natural pitches." The French are used to starting the season early, as Lyon's Laurent Blanc points out: "Moreover, people like coming to matches when the weather's good."

Pascale Pierard

The UEFA Intertoto Cup (Gent v Bohemian) got the international club season under way in June.

Between grass and tradition

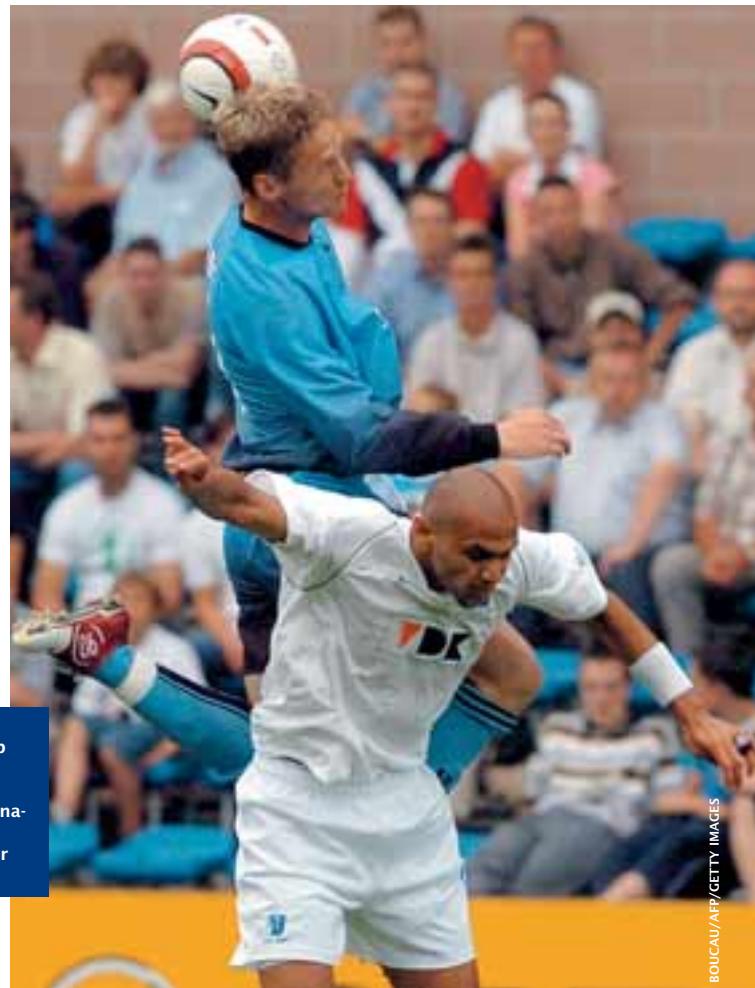
The English play all through the winter without any problems. In fact, the matches come particularly thick and fast during the festive period and the supporters would not be happy if this well-established tradition was abandoned. The Germans, thanks to their under-soil heating, also do not have any difficulties. They always start their season in mid-August and still have time for a long winter break.

Eugen Desiderato, press officer of Grasshoppers Zurich, favours the status quo partly so that supporters' habits are not completely disrupted, but also "because the crowds would be smaller during the holidays. You also have to take the international calendar into account."

Willy Adrianssens, who is responsible for the pitch at Bruges, makes an interesting point: "It is during the summer that the grass grows best and takes root. Ideally, we need a three-month break to ensure high-quality grass. If we lengthen the winter break at the expense of the summer recess, the grass will suffer. It's not feasible, but it would actually be better if the winter break was simply moved to February, which tends to be the coldest month."

P.P.

BOUCAU/AP/GETTY IMAGES



BOUCAU/AP/GETTY IMAGES



The discussions continued during the breaks.



Talk in the auditorium at the House of European Football.

Information technologies Discussion forum

AS PART OF ITS HATTRICK ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME FOR ITS MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS, UEFA ORGANISED A WORKSHOP ON NEW INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES IN NYON ON 14 AND 15 JUNE.

Led by a committee of experts, the two-day gathering was meant to raise awareness among general secretaries and IT department managers of the importance of computer technology in association administration. This discussion forum was held under the banner of exchange and transparency.

Group of experts

How should an association find the best IT solution to a specific problem? By developing an internal system or choosing the leading market product in order to meet its needs? These are two of the questions that were addressed by the members of a committee of experts.

During the workshop, representatives of sports governing bodies (UEFA, IOC), various national associations (France, Netherlands, Sweden, Czech Republic, Italy, England, Denmark) and IT companies, as well as a professor from the University of Lausanne and communications consultants all shared their range of experiences. The purpose of the event was to enable the participants to exchange and learn

from each other's technological expertise in order to optimise access to information.

UEFA Media Technologies

Orchestrated by UEFA Media Technologies, the two days of discussion formed part of a new UEFA strategy: firstly, to facilitate communication with the football family, and then to maximise information exchange.

Set up by UEFA, UEFA Media Technologies is a service company whose remit is to:

- provide technological solutions, editorial content and support designed to assist the development of European football;
- explore and exploit every possibility in the modern media world;
- assist the football family with its IT development projects.

Created in 2004 through a merger between UEFA's IT department and the company UEFA New Media, which devised European football's Internet site, uefa.com, UEFA Media Technologies is meant to be a unique centre

of excellence where information technology is concerned, forming a focal point for internal technical know-how and its management of external partners.

Applications already on-line

For the time being, a range of applications are already used to link UEFA with the different members of the football family:

- via various **Extranets**: administrative documents, club licences, competition rules, match calendars, a discussion forum and address lists are available to the 52 member associations and coaches;
- **uefa.com** as content distributor: as soon as an article is published on uefa.com, it can be automatically copied onto an association website;
- developed for UEFA, the "Helga" system manages **event** logistics, transport and accreditations. The system has already proved its worth at EURO 2004, congresses and other meetings organised by UEFA.

Information system 2009 – FAME

The second phase of the development project, "Football Administration & Management Environment" (FAME) is UEFA's most ambitious project in terms of IT systems development. Its aim is to create the most complete and sophisticated tool available for modern football administration. This new concept will build on existing systems and incorporate targeted solutions for football, TV broadcasting rights, events and internal relations within a single portal.

A true platform for communication, the forum showed how information technologies have now become a strategic tool for the benefit of football.





Parliamentarians: friends of football.



Arrival at the House of European Football.

From Brussels to Nyon

Visit of the 'Friends of Football'

OVER THE COURSE OF TWO HIGHLY SYMBOLIC DAYS, BRUSSELS FINALLY
CAME TO NYON. THIRTEEN MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT VISITED
THE HOUSE OF EUROPEAN FOOTBALL ON 30 JUNE AND 1 JULY,
OPENING A NEW CHAPTER IN UEFA'S RELATIONS WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION.

The 13 'Friends of Football' – 11 men and two women – represented eight different EU member states:

Ivo Belet (Belgium), Richard Corbett (UK), Ryszard Czarnecki (Poland), Szabolcs Fazakas (Hungary), Glyn Ford (UK), Neena Gill (UK), Lasse Lehtinen (Finland), Manolis Mavrommatis (Greece), Christa Prets (Austria), Jacek Protasiewicz (Poland), José Silva Peneda (Portugal), Hannu Takkula (Finland) and Tadeusz Zwiefka (Poland).

UEFA's Brussels Office organised the visit for one simple reason: to allow MEPs to see how UEFA works on a day-to-day basis, away from the glamour of the big tournaments. Politicians are not familiar with many of our activities, and such a visit gives them the chance to see the full range of what we do.

Day one began with an introduction from David Will, representing the UEFA Executive Committee, who chaired the two days of debates.

William Gaillard, Director of Communications & Public Affairs, and UEFA's Head of Media Services then presented the 50-year history of the organisation and 'Vision Europe', its new strategy.

At the end of the first day, CEO Lars-Christer Olsson offered a deliberately "provocative" assessment of several challenges facing European football. These included the slide of some of the richest clubs towards over-commercialisation and an "entertainment" ethos; the role of players' agents; gambling and the spread of money laundering; and the status of sport in the EU.

The MEPs responded enthusiastically to the Chief Executive's presentation and asked how they could support UEFA's efforts. Hungarian MEP Szabolcs Fazakas encouraged UEFA to see the European Parliament as a "partner".

Mr Olsson outlined some of the initiatives that would better equip UEFA and its member associations to confront the many challenges of



modern football: the new club licensing scheme; the Top Executive Programme; greater use of sporting sanctions to punish bad behaviour on and off the pitch; and a new working group on players' agents.

At the start of day two, Gianni Infantino, Director of Legal Services, led an in-depth debate on the central marketing of broadcasting rights and UEFA's new rules on the local training of players. Here again, MEPs responded positively to UEFA's arguments and asked how they could best offer support.

Later in the morning the Head of Stadia and Security presented UEFA's activities to ensure fans' safety and combat hooliganism, while the Manager of Corporate Social Responsibility and Assistance Programmes took the MEPs through UEFA's work against racism as well as its charity portfolio.

As MEPs returned to their home countries, all participants agreed that the visit had taken relations between UEFA and the European Parliament to a new level. Armed with a better understanding of each other's needs, both sides had already identified new ways of working together.



PHOTOS: UEFA

Building a bridge between politics and sport.



Preparation of a UEFA Champions League match in collaboration with TEAM staff.

EMPICS/UEFA



Shirt-pulling: an offence that should be ruthlessly punished.

EMPICS

Meetings and activities Under the banner of respect

THE UEFA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE TOOK THE RATHER UNUSUAL STEP OF MEETING AT A FOOTBALL STADIUM –

THE HOME OF MANCHESTER CITY, TO BE PRECISE – ON 17 AND 18 JUNE, WITH LENNART JOHANSSON IN THE CHAIR.

The Executive Committee had chosen Manchester as the venue of its third ordinary meeting of the year because of the final round of the European Women's Championship, the final of which was to be held in Blackburn on 19 June.

Since its previous meeting in Tallinn in April, the Committee had taken two important decisions: at an extraordinary meeting in Istanbul, it had extended the contract with the TEAM agency covering exploitation of the UEFA Champions League commercial rights for a further three seasons (until 2011/12); UEFA will also acquire a 20% share in the company TEAM Holding SA.

In a telephone conference held on 10 June, the Executive Committee had also decided to amend the regulations of the UEFA Champions League to ensure that, in future, the trophy

holders would be guaranteed the right to defend their title with a place in the group stage as a top seed. This will only increase the number of places that an association has in the UEFA competitions if the title-holders do not qualify for these competitions through their domestic league or if their association has only one Champions League berth.

Exceptionally, the Executive Committee decided to allow Liverpool FC to enter the 2005/06 edition at the first qualifying round stage.

The first part of the meeting in Manchester was devoted to a strategic discussion on safety at European competition matches. The members were reminded of the principle of strict liability, under which the national associations and clubs are responsible for the behaviour of their players, officials and supporters.

In order to prevent a repeat of the deplorable incidents that took place at certain European matches earlier in the year and to improve behaviour in stadiums in general, the Executive Committee discussed a variety of measures, such as sporting sanctions, the strict application of a Code of Ethics and educational measures. It stressed the importance of respect, which is the basis of fair play, particularly towards referees. Precise instructions on which types of behaviour are acceptable from players, coaches and managers will be issued in the autumn, with communication a key element of education. In addition, amendments to the Laws of the Game may also be proposed to the International FA Board in order to improve respect for the Laws of the Game and referees' decisions. Shirt-pulling, simulation and contesting of decisions are all under scrutiny. Elite coaches' attention will also be drawn to the need to respect referees and their decisions. Generally speaking, cooperation between referees and coaches should be expanded for the benefit of both groups.

Club licensing update

Introduced last year, the UEFA club licensing system is still in its experimental phase, as the Executive Committee noted when discussing the report on checks that had been made on ten associations selected at random. Although these checks (which actually took the form of advisory evaluations) highlighted certain problems and infringements by licensors which





Italy are the European Under-21 champions.

in future will have to be punished by the relevant UEFA body, the overall picture is generally positive: the licensing system has already resulted in enormous progress and some significant changes.

Odd years for the Under-21s

Interest in the European Under-21 Championship has steadily grown from one edition to the next, if only because an increasing number of players in this age category


are already first-team regulars – or even stars – at club level.

However, this biennial competition suffers from the fact that it always has to compete with the European Championship or World Cup finals, or even the Olympics.

The Executive Committee therefore decided that, in order to enhance its value, the final round should be held in June in odd years.

In order to hold a final round in 2007, the qualifying competition will be condensed. UEFA's lowest-ranked national associations will therefore play two-legged matches between March and July 2006, leaving 42 teams to contest the group matches in August and September. There will be 14 groups of three teams, with each team playing just two matches – one at home and one away. The 14 group winners will enter a play-off round and the seven winners will qualify for the final round,

to be played in June 2007 in a country to be chosen in December this year.

Thereafter, the competition will revert to its normal two-yearly pattern, with a draw completely independent from that of the World Cup or European Championship. In order to facilitate the organisation of the final round, the host country will always be determined two years in advance, with the host nation qualifying automatically for the finals.

Centralisation of UEFA Cup rights

Last season saw the launch of a new structure for the UEFA Cup,


which included group matches for the first time.

Although the centralisation of the TV and marketing rights had been planned as part of the new structure, it had been postponed in order to leave time to consider in more detail the advantages it might bring.

In February, the majority of the members of the European Club Forum expressed a wish to centralise the rights for the final stages of the competition (from the quarter-finals onwards). At its meeting in June, the Executive Committee gave the green light for this system to be introduced from the 2006/07 season.

For the first two seasons, the clubs will be guaranteed a minimum of CHF 52.5 million. 60% of this sum will

be paid as fixed amounts, with the remainder to be split according to the commercial value of the clubs' national TV markets.

EURO 2008 schedule

As well as adopting the regulations for the 2006-08 European


Championship, the Executive Committee approved the schedule for EURO 2008.

The final round will be played from 7 to 29 June in the Austrian cities of Vienna, Salzburg, Innsbruck and Klagenfurt and the Swiss cities of Basle, Zurich, Berne and Geneva. The Committee decided to amend the schedule used at EURO 2004 in order to balance out the rest



EMPICS

2004 semi-final between Greece and the Czech Republic: rest periods will be more equal in future.

periods for the four semi-finalists following their quarter-final encounters. In 2004, Portugal and Greece enjoyed two more rest days than their semi-final opponents, the Netherlands and Czech Republic respectively, but there will only be one day's difference in 2008.

In order to produce this change, the order of matches has had to be amended and it is possible that the top two teams from the same group could face each other again in the semi-finals. Under the previous system, they could only meet again in the final.



Real Madrid, winners of the first final.

AFP



UEFA



Grassroots football deserves enormous attention.

Celebration of 50 years of European cups

The first ever match in the European Champion Clubs' Cup, between Sporting Portugal and Partizan Belgrade, was held in Lisbon on 4 September 1955.

This season is therefore the 50th anniversary of this competition, which has steadily grown in importance over the years and became the UEFA Champions League in the 1990s.

The draw in Monaco in August will provide an opportunity to launch the celebrations and to unveil the anniversary logo.

A book, a champions' hall of fame and other promotional activities will be launched at different stages of the season, culminating in the final in Paris, 50 years after the same city hosted the first final between Real Madrid and Stade de Reims.

New members of the Coaching Convention

Following the recommendation of the Jira Project Panel and the Technical Development Committee, the Executive Committee approved the addition of the following national associations as members of the UEFA

Convention on the Mutual Recognition of Coaching Qualifications:

- Israel (B and A licences)
- Kazakhstan (B licence)
- Latvia (B licence)
- Liechtenstein (B, A and Pro licences, in partnership with Switzerland)
- Lithuania (B licence)
- Portugal (B licence)
- San Marino (B licence).

First signatories to the Grassroots Football Charter

The national associations of Germany, England, Scotland, Norway and the Netherlands have become the first to sign the UEFA Grassroots Football Charter. They were invited to take this step on account of the quality of their infrastructures and programmes for coaches and players, as well as the philosophy on which their commitment to grassroots football is based.

Accession to the Grassroots Football Charter is seen as recognition by UEFA of the quality of this work, echoing the coaching licences awarded under the auspices of the UEFA Convention in the technical field.

In summary

The Executive Committee also approved:

- the regulations of the youth competitions for the 2005/06 season (European Under-19 Championship, Euro-

pean Women's Under-19 Championship, European Under-17 Championship);

- the creation of an Internet platform for the live transmission of UEFA matches, reflecting its desire to remain at the forefront of technology and to increase the appeal of the uefa.com website, which attracted 1 billion visitors in 2004.

Obituary

Hubert Claessen (Germany), a member of the UEFA circle of former committee members, died on 14 June at the age of 91. He had been a member of the UEFA Appeals Body from 1974 to 1988. The German Football Association (DFB) had appointed him as an honorary member in recognition of his many years' service as a member of the DFB Council.

Out-of-competition doping controls in UEFA Champions League

In order to step up the fight against doping, UEFA has, amongst other measures, recently created an anti-doping unit within its administration.

Another measure has been introduced for the new season, with out-of-competition anti-doping controls for the 32 teams involved in the group matches of the UEFA Champions League.

Out-of-competition controls are not new to UEFA, which also undertook such testing before the final round of the European Championship. Four players from each of the 16 teams involved at EURO 2004 in Portugal were tested.

Nevertheless, this is the first time this type of control has been carried out in a UEFA club competition. Around 960 players may be selected for blood and/or urine tests.

Post-match testing will, of course, continue as before.

The Stade de France will host the UEFA Champions League final 50 years after the first Champion Clubs' Cup final was staged at the Parc des Princes.



FLASH PRESS



Press conference after the 2005 UEFA Champions League final.

EMPIRES/UEFA



Tournament hosts, the Netherlands (Collins John, in white), were eliminated by Nigeria in the quarter-finals.

VOS/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Media Officers Panel meeting

Under the guidance of UEFA's Director of Communications & Public Affairs, William Gaillard, the UEFA Media Officers Panel met at the House of European Football on Thursday 23 June 2005.

Topics for discussion included UEFA's new 10-year strategy as outlined by Chief Executive Lars-Christer Olsson at the recent Congress in Tallinn, as well as UEFA's new working relationship and division of responsibilities with UEFA EURO 2008 SA.

The participants also discussed how communication channels between UEFA media officers at UCL venues and UEFA corporate staff could be clarified, and how best to deal with problems that can arise at matches, such as matches being abandoned or incidents with referees which may have an impact on UEFA as an institution.

The presentations were sent by e-mail to media officers unable to attend due to commitments at FIFA events such as the World Youth Championship in Holland and the FIFA Confederations Cup. The media officers' next meeting was held in Zurich on 18/19 July at a joint workshop with UEFA Champions League venue directors.

Confederations Cup – South American domination

For the first time, the FIFA Confederations Cup, played in Germany from 15 to 29 June, concluded with a final between two teams from the same continent.

Current world champions Brazil showed that they will again be one of the favourites at the 2006 World Cup finals (for which they are well on the way to qualifying). They beat Argentina 4-1 in the final, taking revenge for a defeat three weeks earlier in the World Cup qualifiers.

European champions Greece managed to win only a single point against Japan from their three matches. For Germany, however, the tournament will be viewed as a success at various levels: firstly, because their rejuvenated team finished third following a 4-3 extra-time win over Mexico. They had won their group undefeated before losing 3-2 to Brazil in the semi-finals.

The hosts were also able to note that their organisation of next year's finals was already well under way and, in particular, that the German public were looking forward to watching the matches in 2006 after turning up in large numbers to this dress rehearsal.

Four of Europe's seven representatives were still involved at the quarter-final stage, but none of them progressed any further. Italy lost to Morocco and the Netherlands to Nigeria in penalty competitions, while Germany lost in extra-time to Brazil. Spain, meanwhile, held Argentina for most of their match before going down in the last 20 minutes.

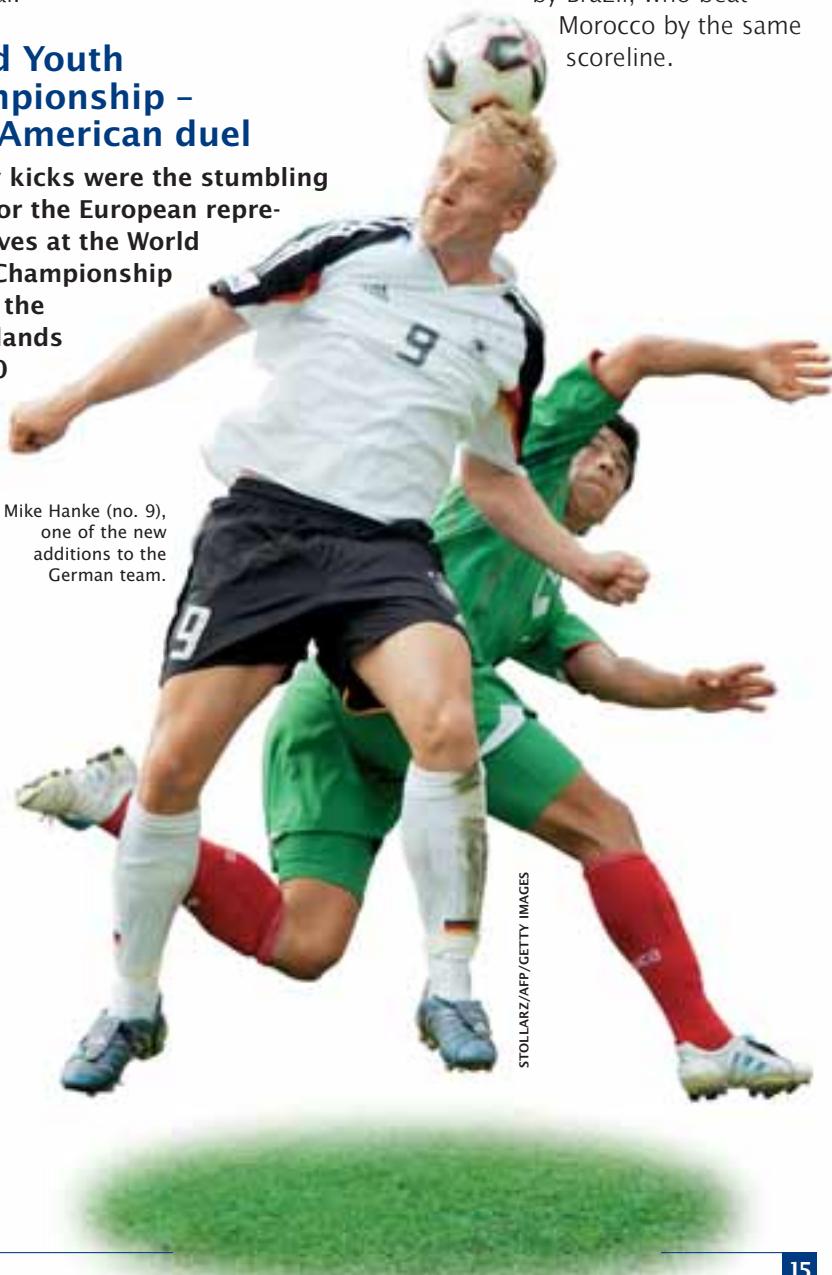
Nigeria won their semi-final (3-0) against Morocco, while Argentina beat Brazil 2-1 in the other semi-final.

In the final, Argentina beat Nigeria 2-1. Third place was won by Brazil, who beat Morocco by the same scoreline.

World Youth Championship – Afro-American duel

Penalty kicks were the stumbling block for the European representatives at the World Youth Championship held in the Netherlands from 10 June to 2 July.

Mike Hanke (no. 9), one of the new additions to the German team.



STOLLARZ/AFP/GETTY IMAGES



Valencia, winners of the Super Cup last year.

LINGRIA



Liverpool won the UEFA Super Cup in 2001 against Bayern Munich.

EMPIRES

Super Cup to remain in Monaco

The UEFA Super Cup has been staged in Monaco since 1998. Preceded each year by meetings, draws and a gala evening, it serves as the official opening of the club season, even though the qualifying rounds begin more than a month earlier.

The contract with Monaco expires this year, providing an opportunity to look at ways of developing this event, a topic that has been discussed in various UEFA circles in recent months.

In Manchester, the Executive Committee brought to its conclusion a debate which had covered ideas such as separating the events (match and draw/gala) or moving the Super Cup to another continent.

After assessing sporting and commercial factors as well as logistical issues, the majority seemed to prefer the status quo, i.e. to continue to combine the match with the other events. The Executive Committee agreed and, after considering the three potential host cities (Barcelona, Geneva and Monaco), decided to invite the Principality to continue hosting the UEFA Super Cup and its associated events until at least 2008.



In Manchester, the Executive Committee approved the regulations of the 2005 UEFA Super Cup.

The match will be played at the Stade Louis II in Monaco on 26 August and will feature Liverpool FC, winners of the 2004/05 UEFA Champions League, and CSKA Moscow, UEFA Cup holders. Liverpool have previously participated in the UEFA Super Cup on four occasions, winning it twice (in 1977 and 2001).

This will be the Moscow club's first appearance in the competition, since their victory in Lisbon secured their first European trophy.

Calendar for the 2005/06 season



UEFA Champions League

12/13 July 2005: first qualifying round, first legs
19/20 July: return legs
26/27 July: second qualifying round, first legs
29 July, Nyon: draw for the third qualifying round
2/3 August: return legs
9/10 August: third qualifying round, first legs
23/24 August: return legs
25 August, Monaco: draw for the group matches
13/14 September: group matches, match day 1
27/28 September: match day 2
18/19 October: match day 3
1/2 November: match day 4
22/23 November: match day 5
6/7 December: match day 6
16 December, Nyon: draw for the round of 16
21/22 February 2006: round of 16, first legs
7/8 March: return legs
17 March, Nyon: draw for the quarter-finals and semi-finals
28/29 March: quarter-finals, first legs
4/5 April: return legs
18/19 April: semi-finals, first legs
25/26 April: return legs
17 May, Paris: final



UEFA Cup

14 July 2005: first qualifying round, first legs
28 July: return legs
29 July, Nyon: draw for the second qualifying round
11 August: second qualifying round, first legs
25 August: return legs
26 August, Monaco: draw for the first round
15 September: first round, first legs
29 September: return legs
4 October, Nyon: draw for the group matches
20 October: group matches, match day 1
3 November: match day 2
24 November: match day 3
30 November/1st December: match day 4
14/15 December: match day 5
16 December, Nyon: draw for the rounds of 32 and 16
15/16 February 2006: round of 32, first legs
23 February: return legs
9 March: round of 16, first legs
15/16 March: return legs
17 March, Nyon: draw for the quarter-finals and semi-finals
30 March: quarter-finals, first legs
6 April: return legs
20 April: semi-finals, first legs
27 April: return legs
10 May, Eindhoven: final



News from member associations

ARMENIA



An unprecedented success

31 May was a day of great celebration not only for the Armenian Under-19 national team, but also for Armenian football in general. On that day, the whole Armenian nation gathered at Zvartnots airport to celebrate our youngsters' unprecedented success in Hungary in the second round of the European Under-19 Championships. For the first time, the Armenian Under-19 team, led by legendary Armenian coach Samvel Petrosyan, reached the final round of the competition, where they will compete against the strongest teams in Europe. In Hungary, the Armenian youngsters finished top of their tough group, ahead of such strong and talented teams as Belgium, Italy and the hosts Hungary.

Thousands of enthusiastic fans were present at Armenia's main airport to welcome their heroes. After the celebrations went on late into the night, the Under-19 players, coaches and officials were received the following day by the Armenian Prime Minister, who rewarded the players with diplomas.

1 June was International Children's Day and this occasion was celebrated in a special way in the Armenian capital Yerevan. Around 400 children from different football schools gathered in front of the Republican stadium and drew different football images on the ground. In their pictures, the children showed their passion and deep devotion to football. Many of them skilfully drew



Celebration of Children's Day with drawings at the Republic Stadium.

their international football idols, including Ronaldo, Ronaldinho, Zidane and Henry. Some also drew some of our own stars, especially the heroes from the Under-19 team.

At the end of the event, each child was rewarded with a ball and football kit.

Arayik Manukyan

BELARUS



UEFA Summer of Grassroots Football 2005 – a starting point

The Belarus FA is doing its best to play an active part in organising different UEFA and national programmes related to the development of football in Belarus.

For example, many successful and memorable tournaments have been organised for children, veterans and disabled people over the last two seasons.

We are pleased to say that we will continue to spend time and money organising such events and programmes.

This year, our federation has taken part in the UEFA Summer of Grassroots Football 2005 programme. On 23 June, we organised the "number one" sport festival, using the training facilities of FC BATE Borisov as the venue for the older age group and the "Stroitel" centre for the juniors. Children from the five regional summer camps participated in the competitions.

The tournament was split into two groups of five teams in each age category. In between matches, training and skills sessions were held for all the participants. Around 160 footballers took part in the tournament.

Thanks to the practical support of UEFA, the Belarus FA presented the winners and participants with trophies and medals. The best players received memorable prizes and all the players were awarded certificates of attendance and souvenir T-shirts. The important thing was that there were no losers and there is tremendous support for the idea of making this an annual event.

The forthcoming rounds of the festival will be held in Belarus' other regional capitals, where we hope the children will really enjoy themselves!

Alexander Leshchik



PRESBELL/A.SHCHICHKO

Grassroots football to the fore under the UEFA banner.

BELGIUM



New Executive Committee

Following the General Assembly held on 25 June, the Belgian Football Association (URBSFA) has a new Executive Committee bureau. Jan Peeters was unanimously re-elected as President for a further year, while three new vice-presidents were chosen from among the Executive Committee members. Roger Vanden Stock was re-elected as first vice-president, while Pierre Schiepers (Limbourg), Guy Lambeets (National League) and David Delferière (Hainaut) were selected as second, third and fourth vice-presidents respectively.

Michel Preud'homme is the new Chairman of the URBSFA's Technical Committee. At the proposal of the URBSFA, he succeeds Karel Vertongen as chairman of this committee. The former international goalkeeper, who is already a member of the Executive Committee, will combine this new role with that of technical director at Standard Liège.

A new system has been adopted for the national division 2 play-offs. From next season, only one team will be relegated directly from division 1 to division 2. In the 2005/06 and 2006/07 seasons, the division 2 play-offs will involve four clubs: the team finishing second from bottom (17th) in national division 1 and the three sectional winners in national division 2.



PHOTO NEWS

PHOTO NEWS



The winners will either remain in or be promoted to national division 1. This system was agreed by the Pro and National Leagues, with the latter receiving compensation, primarily of a financial nature.

François Vantomme

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA



New championship starts on 6 August

Although it was allocated two places in the Intertoto Cup, Bosnia and Herzegovina was not represented in this competition because its teams did not meet UEFA's licensing requirements. The champions NK Zrinjski, from the city of Mostar, qualified for the first preliminary round of the UEFA Champions League, while NK Siroki Brijeg, semi-finalists in the national cup competition, and NK Zepce entered the UEFA Cup preliminary round. These three clubs fulfilled the licensing conditions. NK Zeljeznica, who finished second in the league, and FK Sarajevo, the cup winners, who had both qualified for a UEFA Cup place, were not entered because they did not meet the licensing requirements.

The champions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, NK Zrinjski, faced Dudelange, the champions of Luxembourg, in the first preliminary round of the UEFA Champions League. NK Siroki Brijeg and NK Zepce were drawn against Teuta from Albania and Baskimi from FYR Macedonia in the UEFA Cup first preliminary round.

While the UEFA Club Licensing Panel stuck rigidly to the licensing deadlines, it was a different story in Bosnia

and Herzegovina, where the deadlines were postponed until the release of the fixture lists for the 2005/06 season on 5 July. The new 2005/06 Premier League season will kick off on 6 August. The new clubs in the Premier League will be NK Jedinstvo from Bihać and FK Radnik from Bijeljina.

Sarajevo-based ZNK SFK 2000 won the women's championship again, beating ZNK Iris from Zenica and ZFK Borac from Banja Luka in the final rounds. FK Modrica Maxima are the national junior champions, while NK Siroki Brijeg won the cadets' championship.

Bosnia and Herzegovina's national team played two group 7 qualifying matches for the 2006 World Cup in Germany at the beginning of June. They won a total of four points in these matches in San Marino and Spain. Blaz Sliskovics' men were expected to beat San Marino, but created a surprise by drawing 1-1 with Spain in the Mestalla stadium. These four points increased the chances of Bosnia and Herzegovina finishing in second place in group 7.

A seminar was held in Sarajevo from 13 to 18 June as part of the plan to provide regular training for coaches from Bosnia and Herzegovina and other countries in the region. The participants came from FYR Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, Croatia, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, as well including representatives of the Jordanian FA.

Four Academy modules are being held this year. The first module was held in Copenhagen in April and the second in Sarajevo. The seminar agenda included visits to the football schools in Vogosca, Lukavica and the municipality of Pale. The participants also visited the Open Fun football schools project, which was launched in nine schools in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2004.

This project was supported by the Bosnia and Herzegovina FA. The participants visited the FA headquarters and were introduced to the work of the national youth teams. The FA's support for the "children's house of football", which is to be built as part of the new stadium in Ilidza, was also discussed. The CCPA OFFS project, run in cooperation with the national federation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, extended further than the other countries of the region, according to Esad Hadzijusufovic, the project coordinator for Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Fuad Krvavac



Handshake before the match
Spain - Bosnia-Herzegovina.

F. KRVAVAC

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Fuad Krvavac

CZECH REPUBLIC



Inauguration of a mini-pitch

The inauguration of the first mini-pitch to be built in the Czech Republic within the framework of the UEFA assistance programmes took place in Nymburk (approx. 60km from Prague) on Wednesday 29 June 2005.



The mini-pitch in Nymburk.

The opening ceremony was conducted by Czech FA representatives including Ladislav Maly, director of marketing company Fotbal Trading, Josef Hadraba, member of the Czech FA's Executive Committee, and Otakar Mestek, director of the Amateur Football Department. The project was also supported by local authority representatives, especially Ladislav Kutik, Lord Mayor of Nymburk.

This event highlighted the fact that there is more to football than the professional game alone and proved the high level of interest in young football players and young people in general.

After the official inauguration ceremony, young players had the chance to try out a brand new artificial surface on the mini-pitch, playing two matches during the afternoon. All the players enjoyed the experience.

Representatives from Czech Television were also present, giving TV viewers a chance to watch a very interesting report during the evening news bulletin.

Petra Volkova

ENGLAND



Stadium safety and security

In a year marking the 20th anniversary of the tragic Bradford City fire and the Heysel stadium disaster in May 1985, an FA-led delegation visited Peru in June to deliver a two-day seminar on stadium safety and security.



The FA's Head of Stadium Safety, Chris Whalley, the Football Licensing Authority Chief Executive, John de Quidt, and the head of the UK National Football Information Point of the National Criminal Intelligence Service, Tony Conniford, discussed the massive strides made in the UK to combat hooliganism and improve spectator safety.

The delegates were interested to hear how authorities in the UK had succeeded in bringing supporters back to stadiums up and down the country and the powers given to the police to deal with football violence.

Peru is staging the FIFA U-17 World Championship in September, and participants at the seminar were keen to learn valuable lessons from their counterparts in the build-up to the event.

"Peru is continuing a process of stadium development and the Peruvian Football Federation is hoping to drive forward some proposals on new legislation to combat violence in sport," said The FA's Head of Stadium Safety, Chris Whalley.

"I think the key message from our seminar – that success in England was achieved by a partnership approach between football, government and the police – really struck a chord.

"I got the impression that they were hoping to use this seminar as a stimulus for getting all relevant parties in Peru around the table in order to tackle their problems together, not in isolation."

The event in Peru comes after two highly successful seminars on the same subject in Ecuador and Chile last year, all three taking place as part of The FA-CONMEBOL cooperation agreement signed in 2003.

Nada Grkinic



Left to right: Tony Conniford, Chris Whalley and John de Quidt.

FINLAND



Pohjola Cup events held in June

The annual Pohjola Cup tournaments for the Finnish FA's regional teams were held in Vaasa and Mikkeli. The events form an important part of the FA's player education strategy and provide a great scouting opportunity for the national youth teams. This year's events kicked off in Vaasa, where boys competed in the C14 and C15 age groups (born in or after 1991 and 1990 respectively). In the C14 tournament, the final was played between the



GETTY IMAGES

The Finnish women's team celebrate their qualification for the semi-finals of EURO 2005.

neighbouring regions of Uusimaa and Helsinki. Uusimaa were crowned champions by winning the final 4-0. Helsinki finished second and the region of Turku third after beating Eastern Finland in the bronze medal match. In the C15 category, Turku were crowned champions after beating Satakunta in the final. Uusimaa finished third. Vaasa, which claims to be Finland's sunniest city, did not disappoint, since the matches were played in glorious weather, providing fantastic conditions for the talented youngsters.

Only two days later, it was the girls' turn in Mikkeli. Girls' and women's football in Finland have received a huge boost after the national women's team's success in the European Championship in England. The first ever Finnish senior national team to reach the semi-finals of a major tournament has taken interest in women's football to an unprecedented level in Finland.

The girls' tournament was also played in very good conditions in the city of Mikkeli. The age groups in this tournament were C14 (born in or after 1991) and B16 (born in 1989). In the C14 category, Vaasa region won the cup after beating Turku 1-0 in a very close final. Uusimaa finished third. In B16, Turku once again came second, this time beaten by Tampere on penalty kicks. Keski-Pohjanmaa finished third.

These tournaments involve not only playing football, but also teaching

young players to become better athletes and responsible youngsters off the pitch. The FA coaches again held several lectures for the players about the importance of training, school, family and all the other major aspects in a young player's life. FA physios also led warm-ups and instructed the players. Coach and referee education are also part of the Pohjola Cup's extensive remit.

Jukka Salasuo

FRANCE



Beach football

Launched four years ago by the French Football Federation (FFF), the "Beach football" programme looks set to enjoy considerable success again this summer.

There is no doubt that the idea is an attractive one: through what is essentially a recreational activity, the aim is to enable as many holiday-makers as possible to experience or discover football in a context different from the traditional grass pitch or the TV screen.

Run in July and August by the Amateur Football League with the participation of qualified coaches, the FFF's "Beach football" programme is particularly remarkable for its simplicity and conviviality: participants, who need not be licensed, can register free of charge on the day of the tournament either as individuals, as a family or as a group of friends. There is always space for everyone and the event is enjoyed by all.

Teams of seven players (a goalkeeper, four outfield players and two substitutes, with rolling substitutions allowed) play seven-minute matches without changing ends on a pitch measuring 40 x 20 metres, marked out in the sand using inflatable rings, refereed by the players themselves under the supervision of FFF coaches. It's that simple!

Everything is set for two enjoyable days of celebration, involving an average of 100 teams per tournament under the banner of conviviality and fair play, essential values in any form of football.

At a time when football, which now, very happily, has begun to give women the place they deserve, is becoming more and more diverse, beach football is setting an example – and a good one at that.

Philippe Tournon



GERMANY



Preventing addiction through grassroots sport

The German Football Association (DFB), the Organising Committee of the 2006 FIFA World Cup and the Federal Office for Health Education (BzgA) invited experts to a special conference on the theme of "Preventing addiction through grassroots sport - the example of youth football", held in Frankfurt am Main on 29 and 30 June 2005.

Experts from the worlds of politics and sport discussed ideas and ways in which football and addiction prevention could effectively work hand in hand. Dr Hans-Dieter Drewitz, Chairman of the DFB Youth Committee, hailed the event as a success: "We are very pleased that this conference is the starting point of further cooperation with the BzgA". Prof. Dr Klaus-Peter Brinkhoff, who gave the first talk on the social function of sport among children and adolescents, said "Football clubs can help children say no to drugs - but they need the help of prevention experts." Heinrich Thiemann, State Secretary at the Federal Ministry of Health and Social Security, agreed: "Our aim is to make addiction prevention an automatic component of youth work in sports clubs." At the end of the conference, former world-class hurdler Dr Harald Schmid, a leader of the "Make children strong" initiative, cast a glance into the future: "We want to introduce new measures to help coaches gain qualifications in addiction prevention and to increase the social expertise of the DFB's children's and youth departments."

Maximilian Geis

HUNGARY



MLSZ confirms two great fixtures for August

Hungary will host two great football teams in mid-August. The Hungarian Football Federation has arranged a match with Argentina on 17 August as part of its traditional 'national day' celebrations which will take place on 20 August. In previous years, Hungary have played the likes of Germany, Spain and Brazil to mark the occasion and they are set for a tough test against the first South American team to qualify for the 2006 FIFA World Cup.

As a player, Hungary's head coach Lothar Matthäus was in the West German sides that took on Argentina

in the 1986 and 1990 World Cup finals, losing the first and winning the second.

One of Europe's greatest clubs, Real Madrid CF, have also agreed to play an exhibition match to salute their former Hungarian player Ferenc Puskás (in collaboration with the Hungarian FA and national team). Real will field their best players in the match on 14 August against the Ferenc Puskás XI, a Hungarian all-star team.

Tickets went on sale in late June and it seems likely that both games will attract capacity crowds.

Márton Dinnyés

KAZAKHSTAN



New General Secretary

Askar Akhmetov was appointed as the new General Secretary of the Football Union of Kazakhstan on 15 June 2005.

Askar Akhmetov was born in 1972. In his previous career, he has served as an assistant to the President of the National Olympic Committee of the Republic of Kazakhstan, in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan, at the OSCE embassy in Vienna and as an assistant to the general director of the Khabar agency.

The main aims of his work will be to implement UEFA's club licensing system and to work more closely with the FIFA and UEFA administration, especially in the Goal and HatTrick programmes.

Kazakhstan's clubs have serious problems. In the 2004/05 season, none of them were granted a licence to take part in the UEFA club competitions. In the 2005/06 season, only FC Kairat will compete in the UEFA Champions League. The other clubs (FC Irtysh, FK Taraz and FC Tobol) do not meet UEFA requirements.

Alexander Keplin

LUXEMBOURG



A groundbreaking General Assembly

An extremely important Extraordinary General Assembly of the Luxembourg FA (FLF) was held in Differdange/Obercorn on Saturday 18 June 2005.

Many of the reforms to the FLF Statutes and Regulations, proposed by the new FLF Board (in office since February 2004) under President Paul Philipp were officially adopted at the meeting.

Some of the amendments to the Statutes, which are crucial to the future of Luxembourg football, were adopted



An extremely important General Assembly.

by an overwhelming majority of the votes cast by the meeting delegates.

The most important innovations are:

- the liberalisation of transfers of young players
- the adoption of the youth categories proposed by UEFA
- the abolition of the play-off system in the national division and the return to the traditional 14-team system from the 2006/07 season
- the rule that a club's first team may only play an official match if its team sheet contains at least five players who either hold Luxembourg citizenship or were first licensed as footballers with the FLF. From the 2006/07 season, this figure will rise to seven.

This last point in particular is designed to support the training of home-grown players and is extremely important for young players registered with clubs in Luxembourg. The FLF Board believes that this new rule corresponds with the measures taken by UEFA to promote the local training of players.

It is hoped that, in the medium to long term, these measures will help to increase public interest in football in Luxembourg and improve the standard of the country's national team.

The Luxembourg FA will continue to focus on the development of football, particularly youth football, in Luxembourg in the coming seasons.

Joël Wolff

MALTA



Service mark granted to Malta FA

The Malta Football Association, as the licensor responsible for issuing licences to Maltese clubs for the purposes of participation in the UEFA club competitions, has recently been granted the Qualicert service mark by the Société Générale de Surveillance (SGS), a systems and services certification company based in Geneva, Switzerland.



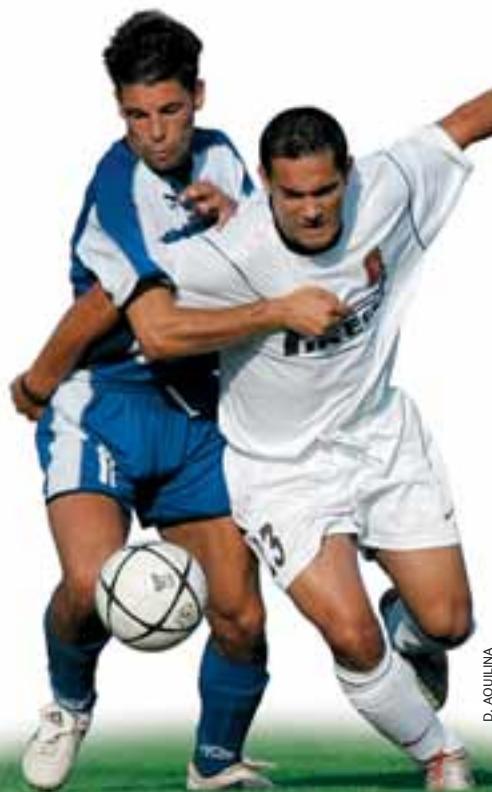
The workings of the Malta FA licensing body had been thoroughly scrutinised over a period of time before SGS were satisfied that all processes met the requirements of the UEFA 'National Football Body Licensing Standard'.

This official endorsement of the Malta FA's compliance with UEFA requirements testifies to the association's willingness to maintain high levels of proficiency in the important area of licensing for UEFA competitions.

As regards financial criteria, the licensing manager representing the Malta FA, Mario Gauci, and financial expert Charles Buhagiar were among the delegates from several UEFA member associations who attended an information meeting earlier this year at UEFA headquarters in Nyon, Switzerland.

The purpose of this meeting was to inform all national associations about changes that UEFA is planning to make regarding the financial criteria for the club licensing system. As a result of discussions on the subject and questionnaires to all associations, new proposals will be submitted to the UEFA Executive Committee for approval next September and for possible implementation as from the 2008/09 season.

Alex Vella



Valletta FC played Buducnost Podgorica in the UEFA Intertoto Cup.

PORTUGAL



The dream of young Martunis

Martunis, the young boy who was found with a Portugal team shirt after the tsunami that struck Asia last December, visited Portugal this week, following a promise made by the



National coach Luiz Felipe Scolari and Martunis.

Portuguese FA just after the tragedy. The eight-year-old boy, who survived alone for 19 days after the natural disaster, was found on a Banda Aceh beach wearing a Portugal shirt. By then, he was very weak and in need of medical care.

Martunis immediately captured the hearts of the Portuguese people when the

TV images were seen and some of Portugal's most prominent entities offered their help to assure the future of the boy, who is in Portugal with his father and a doctor.

The match between Portugal and Slovakia seemed like the ideal occasion for Martunis to visit the country he supports in international football and the Portuguese FA arranged a special programme for him, with several sightseeing trips in Lisbon. Besides the Lisbon Oceanarium, little Martunis visited the Lisbon zoo, the Portuguese FA headquarters, as well as other sights in the Portuguese capital.

However, one of the highlights of his visit was when he was welcomed by all the Portuguese team players at the hotel where they had gathered to prepare for the match

against Slovakia. There he finally met his idols and received a shirt signed by all the players, including his idol, Manchester United's Cristiano Ronaldo.

Martunis attended Portugal's match in a packed Estádio da

Luz, where he and his father received a cheque for EUR 40,000, which had been raised by the players and coaching team and from an auction of Portuguese shirts. Several Portuguese companies are helping Martunis as well as other victims of this terrible natural disaster, like the Pacos de Ferreira municipality, which has helped with new furniture for Martunis' future home.

Hugo Pietra

ROMANIA



Intense activity in the youth sector

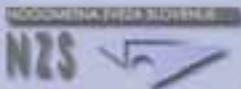
Due to the change in the national championship system at all youth and junior levels (the 2004 edition was played from spring to autumn, while the next edition, 2005-06, will start this autumn), the Romanian FA's Youth and Junior Department had to find a way of covering a seven-month gap.

To this end, it organised several competitions, all of which concluded in June. For example, the finals of the National Schools Indoor Championship and the FA Youth and Junior Cup, which provided a competitive focus for the young players, were both played before the end of June.

In addition, the national youth teams have been busy preparing for the first qualifying phase of the European Championships, which starts in the autumn. In June, for example, the traditional "Trofeul Ardealul" for national Under-16 teams was held in Arad (western Romania, 500 km from Bucharest). The tournament was won by Romania, who won all three matches: 1-0 v Moldova, 4-0 v a local team and 2-1 v Slovenia. Slovenia finished second (with 4 points), Moldova third (3 points) and the local team fourth (1 point).

The national Under-18 team will take part in the 9th edition of a tournament to be held in Niigata (Japan) in mid-July. The team coached by Costel Pana will be the first Romanian national youth team to participate in such a tournament in Japan and expectations are high, since this is a talented group of players who have already won an international tournament (in Italy) and are capable of doing well in the European qualifiers.

Paul Zaharia



SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO



Mini-pitch to promote women's football

The Serbia and Montenegro Football Association is in the midst of an ambitious mini-pitch construction programme.

It has already opened five such facilities in Sremska Mitrovica, Jagodina, Lazarevac, Gornji Milanovac and Belgrade.

The opening ceremonies have attracted a great deal of publicity. In Sremska Mitrovica, for example, the mini-pitch was inaugurated by national coach Ilija Petkovic in the presence of local authority representatives, FA officials and numerous members of the media. Gifts were presented to the children by international player Dejan Milovanovic.

In Lazarevac, the inauguration was used as an opportunity to promote women's football, with a match between Lask Lazarevac and Masinac Nis.

Zoran Lakovic



Women's teams at a mini-pitch inauguration.

SWEDEN



Focus on venue development

The planning process for a major renovation of the Råsunda national stadium in Solna will begin this summer. It is hoped that, with an increase in capacity from 36,000 to 50,000, the venue of the 1958 World Cup final will again be able to host major world football events.

The timetable for the project has not yet been decided, but the new arena will hopefully be ready by 2009. The renovation of Råsunda is an integral part of the restructuring of the city of Solna.

Since the redevelopment work carried out in the run-up to Euro 92, stadium renovation in Sweden has hit a standstill. Modernisation is now needed throughout the country. IF Elfsborg's state-of-the-art Borås Arena was finished in time for this season's kick-off and other new arenas or redevelopments are



Model of the renovated stadium.

now planned in Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö. The Gothenburg clubs will have their new arena ready in 2008, while in Malmö a decision on whether to build a new stadium or renovate the current arena is eagerly anticipated.

Venue development is one of the most critical issues for Swedish football today, both as a means to develop the clubs' economies and to enhance the possibilities of bidding for the major European football events.

Thomas Saleteg

TURKEY



New national team coaches

After Turkey's crucial World Cup qualifying matches, the Turkish FA decided to replace national team coach Ersun Yanal with Fatih Terim. Former national team and Galatasaray coach Terim was appointed on 26 June. He is the only Turkish coach to win a major UEFA tournament and was also the first to lead the Turkish national team to a European Championship finals in 1996.

Under-21 coach Raflit Cetiner's contract has also been terminated by mutual agreement. TFA President Levent Bicakci and Cetiner decided to bring the coach's contract to an end after the Under-21 team's loss to Kazakhstan on 7 June. Cetiner had been in charge since 1998. However, a new Under-21 coach has not yet been appointed.



Fatih Terim and Levent Bicakci.

The Turkish Under-20 team played in the FIFA World Youth Championship in the Netherlands, where they managed to qualify for the second round before returning home after losing 3-0 to Spain.

The TFA's preparations for its move to the Atatürk Olympic Stadium are under way. The venue of the 2005 Champions League final will be the new home of the Turkish Football Association.

Ilker Ugur

UKRAINE



Football forum in the Carpathians

A 10-day Ukrainian football forum has been held in a picturesque part of the Ukrainian Carpathians. This was the third time the finalists in the Ukrainian competition for the most innovative physical education and football coaching methods (both pupils and teachers) have gathered for such an event.



Football for everyone!

This year's forum, forming the highlight of the "Summer of Grassroots Football", was held under the UEFA principle "Football for All". It included a friendly tournament known as the "Ukrainian FA Cup", as well as other football competitions, games, excursions and, of course, football coaching. Specialists from the Ministry for Education and Science and the Ukrainian FA will be researching the experiences of the country's top physical education teachers.

During the forum, the Ukrainian FA introduced the participants to the notion of artificial pitches, on which football, basketball and volleyball can be played in all weathers.

This is the fourth year in which Ukrainian schools have organised physical education lessons with a footballing slant. The aim of the project is not only sporting success, but also to help our children become responsible, patriotic and considerate citizens.

Valeriy Nykonenko



Communications Birthdays – Calendar

Birthdays

Enrique Gonzalez Ruano (Spain), member of the circle of former UEFA committee members, celebrates his 75th birthday on 24 August, while Peter Gans (Netherlands), member of the Referee Observers Panel, turns 70 on 3 August. Geoffrey Thompson (England), UEFA Vice-President, is 60 on 23 August and Nicolae Grigorescu (Romania), member of the Referee Observers Panel, reaches the half-century mark the following day.

UEFA would like to wish them all many happy returns and also a happy birthday to:

- Theodore Theodoridis (Greece, 1.8)
- Sheila Begbie (Scotland, 1.8)
- Süheyl Önen (Turkey, 2.8)
- Philippe Diallo (France, 2.8)
- Andreas Schluchter (Switzerland, 3.8)
- Zdravko Jokic (Serbia and Montenegro, 4.8)
- Michael Skibbe (Germany, 4.8)
- Lamberto Perugia (Italy, 5.8)
- Yehuda Wilk (Israel, 5.8)
- Piet Hubers (Netherlands, 6.8)
- Pierino Lardi (Switzerland, 7.8)
- Peter Donald (Scotland, 8.8)
- Plarent Kotherja (Albania, 8.8)
- Pierre Schiepers (Belgium, 9.8)
- Odd Flattum (Norway, 9.8)
- Roy Hodgson (England, 9.8)
- Heinz Fahner (Austria, 10.8)
- Keith Burge (Wales, 10.8)
- Ettore Mazzilli (Italy, 10.8)
- Maurice Burlaz (France, 11.8)
- Dr Urs Vogel (Switzerland, 11.8)
- Jean-Marc Puisesseau (France, 13.8)
- Roger Vanden Stock (Belgium, 13.8)
- Joseph Mifsud (Malta, 13.8)
- Cornel Cristian Bivolaru (Romania, 13.8)
- Hermann Selberr (Germany, 16.8)
- Jacques Lagnier (France, 16.8)
- Alan Hutchings (England, 16.8)
- Dane Jost (Slovenia, 18.8)
- Vitalijs Liholajs (Latvia, 19.8)
- Patricia Gregory (England, 19.8)
- Hans Reijgwart (Netherlands, 19.8)
- Frantisek Laurinec (Slovakia, 19.8)
- Per Ravn Omdal (Norway, 20.8)
- Carmelo Bartolo (Malta, 21.8)
- Hasan Ceylan (Turkey, 22.8)
- Frans Masson (Belgium, 22.8)
- Kazimierz Oleszek (Poland, 22.8)
- Wilhelm Hennes (Germany, 23.8)
- John Economides (Greece, 23.8)
- Thomas Slosarich (Denmark, 24.8)

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Communications and Public Affairs Division

- Josef Poucek (Czech Republic, 25.8)
- Dulberto Gloria (Portugal, 25.8)
- Giancarlo Abete (Italy, 26.8)
- Regina Belksma-Konink (Netherlands, 26.8)
- Karl Hopfner (Germany, 28.8)
- Joseph McGlue (Republic of Ireland, 28.8)
- Pedro Manuel Correia Magro (Portugal, 30.8)
- Paulo Sousa (Portugal, 30.8)
- Christer Fällström (Sweden, 31.8)
- Pedro Dias (Portugal, 31.8)

Upcoming events

MEETINGS

24.8.2005, Monaco

Club Competitions Committee

25.8.2005, Monaco

Draw for the UEFA Champions League group matches

26.8.2005, Monaco

Draw for the UEFA Cup first round

31.8.2005, Nyon

Seminar for elite referees

31.8-1.9.2005, Nyon

Seminar for assistant referees

COMPETITIONS

2-3.8.2005

UEFA Champions League: second qualifying round (return legs)

3.8.2005

UEFA Intertoto Cup: semi-finals (return legs)

9.8.2005

UEFA Intertoto Cup: finals (first legs)

9-10.8.2005

UEFA Champions League: third qualifying round (first legs)

11.8.2005

UEFA Cup: second qualifying round (first legs)

23.8.2005

UEFA Intertoto Cup: finals (return legs)

23-24.8.2005

UEFA Champions League: third qualifying round (return legs)

25.8.2005

UEFA Cup: second qualifying round (return legs)

26.8.2005, Monaco

UEFA Super Cup

Communications

■ On 11 June, the Extraordinary General Assembly of the Georgian Football Association elected Nodar Akhalkatsi as the new FA President.

■ Following the resignation of General Secretary Vladimir Radionov, Ekaterina Fedyshina, director of the Department of International Affairs, is now responsible for all international matters at the Russian Football Association.

■ The Kazakhstan FA has appointed a new General Secretary: Askar Akhmetov took up the post on 15 June.

Match agents

The UEFA Licensed Match Agents Panel has granted three new licences. The new match agents are:

Lucien RIVAT

2, Rue des Bruyères
FR-07800 La Voulte-sur-Rhône

Tel. +33 4 75 85 39 30

Mob. +33 6 08 22 58 81

Email: rivatludenis@aol.com

Jeroen GULIKER

Drususstraat 34
NL-2025 BS Haarlem
Tel. +31 23 5379933
Fax. +31 23 5294520
Email: info@expersport.nl

Alex COWDY

Flat 7
132 Barlowmoor Road
Didsbury
GB-Manchester M20 2PU
Tel. +44 161 448 2158
Business tel. +44 7731 546861
Email: alex.cowdy@skill-first.com

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Editor André Vieli

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UEFA
Route de Genève 46
CH-1260 Nyon
Suisse
Téléphone +41 22 994 44 44
Télécum +41 22 994 44 88
uefa.com

Union des associations
européennes de football

