



UEFA GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL NEWSLETTER

UEFA
Grassroots
Programme

Editorial:
Watering the Grass



Summer
of Grassroots
Football



The Grassroots
Charter



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ROBERT BARCLAY

**MICHAEL OWEN
TAKES PART IN A GRASSROOTS
FOOTBALL SESSION.**

**UEFA TECHNICAL
DIRECTOR ANDY ROXBURGH
AT A GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL
COURSE IN CYPRUS.**



UEFA



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**FREE PLAY AT THE
OPENING OF A NEW GRASSROOTS
MINI-PITCH IN SWITZERLAND.
CEO LARS-CHRISTER OLSSON
AND GERHARD AIGNER WATCH
FROM THE SIDELINES.**

UEFA-WOODS

'Watering The Grass'

EDITORIAL

BY ANDY ROXBURGH,
UEFA TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

Do you love football? Do you, metaphorically speaking, carry the ball close to your heart? Were you a grassroots player? Every footballer with a passion for the game, even the professionals, will answer yes to all three questions. For example, Andriy Shevchenko, a European champion with AC Milan, played in the streets of Kiev before he was spotted by FC Dynamo at the age of nine; as a child, Michael Owen, Liverpool FC and England star, practised at the local public park, with his father and two older brothers, every Sunday morning; Georghe Hagi, Romania's greatest talent, was a grassroots player without a team when he was 14 years old – he only had the self-belief that one day he would be a top player. Everyone who has played football started out as a grassroots player. Consequently, UEFA and the member associations recognise the importance and the value of the game at grassroots level and are committed to 'watering the grass', to promoting and developing football for all.

UEFA, as the European governing body, has a responsibility to take initiatives which will support and encourage the grassroots work taking place in each member association. Specifically, it is UEFA's role to stimulate interest in the grassroots through promotional activities and materials; to provide expert assistance, facilities and equipment to the associations; to organise educational courses and conferences; to create guidelines for grassroots' programmes based on best practice; and to generate new ideas which will motivate those working with the players – the instructors and the co-ordinators. Of course, the professional game is vital to every association, but the benefits (educational, health, social and sporting)

which are gained from investing in grassroots football, cannot be overemphasised.

When you speak to a footballer, you can ask, "What can you do for football?" or, "What can football do for you?" The first is aimed at the elite, the potential star; the second reflects the approach when dealing with those who play for fun at grassroots level. In the latter case, the philosophy is clear: the game must be open, safe, everywhere, lively, fair, simple, personal, creative and enjoyable. And, significantly, the game must be viewed as a vehicle for social inclusion and educational development. UEFA's support for disabled football, the Red Cross, and the fight against racism are examples of the European governing body's commitment to worthy causes.

During 2004, UEFA will be active in the grassroots field. For example, the 5th UEFA Conference for grassroots leaders will be held in Oslo in the autumn; the new UEFA Grassroots Charter, a programme of endorsement and up-grading, will be established (the pilot project involving six associations is already underway); activities related to the UCL – the Starball match and the Young Champions – will, once again, link the premier club competition with the vast army of fun footballers; and, as part of UEFA's Jubilee celebrations, the months of June, July and August have been declared "A Summer of Grassroots Football". A promotional campaign will include issuing certificates of attendance (signed by President Lennart Johansson and CEO Lars-Christer Olsson) to everyone who participates in an association grassroots event. There will be recognition for grassroots schemes which have a social impact, and a competition to find the best 'grassroots' photograph. In addition, UEFA's new assistance programme, Hat-Trick, will fund small grassroots pitches in each association and, as part of a special educational programme, grassroots co-ordinators and instructors will receive further training to help them with their demanding task. At the start of the new century, the UEFA Congress in Prague issued a Declaration

on Grassroots Football which emphasised the European associations' wholehearted support for development schemes and community projects, in particular those with a social value. Lennart Johansson reiterated this grassroots declaration at the recent UEFA Congress in Cyprus in order to emphasise the ongoing commitment to grassroots football of the associations and UEFA's Executive Committee.

Producing top players and building exciting teams are key aspects of an association's strategy, but without mass participation and public interest in the game, football's popularity will wane. If the grassroots become weak, where will the next generation of players, referees, administrators, officials, coaches and supporters come from? Of course, the grassroots player dreams of becoming the next Shevchenko, Owen or Hagi. This is desirable and to be encouraged, but the production of elite players is not the main purpose of grassroots programmes. Participation and a love of the game are the core values which underpin a dynamic, all-inclusive grassroots football environment – a place where those involved "carry the ball close to their heart".



What young player does not dream about becoming a star like Shevchenko?

A. SABATTINI



PER KJÆRBYE

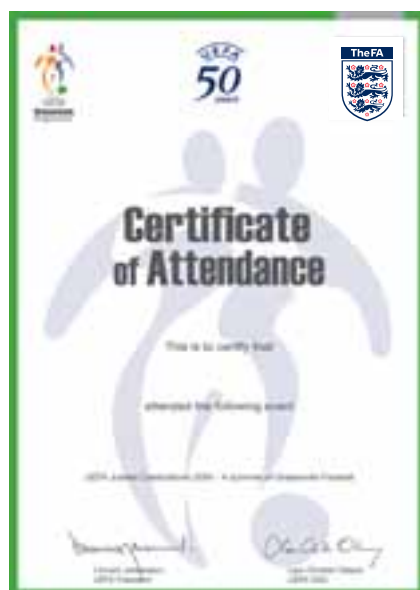
**THE ENJOYMENT
OF PLAYING
IS WHAT MATTERS
MOST.**

SUMMER OF GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL

**AS PART OF UEFA'S GOLDEN JUBILEE IN 2004,
A SUMMER OF GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL HAS BEEN INCLUDED
IN THE PROGRAMME OF CELEBRATIONS.**

During June, July and August, major events such as EURO 2004 in Portugal, the European Under-19 final rounds for men and women in Switzerland and Finland respectively, and the European Youth Football Seminar in Nyon will be in the spotlight. However, in juxtaposition with these few high-profile events during

the summer, the associations will join the Jubilee party by organising various grassroots activities. UEFA will offer technical advice as required, and will promote, support, co-ordinate and recognise many of the grassroots schemes which will contribute to a "European Festival of Grassroots Football".



Everyone who takes part in a grassroots activity will receive a certificate signed by the UEFA President and Chief Executive.

Many associations have chosen to organise different kinds of competitions in different categories, but mostly for young players. In some associations, such as Belgium, Denmark, Iceland, Italy, Northern Ireland and Slovakia, these events will even be for children as young as six. In the case of Belgium, 10,000 youngsters are expected to take part in tournaments and training sessions. Other associations will be concentrating on players up to 16-17 years of age, while the Armenian Football Association's is extending the age limit for its special grassroots activities to 23.

The veterans are not being overlooked either. Armenia is organising a tournament for players over 40, and futsal



**GIRLS WILL HAVE
THEIR FAIR
SHARE OF GRASSROOTS
ACTIVITIES.**



PER KJÆRBYE



UEFA-WOODS

tournaments for adults will take place in the Czech Republic and Ukraine. In Andorra, disabled players will be taking part in a festival of football in the form of a tournament for Special Olympics players.

Some tournaments will be open to girls and boys, like the President's Cup in Latvia, in which 7,200 boys and 1,100 girls will be taking part. Other tournaments have already established a sound reputation, like the Francesc Vila Memorial Tournament in Andorra, which will be taking place for the fifth time with teams from all over Europe. In Germany, there will be a girls' football day, and in Belarus, special activities are being planned for girls aged between 12 and 19.

Apart from tournaments and other competitions, football camps and schools are the most popular activities being organised by the national associations. Such events are being planned in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Italy, Lithuania, Malta, Poland and Sweden, for example. In Iceland, chil-

dren from as young as four will be able to practise football in the clubs and schools being run throughout the country in August. The Republic of Ireland is expecting some 20,000 7-16-year-old children and youths for its summer football schools, while Northern Ireland will be running 24 football development centres throughout the country.

In an original initiative, the Ukrainian Football Association is going to organise "Football Holidays" where the 200 boys and girls taking part will come from the schools whose teachers won the "Best Football Lesson" competition. The programme will include a tournament and various contests.

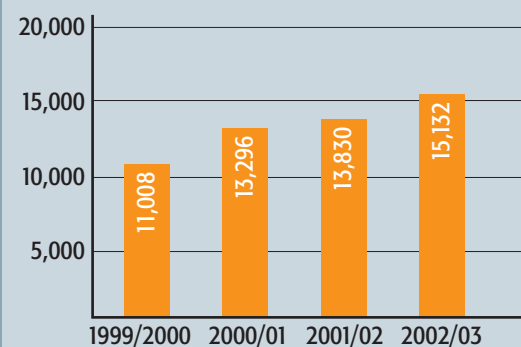
Belgium is also organising something out of the ordinary by offering beach football to a hundred or so young people per day for a fortnight on North Sea beaches. Slovenia is focusing on street football, while Azerbaijan will bring together 62 amateur teams in August, including women's football teams.

The Football Association has been concerned with the quality of grassroots football for a number of years and has set up several charters to this effect, including the Charter Standard Clubs, which encourages clubs to organise grassroots football – protecting children, working with qualified coaches and respecting fair play.

This charter relates to:

- 250,000 registered Mini Soccer players
- 850 Charter Standard Clubs
- 5,000 Charter Standard Teams
- 100,000 players, with child protection/qualified coaches
- 40,000 trained in child protection
- 19,000 Level 1 coaches in ten months

Number of registered Mini Soccer teams





**UEFA TOTALLY
SUPPORTS
GRASSROOTS
FOOTBALL.**



Grassroots football can be played anywhere – even on a roof in Tokyo.

What is Grassroots Football?

All football which is non-professional and non-elite is defined as grassroots (all children’s football is grassroots).

Grassroots football includes:

- Football in amateur clubs
- Children’s football
- School football
- Beach football
- Leisure football
- Company football
- Football in cities (disadvantaged groups)
- Commercial programmes
- Indoor football/futsal
- Football for disabled players
- Veterans’ football



For several years, UEFA has been giving financial support to Special Olympics, an organisation which makes sport accessible to people with learning difficulties.

THE FOOTBALL PYRAMID



Declaration on Grassroots Football

President Lennart Johansson in his address to the delegates at the recent UEFA Congress in Cyprus, reiterated UEFA’s commitment to grassroots football, and in particular the sentiments expressed in the Declaration on Grassroots Football at the 2001 Conference for Presidents and General Secretaries:

‘The representatives recognise the value of grassroots programmes as a vehicle for educational, social and sporting development; and reconfirm their commitment to invest in player development schemes and community projects, in particular those which have a social value.

The Conference supports UEFA’s vision of grassroots football, whereby everyone has the opportunity to play, there

is no discrimination, safety is a priority, and human relationships are more important than results. European Foot-

ball has a contribution to make to society, in particular to young people, and UEFA and the member associa-

tions will continue to work for the further development of the game at every level, including the wonderful world of grassroots football.’

Lennart Johansson thanked the 52 member associations in Cyprus for their support and for their work in the grassroots field.



The UEFA President and the Executive Committee firmly support grassroots football.

**"GRASSROOTS SOCCER
IS FOR ALL AGES, GENDERS, SIZES,
SHAPES, LEVELS OF ABILITY, NATIONALITIES,
FAITHS, RACES. EVERYONE."**

Jürgen Klinsmann



BONGARTS

Grassroots Philosophy

The key principles are:

- Everybody has the opportunity to play
- Football is everywhere
- There is no discrimination
- Action must be dynamic, simple, exciting and rewarding
- Safety is a priority
- Players come first
- Fair play must be respected
- Relationships, teamwork and skill development are key components



UEFA

The "Starball" grassroots football tournament takes place before the UEFA Champions League final.



UEFA

Grassroots Football Charter

**AWARE THAT TOP-QUALITY FOOTBALL CANNOT EXIST
WITHOUT A BROAD AND SOLID BASE BENEATH IT,
THE UEFA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE APPROVED A NEW GRASSROOTS
FOOTBALL PROGRAMME AT THE START OF LAST YEAR.**

This programme is based on a grassroots football charter, the draft of which was presented to the representatives from all UEFA member associations attending the UEFA grassroots football course in Coverciano, Italy, last summer.

In collaboration with the UEFA Administration, a working group then dealt with the details of the charter and its implementation. In a first phase, UEFA is working with six pilot associations (Denmark, England, Germany, Netherlands, Norway and Scotland) to fine-tune and test the programme.

Six areas have been selected for evaluation and approval:

- summer football schools
- girls' training programme
- training of volunteer instructors
- football for disabled players
- football for veterans
- local programmes

A refined version of the grassroots football charter will be presented at the 5th UEFA Grassroots Football Course later this year (18–22 October) and practical examples commented on.

AGENDA

■ **22.7.2004**

UEFA Grassroots Working Group Meeting, **Nyon/Switzerland**

■ **22.7.2004**

UEFA Youth & Amateur Football Committee, **Nyon/Switzerland**

■ **22 – 25.7.2004**

UEFA Youth Football – A Celebration Conference, **Nyon/Switzerland**

■ **18 – 22.10.2004**

5th UEFA Conference on Grassroots Football, **Oslo/Norway**



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