



UEFA•direct



IN THIS ISSUE

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André Vieli

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Cover:

*Manuel Pasqual tries to get
the better of Petr Čech in
Italy's 2-1 win against the
Czech Republic in qualifying
for the 2014 FIFA World
Cup. Together with the
Netherlands, Italy were the
first to secure a ticket to
Brazil. With the play-offs in
November, the full European
lineup will soon be decided.*

Photo: Getty Images

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE IN DUBROVNIK 4

Among various items on the agenda was a summary of the strategy meeting for the presidents and general secretaries of UEFA's member associations, held in Dubrovnik ahead of the meeting of the Executive Committee itself.



COMPARATIVE STUDY OF EUROPEAN CLUB FOOTBALL 8

The UEFA administration has published its benchmarking report on the 237 clubs competing in the 2013/14 UEFA club competitions.



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This year's UEFA/EU Stadium and Security Conference highlighted the need to work together to overcome difficulties.



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EUROPEAN FOOTBALL UNITED AGAINST RACISM 22

Matchday three in the UEFA club competitions will serve to spread the unequivocal message that racism and discrimination have no place in the game.





MEMBER ASSOCIATION DIALOGUE CRUCIAL FOR PROGRESS

The recent Top Executive Programme (TEP) strategy meeting in Dubrovnik, Croatia, provided the latest opportunity for the presidents and general secretaries of UEFA's 54 member associations to deal with the important sporting and political matters which our sport continuously faces – and to make their case to the UEFA Executive Committee.

Although the member associations meet at the annual UEFA Congress, the TEP meetings take place in a completely different atmosphere, as they are working sessions which focus more on sharing ideas in order to shape proposals. These debates and discussions are central in ensuring that the processes of good governance and transparency are maintained across UEFA's decision-making process.

Normally, issues which affect the long-term evolution of UEFA's competitions are discussed at committee stage before a final presentation ends on the UEFA Executive Committee's table for a final decision. These issues take time to resolve, but, equally, the TEP meetings allow the associations to make best use of the time available, in order to propose changes and address more immediate operational issues.

This TEP meeting came with a particularly packed agenda, and the talks were shaped by the desire of the UEFA member associations to further promote and develop senior national team competitions for the long term, but always keeping in mind the agreed international match calendar and the continued respect of the principle of unity across all member associations.

In addition, certain other proposals and recommendations were submitted to the UEFA Executive Committee, which held its own meeting immediately after the TEP gathering. For instance, the request to retain the current date format of the European Under-21 Championship final tournament in odd years after 2015 was approved within 24 hours of the request being made! This is democracy at its finest...

We appreciate the input provided by the member associations, especially where they make proposals and take decisions for the benefit of European football as a whole. It is this vision, based on principles of unity and transparency, which allows us to strengthen and progress European football for its long-term benefit.

Gianni Infantino
UEFA General Secretary

STRONG INTEREST IN EURO 2020

With Michel Platini in the chair, the UEFA Executive Committee met for the first time since the elections held at the UEFA Congress in London in May. It was therefore the first meeting for Englishman David Gill and German Wolfgang Niersbach, who had replaced their compatriots Geoffrey Thompson and Theo Zwanziger.



The UEFA Executive Committee at its meeting in Dubrovnik

The Croatian city of Dubrovnik hosted the meeting on 19 September, following a strategy meeting for the presidents and general secretaries of UEFA's 54 member associations, organised under the banner of the Top Executive Programme (TEP). A report summarising this two-day strategy meeting kicked off the Executive Committee's discussions.

U21 final rounds to remain in odd years

The future of the national team competitions beyond 2018 was among the items debated by the national associations' top executives. It was not a question of taking decisions, but rather of giving some initial thought to how these competitions might evolve, within the framework of the approved international match calendar and in the general interest of the associations. The only concrete outcome on this subject, which will continue to be analysed and discussed at great length, was a request from the national associations that European Under-21 Championship final rounds should continue to be held in odd years. In January 2012, the Executive Committee decided to revert to the previous system of aligning the Under-21 match calendar with

those of the FIFA World Cup and European Football Championship qualifying competitions. The Executive Committee granted this request from the national associations, meaning that Under-21 final rounds will continue to be held in odd years after 2015. The possibility of group winners qualifying directly rather than via play-offs requires further evaluation, as does the idea that the number of finalists should be increased.

No more cup runners-up in the UEFA Europa League

In the club competitions, and more specifically the UEFA Europa League, the question of whether domestic cup runners-up should qualify if cup winners qualify for the UEFA Champions League was once again debated. Most national associations thought this rule should be changed so that the place reserved for the domestic cup winner would go to the best-placed club in the league championship that had not already qualified for a UEFA competition. This change should come into force from the 2015/16 season.

The strategy meeting also tackled the subject of the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar, with the national associations unanimous that they were

not against the principle of the tournament being moved from June/July to a different time of year.

The national associations also declared themselves against the third-party ownership of players, expressed support for UEFA's cooperation with the other football confederations through memorandums of understanding, and thought that the possibility of shortening the summer transfer window should be examined, although this subject fell under FIFA's remit.

Two places for Gibraltar

After this review of the various topics discussed at the strategy meeting, the Executive Committee continued its meeting by taking note of the different UEFA committees' activities since its last meeting in London in May. Among other things, it noted the decision of the bureau of the Fair Play and Social Responsibility Committee to give the German and Czech football associations €150,000 each to help pay for repairs to club infrastructure damaged by floods in these countries in June.

Following the admission of the Gibraltar Football Association as a UEFA member, the Executive Committee accepted the proposal of the Club Competitions Committee and decided to allow Gibraltar to enter two clubs for the UEFA competitions from the 2014/15 season: its league champions for the UEFA Champions League and its domestic cup winners for the UEFA Europa League. Both clubs will enter at the first qualifying stage and the access list for the UEFA club competitions will be amended accordingly.

In other business, the Executive Committee confirmed that the 2014 UEFA Super Cup would be held in Cardiff on Tuesday 12 August, and that the 2013–15 European Under-21 Champion-

MEETING OF THE STRATEGY COUNCIL

Comprising representatives of the national associations, leagues, clubs and professional players, the UEFA Professional Football Strategy Council (PFSC) met on 19 September in Dubrovnik on the morning of the UEFA Executive Committee meeting.

An update was given on the strategy meeting of the presidents and general secretaries of UEFA's member associations, as well on the progress made by the PFSC working group on transfer matters. The transfer system will remain a topic of discussion at forthcoming meetings.

The locally trained player rule was discussed following the publication of a study on this rule commissioned by the European Union. Additional items on the agenda were the calendar of the FIFA World Cup 2022 in Qatar and European social dialogue. •

ship final tournament would be held in the Czech Republic from 17 to 30 June 2015.

Candidates for UEFA EURO 2020

By the 12 September deadline, 32 national associations had informed UEFA of their interest in hosting matches at UEFA EURO 2020, which will be played in 13 European cities to mark the competition's 60th anniversary. The UEFA President, Michel Platini, who came up with the idea, welcomed the enthusiastic response to his proposal. The "EURO for Europe" is designed to give national associations that would be unable to organise a whole tournament on their own the chance to be involved in staging the event, and many responded to the invitation. Most of the candidates (26) applied for one package comprising three group matches and one knockout

The leaders of the 32 associations that are bidding to host matches at UEFA EURO 2020



Getty Images

match, while Turkey only applied for the package of semi-finals and final, and the national associations of Germany, England, Belgium, Spain and Ukraine applied for both.

The candidate associations and their proposed provisional host cities

Armenia	Yerevan
Azerbaijan	Baku
Belarus	Minsk
Belgium	Brussels
Bulgaria	Sofia
Croatia	Zagreb
Czech Republic	Prague
Denmark	Copenhagen
England	London
Finland	Helsinki
France	Lyon
FYR Macedonia	Skopje
Germany	Munich
Greece	Athens
Hungary	Budapest
Israel	Jerusalem
Italy	Rome/Milan
Kazakhstan	Astana
Netherlands	Amsterdam
Poland	Warsaw/Chorzow
Portugal	Lisbon/Porto
Republic of Ireland	Dublin
Romania	Bucharest
Russia	St Petersburg
Scotland	Glasgow
Serbia	Belgrade
Spain	Madrid/Barcelona/ Bilbao/Valencia
Sweden	Solna
Switzerland	Basel
Turkey	Istanbul
Ukraine	Kyiv/Donetsk
Wales	Cardiff

The national associations can still change their proposed cities before they submit their final bids, which they have to do by 25 April 2014. The Executive Committee will decide on the host cities at its meeting on 25 September 2014.

Fewer losses

The Executive Committee also took note of a benchmarking report prepared by the UEFA administration on the 237 clubs qualified and licensed for the 2013/14 UEFA club competitions (see pages 8-9). This report shows that club finances have turned a corner, with losses, which had been rising steadily in recent years, taking a downward turn, falling by €600 million from €1.7 billion to €1.1 billion, i.e. by 36%. This development shows the initial effects of the financial fair play measures introduced by UEFA for clubs participating in its competitions.

■ With less than 1,000 days until EURO 2016 in France, the Executive Committee was updated on the state of progress of construction work (the stadium in Nice, for example, having opened in September) and the sale of television rights.

A report was also presented on the disciplinary cases dealt with this summer in relation to the UEFA club competitions. The rising number of cases and the complexity of the proceedings are posing organisational problems that require in-depth discussion.

Finally, the committee was informed about proposed revisions to the UEFA Statutes designed to bring them into line with decisions taken since the last revision or to clarify points such as the definition of absolute majority.

The next Executive Committee meeting will take place in Bilbao on 12 and 13 December. ●

DUBROVNIK 1970

The Executive Committee meeting on 19 September 2013 was not the first to be held in Dubrovnik. It had met there 43 years earlier, on 8 May 1970, with the then UEFA President, Gustav Wiederkehr, in the chair just after being re-elected at the 10th Ordinary UEFA Congress held in the Dalmation city earlier the same day. The Executive Committee meeting had lasted only one hour, the only item on the agenda being the appointment of the Executive Committee office holders and the composition of the other UEFA committees. The Executive Committee's ordinary business had been dealt with a few days earlier, on 5 May, at a meeting in Italy. That meeting should have been held in



The members of the UEFA Executive Committee who met in Dubrovnik in 1970

Milan but, because of a threatened strike by hotels there, it had been moved to Cernobbio, near Como. Since hotel prices there were higher than average, the Executive Committee decided in Dubrovnik to give its members an additional 50 Swiss francs per night. It should be mentioned that, back then, Executive Committee members paid for their hotel rooms themselves from the allowance they received from UEFA.

It is also interesting to note that, at the UEFA Congress, the Football

Association of Yugoslavia proposed that a fair play trophy be awarded in each UEFA competition. However, the proposal was rejected on the grounds that it would be too complicated to implement. ●

EUROPEAN FUTSAL CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL ROUND DRAW IN BELGIUM

The play-offs rounded off qualifying in September, providing the names of the last four participants in the final round of the European Futsal Championship, which will take place in Antwerp, Belgium, between 28 January and 8 February next year.



Ukraine, the Netherlands, Romania and Croatia have taken the last four places at the UEFA Futsal EURO 2014, alongside Spain, Italy, Russia, Slovenia, Portugal, Azerbaijan, the Czech Republic and hosts Belgium.

Spain, who have held the title since 2005, will be seeking to win the tournament for a sixth time – and the fifth time in a row. However, Italy (winners in 2003) and Russia (who won the inaugural tournament) will also be wanting to add to their list of honours, and former finalists Portugal and Ukraine will be in the running as well.



The trophy was handed to François de Keersmaecker (centre), president of the Royal Belgian Football Association, by Laurentzi Gana Gorozika, representing holders Spain. On the left is former Belgian international Marc Degryse

The draw for the final round was made on 4 October at the Centrum Elzenveld in Antwerp, resulting in the following groups:

- Group A:** Belgium, Ukraine, Romania
- Group B:** Russia, Portugal, Netherlands
- Group C:** Italy, Azerbaijan, Slovenia
- Group D:** Spain, Czech Republic, Croatia.

The group matches will be played at the Lotto Arena between 28 January and 2 February. The quarter-finals, semi-finals and final will then be played at the larger Sportpaleis (which has a capacity of 15,000) between 3 and 8 February. The full fixture list is available on UEFA.com. ●

EUROPEAN WOMEN'S UNDER-19 CHAMPIONSHIP QUALIFYING ROUND COMPLETED



The 11 group winners and the 10 best second-placed teams in the qualifying round of the 2013/14 European Women's Under-19 Championship will join England, Germany and Spain (who each had a bye in qualifying) in the draw for the elite round, which will be made on 20 November.

The elite round will be contested in spring 2014.

The final round of the competition will then take place from 15 to 27 July 2014, with the six group winners and the best runners-up from the elite round being joined by hosts Norway.

The 24 teams that have qualified for the elite round are: Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, England, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Ireland, Romania, Russia, Scotland, Serbia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and Ukraine. ●

UEFA FUTSAL CUP ELITE ROUND LINEUP COMPLETE

All the teams that will be contesting the elite round of the 2013/14 UEFA Futsal Cup are now known.



The six group winners from the main round – MFK VitEn Vitebsk (Belarus), Győri ETO FC (Hungary), Tulpar Karagandy (Kazakhstan), FK EP Chrudim (Czech Republic), KMF Ekonomac Kragujevac (Serbia) and Araz Naxçıvan (Azerbaijan) – and second-placed teams Slovan Bratislava (Slovakia), KMF Tango Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Lokomotiv Kharkiv (Ukraine), FC Litija (Slovenia), CF Eindhoven (Netherlands) and City'US Târgu Mureş (Romania) qualified at the beginning of October. They will be joined in the elite round by Kairat Almaty (Kazakhstan), MFK Dinamo (Russia), FC Barcelona (Spain) and Sporting Clube de Portugal (Portugal), who were given a bye in the main round on account of their seedings.

The draw for the elite round will take place on 18 October at UEFA headquarters in Nyon, and the outcome will be announced on UEFA.com. Four groups of four will compete in mini-tournaments between 19 and 24 November, with the group winners qualifying for the final round, which will take place in April 2014 in the home country of one of the finalists. ●

FIFA BEACH SOCCER WORLD CUP RUSSIA DEFEND THEIR BEACH SOCCER TITLE

Russia successfully defended their title in the FIFA Beach Soccer World Cup in Tahiti, which took place from 18 to 28 September.

The Russians played another European side – Spain – in the final, beating them 5-1.

The other European teams at that FIFA tournament were Ukraine and the Netherlands, neither of whom made it through the group stage. ●

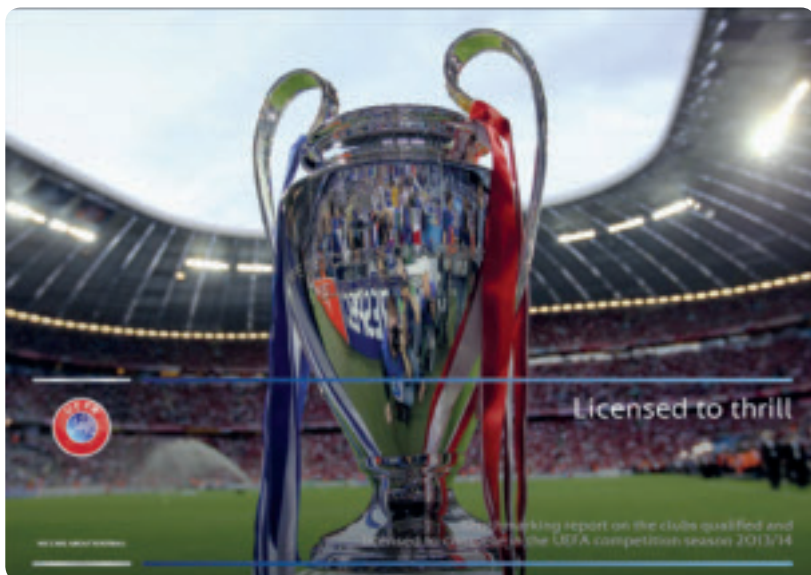


Russia's players show their delight after overcoming Spain in the final

EUROPE'S CLUBS UNDER ANALYSIS

A new UEFA benchmarking report focusing on the 237 clubs competing in this season's UEFA club competitions was unveiled in Dubrovnik and is now available on UEFA.com.

Photos UEFA



The report, entitled *Licensed to thrill*, is the first benchmarking publication to concentrate in detail on the clubs participating in UEFA's competitions. It is based on audited financial figures submitted by the clubs to UEFA as well as on data from UEFA's competition and stadium databases.

Reduction in club losses and debts

The UEFA General Secretary, Gianni Infantino, highlighted the headline figures from the report first in Monaco and then in Dubrovnik, in particular the €600m decrease in top-division aggregate club losses – the first time on record that club revenue growth has exceeded wage cost growth – and a significant 70% reduction in clubs' overdue payable debts. As the UEFA General Secretary said in Monaco, these figures underline the positive effect that financial fair play is already having on clubs. The 52-page report contains a wealth of information on European club finances beyond those headline figures, as well as some important non-financial information.

Unique depth and breadth of European football revealed

The first section of the report features a detailed ten-year review of club performance in UEFA competitions and emphasises the broad participation of clubs and relative success of different countries' clubs. For example, Spanish and English clubs have been the most consistently successful, with a 70% success rate in reaching at least the last 16 of the UEFA Champions League or UEFA Europa League, while teams from 22 different UEFA member associations have reached this stage of the competitions during those ten years.

This section of the report also highlights what makes European football unique, with the huge depth and breadth of club football illustrated. As the UEFA President, Michel Platini, says in the foreword to the report: *"Whilst some clubs have inevitably been more successful than others, the fact that 255 different clubs have competed in the UEFA Champions league and 583 different clubs in total have competed in UEFA club competitions in the last decade makes me proud to be the UEFA President. Proud that so many different people have been able to experience first-hand the magic of football and proud of the strength of football across Europe."*

The PDF version of the report provides added interactivity – for example, allowing readers to hover over the club logos and see pop-up boxes showing a complete record of every round in which each club has participated during the ten years under review.



As well as revealing the unique depth of European football, the report also spotlights the healthy turnover of clubs in the competitions, with 26 clubs (listed in the report) participating for the first time in a decade, while 21 of these clubs are playing in Europe for the first time in their history.

Club rankings revealed for first time

The inclusion of a series of top 25 club rankings in various categories, including average domestic attendance, squad transfer costs, the value of club fixed assets, club revenues and net earnings from transfer activity, represents a significant increase in the transparency of clubs' off-pitch performance and is in line with the stated financial fair play objective of increasing club football transparency.

Ever increasing revenues

The report presents the financial performance of the most recent fully completed financial year (ending 2012), which will form the basis for the first year of financial figures to be examined under the much anticipated break-even assessment of financial fair play. According to the report, there were 31 clubs in Europe with revenues of €100m+ in the past financial year, of which 24 are competing in this year's UEFA competitions, with Real Madrid CF topping the revenue table.

While revenues across European top-division football (700+ clubs) increased by a healthy 7% compared with the previous year, the revenues of the 25 largest clubs increased at the even higher rate of 12%. This means that between 2008 and 2012, these clubs increased their revenue by a remarkable 42%, buoyed by the ever increasing global reach of the European game.



Domestic television contributed by 25% to total revenues of the 237 clubs participating in UEFA competitions, with UEFA prize money contributing 11%, sponsorship and commercial rev-

enues 24% and 10% respectively, gate receipts 20%, and other revenues the remaining 10%.

As well as looking at the current state of club finances, the report also presents some analyses looking back over the last five three-year cycles of European club football and, again, the picture presented is a successful one, the record levels of interest in UEFA club football generating an average increase in competition distributions equivalent to 12% every year for the last decade.

Investment and spending levels revealed

Elsewhere, the report analyses the stadiums to be used in this year's UEFA club competitions, with 56 clubs initially sharing stadiums, a figure that is likely to rise as and if clubs progress to later stages of the competitions, where logistical and security requirements increase. Of the stadiums in use at some stage during the competitions, well over half are classified as Category 4 and over half have a capacity of more than 20,000.

One of the aims of financial fair play is to encourage long-term investment in stadiums, training complexes and other facilities as future resources. The record levels of income flowing into the game provide an opportunity for such investment, but detailed UEFA analysis of the 237 club accounts reveals that total cash invested in such assets was around €300m during 2012. This compares with a net transfer cost of approximately €800m and net wages of €4,900m. These figures underline the need to continue to encourage long-term investments at club level.

On average, the 237 clubs spent 60% of their revenue on wages, 79% of which went to players and 21% to technical and administrative staff. The report also demonstrates the redistributive effect of the transfer system, with Lithuanian, Belgian, Icelandic, Polish and Serbian clubs reporting 20%+ net transfer earnings as a percentage of revenue.

Increasing understanding of European club football

UEFA has been greatly encouraged by the feedback received from all stakeholders on the previous annual club licensing benchmarking reports, and hopes this new "slim-line" interim report will further increase understanding of club football in Europe. The report demonstrates that football, and European football in particular, remains strong, with many successes. At the same time, it provides some food for thought. The last word is left to the UEFA President: "Let us together keep European football strong for generations to come." ●

TOGETHER IS THE ONLY WAY FORWARD

On 11 and 12 September, Warsaw welcomed over 300 delegates to the annual UEFA/EU Stadium and Security Conference.



UEFA vice-president Grigoriy Surkis gives his opening address

This unique event – the theme of which was “together is the only way forward” – brought together the clubs that had qualified for the UEFA Champions League and the UEFA Europa League, the police authorities of their respective countries, experts from EU think tanks and UEFA’s 54 member associations.

The programme featured opening addresses by Grigoriy Surkis, one of UEFA’s vice-presidents, and Elvinas Jankevičius, the vice-minister for the interior in Lithuania, which currently holds the EU presidency. These were followed by an overview of notable incidents, which spanned three seasons, and a series of integrated group workshops on prominent issues (including welcoming away supporters to a host city, the use of pyrotechnics in stadiums and overall stadium management and operations).

Back to basics

Let us first look at the theme of this year’s conference. In 2012 the event focused on “raising the bar” – calling for an overarching improvement and dedication above and beyond the call of duty to ensure the best possible environment for football. This year’s conference went back to basics, emphasising the importance of working together to achieve the best possible results. Working together may seem obvious, but all too often we focus on our own objectives and forget about the correct flow of information – or do not stop to think about the impact that our actions can have on our partners. As different stakeholders have different roles and tasks, this is sometimes a natural consequence of working together, but it is especially common when working under pressure or to a tight deadline. “Together is the only way forward” is about knowing our partners and understanding the wide variety of elements that must come together in the event chain to stage a safe and secure football match. The first priority is always safety, and in this respect working together should not be a choice but rather an integrated part of the daily work ethic.

Government support needed

Grigoriy Surkis is certainly no stranger to complex event operations, having been a key player in the organisation of UEFA EURO 2012 on behalf of Ukraine. He opened the conference by stress-



The conference room was set up in an innovative style to foster discussion

ing the importance of collective cooperation: “UEFA has 54 member associations, but despite this vast network it simply cannot operate in isolation. We need to be supported by governments, public authorities and police in our efforts to ensure that our competitions can take place in a safe, secure and welcoming environment.”

He went on to explain how the current political turbulence and economic instability in Europe has had an impact on football, with protests and unrest becoming more visible. Surkis stressed that legislators and governments’ focus on football violence must be constant and relentless, because as long as everything possible has not been done, our duty has not been fulfilled.

Not just the game

Elvinas Jankevičius also took a strong line on cooperation, but admitted that there are no easy stand-alone solutions: “Joint responsibility is the only way to ensure a safe and welcoming environment for spectators – and this is valid not only on the football pitch, but also during travel, at airports and train stations, and in the city centre. Football is not just the game, it’s the whole ‘day out’, and this is especially true for travelling fans and families.” The vice-minister concluded by stressing the serious nature of stadium security, reminding everyone present that people’s



lives are at stake. An integrated approach is needed, from prevention to reaction, one that involves the active and joint participation of public and private authorities, police forces, clubs and supporters.

Incident review

The UEFA incident review was presented from the unique perspective of the travelling fan and examples were given not only of incidents in the stadium itself, but also of incidents while travelling to the final destination, on arrival, in the city centre and outside the stadium. It is clear from the number of reported incidents over the last three seasons that although the situation remains stable, considerable progress has to be made in the coming years to minimise problem areas.

The issue of pyrotechnics was also discussed, resulting in a wide range of opinions being expressed and intense debate. The workshop explored the two opposing positions on pyrotechnics: the first being that their use in the stadium should be banned; and the second being that they should be allowed in the stadium, but their use should be regulated. Representatives of Football Supporters Europe (FSE) argued that pyrotechnics are not necessarily dangerous, so if used in the correct way and the right location,

they should prove harmless and only enhance the atmosphere for football fans. The vast majority argued the opposite and, using case studies and some disturbing video footage, stressed the inherent risk involved. The discussion groups were all overwhelmingly against pyrotechnics in the stadium, although this is likely to remain a passionate topic for some groups of supporters.

Open discussion

Now in its 12th year, the UEFA/EU Stadium and Security Conference has continued to develop in terms of both content and the exchange of knowledge. The design and impressive layout of the conference room facilitated open discussions based on long-term experience in the field, and to facilitate future exchanges of information the online Stadium and Security Expert Tool (SSET) developed by UEFA and the EU was launched. This innovative application is considered the most comprehensive source of information and best practices available.

The subjects discussed in Warsaw and the level of debate proves that now, more than ever, communication barriers must be overcome, and UEFA, its member associations and clubs must come together with governments, public authorities and the police to put a stop to football violence. An integrated approach is indeed the only way forward and it is up to all of us to ensure that this vision becomes a reality. ●

The various workshops allowed delegates to discuss issues in greater detail



THE FANS' VIEW ON COMPETITIVE BALANCE IN FOOTBALL LEAGUES

Each issue of UEFA•direct features a summary of a research project funded by the UEFA research grant programme. In this issue, Tim Pawlowski presents his research.



Tim Pawlowski is a professor of sports economics at the University of Tübingen. His research interests include the economics of league competitions and economic analysis of sports demand. He has conducted research projects for organisations such as the federal ministry of finance, the Hamburger Sport-Verein (HSV) and Major League Soccer (MLS).

His research has been published in journals such as *Applied Economics* and the *Journal of Sports Economics*.

Regulations governing salaries (such as the salary caps in the North American major leagues) and redistribution schemes (such as the redistribution of media revenues in European football) are common practices in professional sports leagues. The main reason for this is the desire to maintain a certain degree of competitive balance. This seems to be important, since the “uncertainty of outcome hypothesis” suggests that increasingly unbalanced sports competitions have the potential to negatively affect fans’ interest and, as a result, stadium attendance levels and TV audiences.

However, in European professional football, studies seldom prove that more tickets are sold when both teams have roughly equal chances of winning. Moreover, various studies show that football fans are even attracted by matches where the away team is the favourite (probably motivated by the opportunity to see top players and/or an upset). Furthermore, over the longer term, aggregate attendance levels have actually risen in some football leagues (e.g. those of Germany and England), even as those leagues have increasingly become dominated by a small number of teams over the last ten years.

At first glance, such findings suggest that competitive balance is of minor importance for football fans in Europe. This would clearly challenge the relevance and necessity of introducing more regulations in football with the aim of achieving more balanced competitions. However, so far, the only thing we really know is that competitive balance is of minor importance for football fans *at present*. Significantly, the question of whether (increasingly unbalanced) football competitions might be at risk of moving into territory where fans’ interest will tail off *in the future* remains unanswered. Clearly, finding an answer to this question is of great importance for the organisers of national leagues, as well as for UEFA. To find an answer, we first need to better understand fans’ views and perceptions regarding competitive balance.

This study therefore examines the relationship between perceived competitive balance in three European football leagues and fans’ intention to go to the stadium or watch a

match on TV. The data used was collected from 1,689 football fans in Germany, Denmark and the Netherlands by means of a written survey conducted in cooperation with local partners.

The results demonstrate that there are three different dimensions to football fans’ views regarding competitive balance, and that their perception of the level of balance does indeed vary across these short, medium and long-term dimensions (as illustrated in the figure), as well as across leagues. Significantly, around 70% of fans reported that they do care about competitive balance. Further analysis confirms that we might be close to the point where an increase in competitive imbalance could lead to a decline in fans’ interest in some football competitions in Europe.

Further details can be found here:

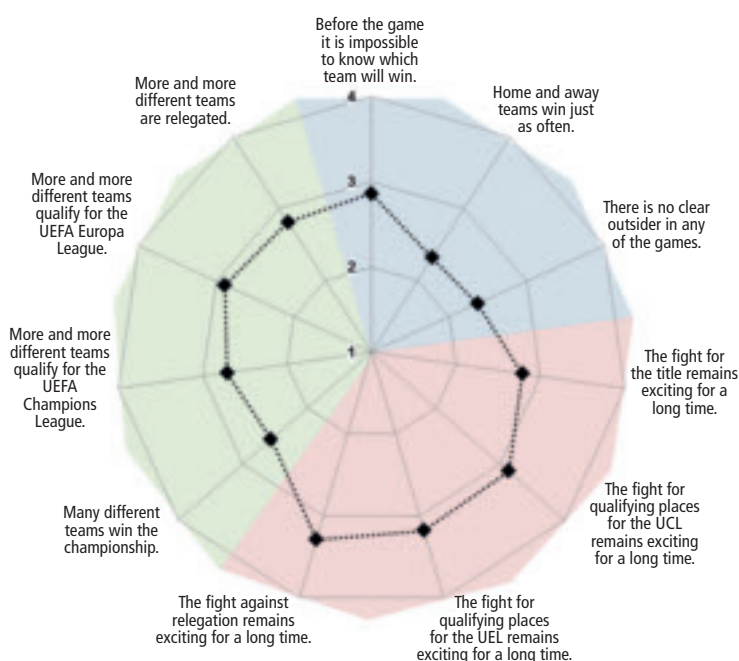
Pawlowski, T. (2013). *Wettbewerbsintensität im Profifußball - Eine empirische Untersuchung zur Bedeutung für die Zuschauer*. Wiesbaden: Springer-Gabler Research.

ISBN: 978-3-658-00210-7 (<http://www.springer.com/springer+gabler/bwll/book/978-3-658-00210-7>)

Pawlowski, T. (2013). *Testing the uncertainty of outcome hypothesis in European professional football - A stated preference approach*. *Journal of Sports Economics*, doi: 10.1177/1527002513496011. ●

Thinking back over the last few seasons, what is your opinion of the league?

(1 = I do not agree... 4 = I agree completely)



NEW KIDS ON THE ROCK

Gibraltar became UEFA's 54th and newest member at the 37th Ordinary UEFA Congress in London this May.

They may be the newest kids on the block, but they are no newcomers to the international football family. The Gibraltar Football Association (GFA) was established 118 years ago in 1895, making it the seventh oldest national association in Europe, alongside Belgium and Switzerland and just behind the four British associations, Denmark and the Netherlands.

The origins of Gibraltarian football have military roots. British soldiers and sailors based in Gibraltar began playing the game in the 19th century and their enthusiasm for it soon rubbed off on the civilian population. By 1892 at least one club – Prince of Wales FC – was already in existence. Another club, Gibraltar FC, was founded in November 1893. The first national league competition was established in October 1907.

Golden ages

The period between 1949 and 1955 is regarded by many as the "golden era" of football in Gibraltar. It was during this time that several famous clubs, including Real Madrid CF, visited to play against the Gibraltarian national team.

Fast-forward to 2013 and Gibraltar could be about to embark on another golden age. The Gibraltarian national futsal team participated in the UEFA Futsal EURO qualifiers for the first time in 2013. The team was drawn in Group A alongside San Marino, Montenegro and hosts France. The qualification tournament also saw Gibraltar's first ever win in an official UEFA competition – an exciting 7-5 victory over San Marino. Gibraltar's Under-19 and Under-17 national teams participate in their respective qualifying tournaments in October 2013, and the senior national team will feature for the first time in the draw for the qualifying competition for EURO 2016 in February 2014.

Project for a new stadium

Gibraltar's national stadium is currently the Victoria Stadium, although the GFA will shortly embark on a flagship project to develop a new national stadium overlooking the spectacular Strait of Gibraltar – the historic maritime crossroads where the continents of Europe and Africa meet. Fittingly, the new ground will be named the Europa Stadium.

Gibraltar's national league continues to thrive. In the 2012/13 season, six clubs participated in the first division and a further ten in the second division. Lincoln FC became Gibraltarian champions in 2012/13. They were undefeated all season and won the league title by an 11-point margin. The first division has been expanded for 2013/14 and will now consist of eight clubs.

THE GFA IN BRIEF

President: Desmond Reoch
General secretary: Richard Manning
Address: PO Box 513, Gibraltar
Tel.: +350 200 42 941
Fax: +350 200 42 211
Email: info@gibraltarfa.com
Website: www.gibraltarfa.com
Number of members in 2013
Registered players: 1,393
Referees: 41
Coaches: 210



In addition to the league competition, a national cup competition – the Rock Cup – is also played. In the 2013 final, St. Joseph's FC beat Manchester United (Gibraltar) FC 3-1 to lift the trophy.

There is incredible enthusiasm for the grass-roots game in Gibraltar, while the women's game and futsal continue to grow. Over 600 youngsters were registered in GFA competitions for 2012/13 and that number is expected to increase for this season. When you consider that Gibraltar's total population is 30,000, the figures are truly remarkable. Although there are currently just three women's teams participating in the GFA's women's league, the game is quickly gathering popularity among girls in Gibraltarian schools. A new national futsal league will commence in the autumn.

These are exciting times for Gibraltarian football and, as UEFA's newest member, the GFA is enthusiastic about the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead. ●

Dennis Beiso

The senior national team of Gibraltar



DM Parody

MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS



Big birthday for honorary president Mauhart

On 14 September, Beppo Mauhart – who was president of the Austrian Football Association (ÖFB) for 17 years, 9 months and 10 days and wrote sporting history in Austria as one of the architects of UEFA EURO 2008 – celebrated his 80th birthday.

The ÖFB's honorary president, who is known for his elegance and eloquence, led Austria's largest sports association from 1984 to 2002, during which time he made a number of changes and was responsible for considerable reforms and restructuring.

The independence of the Austrian Bundesliga, the return to a top division of ten clubs, the establishment of the Friends of the National Team and the creation of development centres for the next generation of players were just some of the achievements of the Mauhart era. Mauhart's period in office – the longest of any ÖFB president – also coincided with the construction of a roof at what is now the Ernst-Happel-Stadion, as well as qualification for the final rounds of both the 1990 and 1998 FIFA World Cups.

His greatest coup, however, was the successful bid to host UEFA EURO 2008, in which he played a key role right up until his departure from the ÖFB. Beppo Mauhart laid



Beppo Mauhart with the ÖFB's president, Leo Windtner (right), and general director, Alfred Ludwig

the foundations for that success with Austria and Hungary's bid to co-host UEFA EURO 2004, demonstrating his vision, considerable commitment and iron will.

Leo Windtner, the president of the ÖFB, Alfred Ludwig, the ÖFB's general director, and the rest of the ÖFB board congratulated Beppo Mauhart on his birthday and celebrated his services to Austrian football.

● Christoph Walter



UEFA President visits Baku

The UEFA President, Michel Platini, recently visited Azerbaijan, where he met the country's president, Ilham Aliyev, and the president of the Association of Football Federations of Azerbaijan (AFFA), Rovnag Abdullayev. At the meeting with Ilham Aliyev, the two men underlined the importance of the activities being carried out to develop various kinds of sport in Azerbaijan and praised the measures being implemented with a view to establishing modern sports infrastructure in the country. They also discussed the successful cooperation between Azerbaijan and



Michel Platini and Rovnag Abdullayev take part in the foundation laying ceremony

UEFA, as well as reforms being carried out in order to develop football in the country.

On 21 September a foundation-laying ceremony was held for a new training facility for Azerbaijan's national teams near the AFFA Football Centre in Baku. That was followed by a media briefing, at which it was announced

that UEFA had registered Baku as a candidate to host UEFA EURO 2020 matches, which are to be held in 13 cities across the continent. Baku was put forward by the AFFA and will compete with cities from 31 other countries.

As part of his visit to Baku, the UEFA President also witnessed the progress made in the construction of the city's Olympic Stadium, which is scheduled for completion in 2015. Later that day, local club Sumqayıt FK unveiled their new stadium in the presence of Michel Platini and Rovnag Abdullayev. The UEFA President then met young footballers from the club.

● Ulviyya Najafova



Dragons' nest completed

The Bosnia and Herzegovina Football Federation (NFSBiH) has completed the building of its new training centre, which sits at Crkvičko brdo, on a hill above the town of Zenica. It offers stunning views of the stadium below, where Safet Sušić's team – the Dragons – have achieved such success in recent years.

The centre has been built with the help of UEFA's HatTrick programme and FIFA's Goal Programme, and also with the aid of Zenica city council, which has leased the land for 40 years and built the necessary infrastructure and access roads. The work, which has been coordinated by the NFSBiH, has all been done by local firms, which is very important in these times of economic crisis.

A large number of guests were present for the centre's inauguration. Foremost among them were the UEFA President, Michel Platini, the president of the NFSBiH, Elvedin Begić, the general secretary of the NFSBiH, Jasmin Baković, the former chairman of the NFSBiH normalisation committee, Ivica Osim, Bosnian football ambassadors Duško Bajević, Faruk Hadžibegić and Sead Kajtaž, and members of the Executive Committee, as well as guests from neighbouring countries, such as Davor Šuker, president of the Croatian Football Federation, and Ivan Čurković from Serbia. National team coach Safet Sušić, his assistant Borče Sredojević, and players Emir Spahić (the team captain) and Senad Lulić were also present, as were former internationals

Muhamed Konjić, Elvir Bolić, Vedin Musić, Nermin Šabić and Vlatko Glavaš.

After the entertainment programme, in which Bosnian ball juggling champion Zlatko Mešić performed and 160 boys and girls from across the country played football on the pitch, the opening ceremony began. Michel Platini and Elvedin Begić unveiled a statue erected by the NFSBiH and the training centre was officially declared open.

In his speech, Elvedin Begić highlighted the great importance of the complex for the development of football in the country: "This reminds us how much FIFA and UEFA have helped us – not only with the training centre, but also with other projects – and to say that we are grateful would be an understatement. This construction work has given us a centre at which all national teams can prepare, and this gives us hope that we can now perform better in games. We are just sad that we do not have an adequate stadium," he added.

The UEFA President expressed his satisfaction with the work done: "Congratulations on a nice training centre. I'm glad I'm now on the football field, because I have spent recent years dealing with political issues in the office. I would like to thank Ivica Osim, who, as head of the normalisation committee, put the Bosnia and Herzegovina Football Federation on the right path. I believe in Bosnia and Herzegovina because this region loves football."



A good turnout for the inauguration ceremony

Mr Platini also thanked the mayor of Zenica, Husejin Smajlović, for all the cooperation and assistance provided to the NFSBiH in recent years and presented him with a UEFA award.

"It's nice to be at a place like this. Our first match in autumn 1996 in Tirana was played with borrowed equipment, and now we have our own nest, from which numerous young male and female players will go out into the world of football," said Muhamed Konjić, the first captain of the Bosnian national team.

The NFSBiH's training centre has two football pitches: one with natural grass and one with artificial turf. The grandstand complex has accommodation blocks with 24 double rooms, two suites (intended for selectors), a meeting room, a restaurant, a kitchen, six locker rooms, space for leisure activities, a sauna and much more besides. The training centre will not only be used to prepare national teams. According to the NFSBiH, various seminars, meetings and other such events will also be held at the centre.

● Fuad Krvavac

A day in the life of a referee

The Bulgarian Football Union (BFS) recently organised a two-day seminar for the country's football journalists. Prominent journalists representing all kinds of media, both traditional forms (i.e. print media, TV and radio) and online media, were invited to learn about refereeing from renowned speakers, all of whom were former international referees.

The reporters had the opportunity to test their knowledge of the Laws of the Game, including the most recent changes. They also took UEFA's video-based refereeing test and played the Make a Decision game, where each participant had four cards – green, blue, yellow and red – and had to use them to evaluate video clips of scenarios on the pitch, which were played just once in real time. The changes to the offside rule were the most discussed



Assistant referees are having to adapt to changes to the Laws of the Game

topic of all, and the issue of handball also raised a lot of questions.

Yordan Hristoskov, a member of the BFS Executive Committee, announced at the

seminar's opening ceremony that, from now on, a trophy would be awarded to the journalist who reported most fairly and respectfully on referees' decisions in the course of the season. The BFS also aims to turn this seminar into a regular event.

In other news, the BFS's coaching academy recently ran a UEFA B licence course for goalkeeping coaches.

Among the lecturers on the course were Italian coach Massimo Cacciatori and Maarten Arts from the Netherlands.

● Pavel Kolev

Croatian football mourns the loss of Vlatko Marković

Croatian football recently lost one of its greats when former player, coach and Croatian Football Federation (HNS) president Vlatko Marković passed away at the age of 76 after illness.

Marković was born on 1 January 1937 in Bugojno in Bosnia and Herzegovina. After an impressive playing career (one of the highlights of which was being selected for the FIFA World Cup in 1962), Marković became a successful coach, guiding Yugoslavia to victory in the UEFA competition for national representative Under-23 teams. He also managed the Croatian national team for one match in 1994.

In 1998 he was elected president of the HNS, a position that he held for the next 14 years. In 2012 he was appointed honorary president of the HNS. He oversaw Croatia's participation at two FIFA World Cups and three UEFA EUROs, while also helping the federation to build its new headquarters. He was a member of several FIFA and UEFA committees and served as chairman of the UEFA Technical Committee. He was given several prestigious awards, including the Matija Ljubek Award (presented by the Croatian Olympic Committee) and the Franjo

Bučar Award (a national award for sports).

A commemorative ceremony was held for him, at which the president of the HNS, Davor Šuker, emphasised Marković's close relationship with his colleagues in the federation:

"Vlatko was not only a boss; he was a father figure to many of us. You could go into any battle with him; you knew he had your back. We owe it to him to continue down his path – taking care of people, taking care of the federation, taking care of Croatian football. He taught us how to do it."

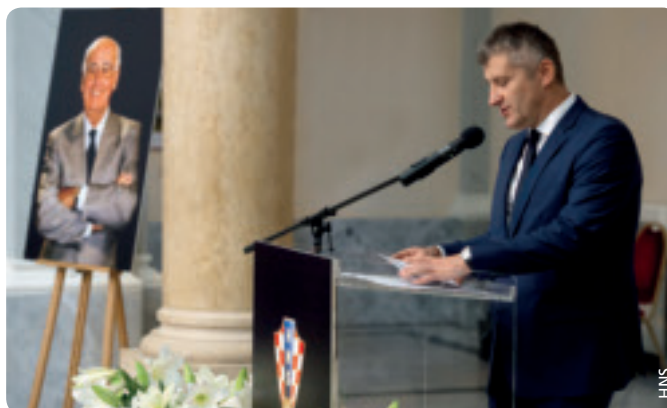
František Laurinec, a member of the UEFA Executive Committee, also said a few words about his close friend:

"Croatian and world football have lost one of their best administrators. He earned great respect as a friend and as an international authority. Vlatko Marković's name will not be forgotten in football."

Other speakers included FIFA director Walter Gagg, Zagreb mayor Milan Bandić, GNK Dinamo Zagreb president Mirko Barišić, Dinamo Zagreb star Zlatko Škorić, and Marković's close associate and national team director Zorislav Srebrić.

Vlatko Marković passed away on 23 September 2013.

● Tomislav Pacak



The HNS president, Davor Šuker, pays homage to Vlatko Marković

Open days get new season under way

As it does every year, the French Football Federation launched the start of the new football season by organising three weekends of open days. The first were for U10s and U11s on 14/15 September, followed by U8s and U9s on 21/22 September and U6s and U7s on 28/29 September.



All over the country, the clubs and districts participating in the initiative opened their doors to the general public – children and parents alike – to bring them into the fold and get them playing football. Numerous workshops were held as part of the open days, including fun children's games, juggling and friendly matches.

This initiative, which is free and open to everyone, aims to promote the pleasure of playing football. For the youngest age groups, it offers an introduction to football with no pressure to win. For the older ones, it serves as an invitation to take up the game or to improve performance levels under the guidance of the regional coaches and the technical staff on hand.

This latest series of open days attracted more than 280,000 children (including 12,000 girls) to 3,200 different venues.

● Laura Goutry

Good start for women coaches

The Hungarian Football Association (MLSZ), led by Sándor Csányi, has again underlined its desire to attract and involve women in football in Hungary by introducing a new coaching course tailored specifically to women. The MLSZ recognises the importance of women's football and has a clear strategy to improve the current situation. Basic coach education is one part of this strategy, designed to lay firm foundations for future development.

The MLSZ's coach education centre has started a new grassroots C licence programme for coaches looking to work in youth football, coaching children aged between 5 and 14. One branch of this programme is dedicated exclusively to women who, after 16 weeks and 66 hours of education, hope to achieve the grassroots C coaching licence. Among the 18 students on the specialist branch are two members of the women's Hungarian national football team, Boglárka Szabó and Júlia Németh, and the head coach of the women's Under-17 national team, Andrea Lévy.



A hands-on exercise for the coaching students

"This course is undoubtedly useful for women at the start of their coaching careers, so they can build their confidence and introduce training drills for other women and girls," Lévy said. "We have a few active footballers here and a good group of people who can all improve, even those who've already studied coaching in the past. The tutors are excellent at presenting the materials and make every effort to help the students become better coaches."

● Márton Dinnyés

IFA launch women's football academy

The Israel Football Association (IFA) is happy and proud to announce the establishment of the first Israeli women's football academy, in which 21 selected players were enrolled in September.

This professional academy is the IFA's first step towards a better future for women's football in Israel. The basic values of the academy are excellence, fair play, teamwork and achievements.

The aim is to allow talented young women to maximise their potential through optimal



Israel hopes to get more girls into football

training in optimal conditions and to achieve creditable results in important international tournaments.

One such tournament is the final round of the 2014/15 European Women's Under-19 Championship, which Israel is hosting and for which the 21 academy players are expected to be on the roster.

The academy's top-notch coaching staff include head coach Guy Azouri, who has previously led top men's teams in Israel, and his assistant coach, Jan Talsnikov, a former player who also has experience of coaching in the top-flight.

The girls will be at the academy 24 hours a day, Sunday to Thursday, for 11 months a year. They will practice twice a day and will play in both the boys' league and the women's first division.

The IFA will provide these young athletes with the best training conditions, a boarding school, top sports facilities, a state-of-the-art gym, specialist staff for check-ups, follow-ups and development programmes, access to the sports medicine and research department on campus, a constant support structure comprising physicians, nutritionists, physiologists, psychologists and other specialists, injury rehabilitation, and a social and educational team that is second to none.

This is another milestone in the IFA's efforts to reduce the gap in women's football standards between Israel and the countries that first made the game so popular and successful.

The IFA sees this as something that will make a big difference to people's perceptions of women's football and should bring more girls into the game in the near future.

● Michal Grundland

Youth football project

In cooperation with the magazine *Guerin Sportivo* and Sky TV, the Italian Football Federation (FIGC) has launched a new project for the 2013/14 season. The initiative – *La Giovane Italia* – reflects the principles of Club Italia, the department that coordinates all of Italy's national teams (which is headed by Demetrio Albertini, with Arrigo Sacchi acting as a coordinator). The aim is to promote and showcase Italy's young footballers.

Of all the criticisms made of our youth football, Arrigo Sacchi – a man with extensive experience on the international stage – immediately pointed to the limited international experience of our young players relative to other European countries and the fact that our young players find it difficult to be magnanimous and patient, to understand that you win just by taking part and, above all, to accept the idea of losing with dignity.



Faces of the future

The FIGC has also set up a new national Under-15 team, with the aim of broadening the monitoring of Italy's most promising young players and improving cooperation with all the other national youth teams, right up to the senior team, strengthening the players' bond with the national team's shirt and implementing a code of conduct.

The development and promotion of the next generation of Italian footballers are key objectives of the FIGC, which has invested both human and financial resources in increasing numbers of training courses, international matches and observers. Reforms have been implemented in order to adjust the age of players competing in the Primavera championship and establish UEFA training courses for youth team coaches. In addition, regular meetings with clubs are foreseen in order to establish a common approach as regards technique, selections and investment.

This involves the use of a specific manual, which is now in its third edition. It includes files on 300 Under-19 players – 50 who have already been selected for national youth teams and 250 future champions who are being monitored by technicians at regional level. The technical profiles have been developed by Paolo Ghisoni, Stefano Nava and a group of experts.

If you want to teach young people the social values of our sport, you have to start at youth level.

● Barbara Moschini

Injury prevention in training

The medical department and technical staff of the Liechtenstein Football Association (LFV) attended a one-day training course on 13 September. The course, which focused on injury prevention, was devised by the FIFA Medical Assessment and Research Centre.

Playing football requires a variety of qualities, such as stamina, skill, speed, and technical and tactical awareness. These qualities are constantly nurtured and improved through training. However, due to the risk of injury inherent in football, training should also include injury prevention exercises.

To this end, the FIFA Medical Assessment and Research Centre has developed the 11+ Programme, which was presented to the LFV medical department and technical staff at the one-day training course.

The event was organised by Dr Ecki Hermann, head of the LFV medical team, and conducted by FIFA's Mario Bizzini. It began with some theory, which was followed by a practical session including demonstrations by the course leaders. The day was rounded off with more practical exercises in which LFV sports students participated.

● Anton Banzer



The LFV president Matthias Voigt (white T-shirt) with the men behind the course

A project for the women

Although the Women for Football project started three years ago, the idea of inviting all the wives and girlfriends of national team players to attend matches is a new development this year. In September the women watched their first international together.

A special VIP area of the stand was prepared at the Lithuanian Football Federation's new stadium in Vilnius, attracting the attention of photographers. Vaida Česnauskienė, wife of current Lithuanian international Deividas Česnauskis, was nominated to be an ambassador for the project.

According to Vaida Česnauskienė, having players' wives and girlfriends attend matches will hopefully become a tradition and be an example to all women – showing that stadiums are open to all. She explained that it is very important to continue with this initiative at future matches and to involve as many women as possible.

"I am sure that the wives and girlfriends of every player has followed each match separately – whether at home, in the stadium or elsewhere. Now we have the opportunity to come together and feel the emotion of the game together. We are all fans of our respective men,



Enthusiastic support for the national team

so together we form a second national team in the stands," Vaida Česnauskienė said.

In September the Women for Football supporters team went to their first match outside Lithuania, travelling to Latvia. It was their first match abroad, but hopefully not their last.

The Women for Football project includes many activities in the area of professional football, but also extends to the amateur game. An important part of the project is social events, which are very prominent and need the help of each individual sports association.

Women in football will hopefully become more visible as a result of the project and attract more and more other women to the game – not just as players, referees and coaches, but also as supporters, socially active members of clubs and members of event organising committees. Football is not just a game and football events involve considerable preparation.

For this reason, the Women for Football project is very keen for as many women as possible to get involved.

● Vaiva Zizaite

Esther Azzopardi at Women's EURO 2013

Malta's participation in the UEFA Women's EURO 2013 held in Sweden this summer was ensured by Esther Azzopardi, who was among the 24 women officiating at this top UEFA competition.

Azzopardi was one of the three fourth officials appointed by UEFA for the final tournament, the others being Carina Vitulano (Italy) and Monika Mularczyk (Poland).

On the opening day, Azzopardi officiated alongside Bibiana Steinhaus of Germany, who had been appointed to referee the derby between hosts Sweden and neighbouring Denmark at Gamla Ullevi Stadium in Gothenburg, which ended in an exciting 1-1 draw.

She was also fourth official for France v Russia (3-1), refereed by Jenny Palmqvist of Sweden at the Norrköpings Idrottsparken in Norrköping, and for Norway v Netherlands (1-0), refereed by Teodora Albon of Romania at the Kalmar Arena.

Azzopardi's final appointment was for Denmark v Finland at Gamla Ullevi Stadium, which Kateryna Monzul of Ukraine refereed.

Speaking from Kalmar during the tournament, the Maltese official said how



Sportsfile

pleased she was to be representing Malta in such an important competition: "This wonderful experience will remain in my memories forever. The atmosphere at matches was electrifying. The match between rivals Sweden and Denmark on the opening day attracted a sell-out crowd of 16,128 spectators."

● Alex Vella

Esther Azzopardi.

2013 peace project in Moldova

From 5 to 7 September, the British embassy in Chisinau, the Football Association of Moldova (FMF) and the Spirit of Soccer NGO organised the 2013 Football Ambassadors of Peace project.

The project involved a workshop for coaches held at the FMF's national training centre in Vadul-lui-Voda, followed by a football festival for 100 girls from ten Under-14 teams from all over Moldova (including Transnistria and the autonomous territorial unit of Gagauziya).

The festival was attended by Phil Batson, British Ambassador to the Republic of Moldova,

Nicolai Cebotari, general secretary of the FMF, and Scott Lee, founder and director of Spirit of Soccer.

The project will help to develop child protection policies and practices, as well as fostering the improvement of coaching methods for women's football in Moldova. The British embassy in Chisinau, the FMF and Spirit of Soccer (a partner in FIFA's Football For Hope programme) have already designed and implemented four previous projects addressing issues relating to conflict resolution, children's rights and child protection in Moldova.

● Press office



Some of the girls involved in the football festival

Trophy for Street League team

The Northern Ireland Street League team recently returned from their very successful debut at the 11th Homeless World Cup, which was held in Poznan in Poland. A total of 68 teams from 45 countries competed in the fast and furious four-a-side competition.

The players were selected from the Belfast and North West Street Leagues, which take place weekly to provide opportunities for those

marginalised groups to participate in football and educational programmes. Selection was based not only on football skills, but also on commitment and positive attitudes.

Once the tournament started, the team found their winning form quickly. After a first defeat, they rose to the occasion to beat England 8-0. During the group stages, the team won seven of their ten games, defeating teams such as Switzerland, Canada, Finland, South Korea, the Philippines and Germany.

The team made it to the quarter-finals of the Ministry of Labour Cup, where they were knocked out by Slovenia. Their final ranking was 30th out of a total of 45, but the real victory was the acknowledgement of the positive spirit in the team. Northern Ireland were awarded the trophy for the best new team, recognising not only the great display on the pitch but also their contribution off the pitch.

The whole team embraced the tournament ethos of fair play and respect by supporting other teams with coaching, making new friends and experiencing new cultures. They also showed sportsmanship on the pitch as they helped injured opponents off the field and dealt with pressure and defeats in a positive way while at the tournament. This was all encompassed in the team's mantra – "have fun and you have won".

● Maria Wilson



The Street League team that did Northern Ireland proud in the Homeless World Cup

A unique edition of the Tybark Cup

The 14th Tybark Cup tournament, in which almost 185,000 children aged ten and under have taken part since early spring, has now come to an end. The girls' competition was won by representatives of Małopolska, while the boys' champions were from the Łódzki region. The whole tournament, which mirrored the European format, was a huge success.

Maciej Sawicki, general secretary of the Polish Football Association (PZPN), had the following to say about the competition: "This was a unique edition of the Tybark Cup tournament. As many as 185,000 kids applied, which is phenomenal, and numerous fans filled the stands of the Arka Gdynia stadium to cheer the teams on and have fun themselves. I must admit, I envy those kids a little. They have the opportunity to compete in such great conditions. The best teams were named unofficial U-10 champions of Poland and as a reward they will get a chance to cheer on our senior national team in a 2014 World Cup qualifier against England at Wembley. Congratulations and see you all next year!"

PZPN vice-president Roman Kosecki added: "It is really important for the kids to see former players who can teach them a trick or show them a useful skill to help them develop. I am glad that the final took place at the Arka Gdynia stadium. Youngsters need to be spoilt. They need to play in the best conditions possible. I consider tournaments such as this a great way of training young players and bringing kids closer to football. Our national team players Piotr Zieliński and Bartosz Salamon were also part of the Tybark Cup few years back. I think that during last weekend's finals we again witnessed several future national team stars."



Poland's young footballers, raving to go

The two final days of the competition comprised 96 games. The finals were an unforgettable experience not only for the kids but also for the spectators, who watched the greatest young talents in Poland from the stands of Arka Gdynia stadium. And with that, another successful, some may say historic, edition of the Tybark Cup came to a close.

● Jakub Kwiatkowski

Women's football gains firm footing

The president of the Portuguese Football Federation, Fernando Gomes, paid a visit to the women's national team in September before they flew off to Greece, where they successfully began their qualifying campaign for the 2015 FIFA Women's World Cup in Canada.

Gomes held talks with the players on current and future trends in women's football in

Portugal and showed the national association's firm commitment to the further development of the game. These talks took place at the Rio Maior sports centre, a complex that provides world-class facilities to help girls and women reach the top level in football.

The women's Under-19 and Under-17 national teams have been making unprecedented strides in Portugal and the number of female players has risen by 170% in two years – in 2011 there were 2,057 (including both senior



The FPF president, Fernando Gomes, addressing the women's national team

and youth levels) and by 2013 that number had risen to 5,746. Developing women's football has been a key target for the Portuguese Football Federation since Fernando Gomes was elected president in December 2011.

● Matilde Dias

Departure of Giovanni Trapattoni

The Football Association of Ireland (FAI), Giovanni Trapattoni and Marco Tardelli announced on 11 September that, following an amicable meeting that day, they had parted company by mutual consent.

One of the greatest managers world football has known, Trapattoni's tenure as manager of the Republic of Ireland national team was an emotional journey, with the highlight being qualification for UEFA EURO 2012.

The legendary coach, who counts Juventus, FC Internazionale Milano, AC Milan, FC Bayern München, SL Benfica and the Italian national team among the many sides he has led, will always be very warmly regarded in Ireland.

While the heartbreak of the FIFA World Cup qualification play-off defeat by France in Paris in 2009 will always be a sore memory for the Irish fans, there is no doubt that Trapattoni and Tardelli helped restore the standing of the national team overall.



Minister Joan Burton at FAI headquarters

Trapattoni said: "I want to thank everyone in Ireland who has given us their support during our time here, which has always meant a lot to us.

"We leave this country with emotion because we understand the Irish supporters, who have a well-deserved international reputation, and they have our utmost respect. I would like to thank John Delaney, Paddy McCaul, Michael Cody and the FAI board for their support and friendship over the last five and a half years."

Making the announcement, the FAI's chief executive, John Delaney, said: "We thank Giovanni Trapattoni, Marco Tardelli and Fausto Rossi for the last five and a half years, during which we qualified for our first major tournament in ten years and were close to qualifica-

tion for the 2010 World Cup in South Africa after the play-off in France.

This particular World Cup campaign has been disappointing, but Giovanni leaves us with a group of good young players, which should form the basis of the squad that the new manager will use for UEFA EURO 2016 in France, when 24 teams will qualify."

Meanwhile, the FAI's activities continue as normal and the FAI was very pleased to welcome Joan Burton, minister for social protection, to FAI headquarters at the National Sports Campus in Abbotstown.

The minister met management and staff, including interns who are currently participating in the JobBridge national internship scheme. The scheme has seen several out-of-work individuals progress from intern roles to full-time employment with the FAI in recent months.

Minister Burton was accompanied by Martin Murphy, managing director of HP Ireland and chairperson of the steering group that oversees the implementation of the national internship scheme.

● Stephen Finn

New national performance centre in Edinburgh

The Scottish government has announced that its £30m sporting school of excellence will be built at Heriot-Watt University in the capital city by 2016. This announcement came after a recommendation by its working party – chaired by the chief executive of the Scottish Football Association (SFA) – which reviewed bids from the shortlisted candidate cities of Edinburgh, Dundee and Stirling.

The centre will host all Scotland national teams and the performance department and incorporate a large number of sports, including rugby, volleyball, athletics, badminton, basketball, cricket, fencing, handball, hockey, netball, shinty and squash.

"This is the jewel in the crown for the Scottish FA's performance strategy," said the SFA's chief executive, Stewart Regan. "We visited a number of leading centres across the world, including St George's Park in England and the centres in Barcelona, and Papendal in the Netherlands. We also looked at some of the newer academies in the Premier League down south, where innovation has been introduced to try and make a difference.

"We feel that Edinburgh and Heriot-Watt came up with the best plan to help us achieve our vision. We believe the centre will be leading-edge; it will be world-class. We have tried to build in a 'wow' factor and absolutely it will be a facility to match the likes of St George's Park. We believe we have a very exciting project and we're looking forward to making it happen."

The national performance centre will feature a replica of the Hampden pitch, a 500-seater indoor football stadium, two rugby pitches, three tennis courts and a nine-court sports hall, on top of sport science and medical facilities.

As well as Gordon Strachan's squad, the centre – which has been backed by Sir Chris Hoy and Gavin Hastings – will also host the Scottish rugby team as they prepare for big test matches.

The SFA's chief executive is most hopeful that this will have a tangible effect on the prospects of the nation's football team and be both aspirational and inspirational to the young footballers who are part of the SFA's seven regional performance schools. "Whenever we have a camp, we would want the teams to use the facilities," Regan explained. "Accommodation was one of the key components of the vision, alongside other medical and sport



Scotland's national teams will have everything they need

science requirements, and a full-size indoor third-generation surface, which means we will be able to train and coach all year round. It will be a one-stop shop to provide all our needs prior to a major match, both home and away.

"It will be used from the men's A squad right down to our Under-16 Victory Shield side, and from the women's full international team down to their Under-15s and Under-17s. It is the perfect opportunity to bring together our players in an inspirational environment with inspirational people to try and build performance for the future. It is also, then, the link between our performance schools and the national teams. It is a place that every young player in our performance school system should aspire to be part of."

● Darryl Broadfoot



Award for veteran referee Jenny Palmqvist

Swedish referee Jenny Palmqvist has been named the world's best referee of 2012 for women's football, an honour bestowed by the International Federation of Football History & Statistics (IFFHS). Palmqvist has been a FIFA referee for 11 years and has well over 100 international games under her belt.

"I'm very flattered. 2012 was a great year for me and my team, with the Olympic Games in London and the UEFA Women's Champions League final being the standout moments," said Palmqvist.

Jenny Palmqvist is on the verge of retiring as a referee but will continue to coach and mentor aspiring youngsters.

"I want to give something back to football and refereeing. I've had so many great experiences in my career. I've travelled the world and seen the incredible development of women's football. That is not something I could have foreseen when I started out 15 years ago," said Palmqvist.

In other news, the Swedish government has finally decided to scrap a law that forced limited companies to pay for police presence at public events. The law, which was adopted in late 2011, meant that AIK Solna, Djurgårdens IF, Hammarby IF and Örebro SK (clubs that are run as limited companies) were each forced to pay up to €110,000 a game to have the police present in the vicinity of the stadium and on public transport on matchdays. The system had been criticised and subjected to legal challenges



Jenny Palmqvist with the medal she received after having refereed the 2011/12 UEFA Women's Champions League final in Munich

by clubs and the Swedish Football Association, and their work has now finally borne fruit ahead of the Swedish elections in 2014.

● Andreas Nilsson



High spirits despite bad weather

Switzerland's former internationals recently met for their annual get-together at the invitation of Peter Gilliéron, president of the Swiss Football Association (SFV-ASF), and Alex Miescher, general secretary of the SFV-ASF.

The atmosphere was great, as it always is when the former players get together. They spent the entire day regaling each other with tales from the past. Even the miserable weather, which forced a change to the programme, could do nothing to dampen the mood. Instead



Former Swiss internationals at breakfast

of cowbell golf at 1,100m above sea level, the former footballers competed at Switzerland's national sport: the card game Jass. In a hastily

organised Jass tournament in the historic Restaurant zum Bären in Trubschachen (the oldest inn of this name in the whole of Switzerland), former international defender André "Andy" Egli (78 caps) was head and shoulders above the rest, earning plaudits from the other ex-players and Peter Gilliéron (who also did admirably, finishing fourth overall).

In addition to savouring traditional restaurant dishes, the former players also visited a local biscuit factory, where they enjoyed the delicious produce on offer.

● Pierre Benoit



Historic win for Ukraine's Under-15 girls

Ukraine's Under-15 girls – the country's youngest women's national team – recently defeated local rivals Belarus in a friendly match to record their first ever win.



First taste of victory for Ukraine (in yellow), against Belarus

Ukraine put pressure on their opponents and went 1-0 up early on, with Olena Katerynina opening the scoring with a header. Belarus were close to equalising on a few occasions, but Ukraine's goalkeeper Olha Ryabovil showed she had a safe pair of hands.

Two accurate strikes by Iryna Rybalkina and Nataliya Gryb then put Ukraine 3-0 ahead before half-time, taking the pressure off.

Belarus created several opportunities in the second half, threatening the Ukrainian goal, and eventually Miranovych scored in the 65th minute. However, Khrystyna Ogarkova, Ukraine's captain, then hit the target with a long-range shot to make the final score 4-1.

After the final whistle, representatives of Ternopil city council presented the coaches of both national teams with gifts and souvenirs.

● Yuriy Maznychenko



Wales host futsal internationals

The Welsh national team are hosting their first ever international futsal matches at the end of October, when Andorra come to visit.

There will be two games at the Newport Velodrome on Saturday 26 and Sunday 27 October, organised as the unofficial return legs of matches played in Andorra in September last year.

Futsal is still in its infancy in Wales, but the first UEFA club competition matches were recently held there and a national club competition has been running for a few seasons now. In March, Wales played England in a friendly fixture and only lost by a single goal. They also made their debut in the European Futsal Championship in January with three preliminary round games in Bulgaria.

● Ceri Stennett



Wales' national futsal team

BIRTHDAYS

James McCluskey (Scotland, 1 November)

Marc Batta (France, 1 November)

☆☆☆ 60th

György Szilágyi (Hungary, 2 November)

Francesco Bianchi (Switzerland, 2 November)

Gero Bisanz (Germany, 3 November)

Georgios Vourvachis (Greece, 3 November)

Micky Zager (Israel, 4 November)

Prof. Andrea Ferretti (Italy, 4 November)

Luis Figo (Portugal, 4 November)

Lennart Johansson (Sweden, 5 November)

Fernand Meese (Belgium, 5 November)

Georgi Popov (Bulgaria, 5 November)

Mircea Pascu (Romania, 6 November)

Dragan Djordjevic (Serbia, 6 November)

Nadezhda Ulyanovskaya (Russia, 6 November)

Peter Gardiner (Scotland, 7 November)

Vladimir Badura (Slovakia, 7 November)

Sergio Di Cesare (Italy, 8 November)

Haris Loizides (Cyprus, 8 November)

☆☆☆ 50th

Gjergji Bitri (Malta, 8 November)

Michele Uva (Italy, 8 November)

Rudolf Zavrl (Slovenia, 9 November)

Jorge Perez Arias (Spain, 9 November)

Willi Hink (Germany, 9 November)

Theodore Giannikos (Greece, 9 November)

Thomas Hollerer (Austria, 9 November)

Isabel Hochstätter (Austria, 9 November)

Marc Van Geersom (Belgium, 10 November)

Muharrem Zihni Aksoy (Turkey, 11 November)

Mehmet Murat Ilgaz (Turkey, 11 November)

Uno Tutk (Estonia, 11 November)

Milan Spirkoski (FYR Macedonia,

12 November) ☆☆☆ 50th

Howard Wilkinson (England, 13 November)

☆☆☆ 70th

Stefan Hans (Germany, 14 November)

Maciej Stanczuk (Poland, 14 November)

Peter Fröjdfeldt (Sweden, 14 November)

☆☆☆ 50th

Samira Huren (Bosnia and Herzegovina,

14 November)

Jean Lemmer (Luxembourg, 15 November)

Otto Demuth (Austria, 16 November)

Wolf-Günter Wiesel (Germany, 16 November)

Susan Ann Hough (England, 16 November)

Radenko Mijatovic (Slovenia, 16 November)

☆☆☆ 50th

Jan Fasung (Slovakia, 17 November)

Brian Quinn (Scotland, 18 November)

Dumitru Mihalache (Romania, 18 November)

Per Svärd (Sweden, 18 November)

Claudio Circhetta (Switzerland, 18 November)

Stanislaw Michal Pilkowski (Poland,

18 November)

Knarik Abelyan (Armenia, 18 November)

Dr Jacques Liénard (France, 19 November)

Horst R. Schmidt (Germany, 19 November)

Petr Fousek (Czech Republic, 19 November)

Jean-Louis Piette (France, 20 November)

Paul-Heinz Lenhart (Germany, 22 November)

☆☆☆ 70th

Jyrki Filppu (Finland, 22 November)

Mamuka Kvaratskhelia (Georgia,

22 November)

Izabella Lukomska-Pyrzalska (Poland,

22 November)

Nikolai Pisarev (Russia, 23 November)

George Koumas (Cyprus, 24 November)

Jonas Braga (Lithuania, 25 November)

Zbigniew Przesmycki (Poland, 26 November)

Borislav Popov (Bulgaria, 26 November)

Styrbjörn Oskarsson (Finland, 26 November)

Marcos Del Cuadro (Switzerland,

26 November)

Miroslav Pelta (Czech Republic, 27 November)

Marios N. Lefkaritis (Cyprus, 28 November)

Ante Vucemilovic-Simunovic (Croatia,

28 November)

Andrey Medintsev (Bulgaria, 28 November)

Tomaz Ranc (Slovenia, 28 November)

Marko Ilešič (Slovenia, 29 November)

James Finnegan (Republic of Ireland,

29 November)

Alojzije Supraha (Croatia, 29 November)

Charles Flint (England, 30 November)

Adam Giersz (Poland, 30 November)

Christiaan Timmermans (Belgium,

30 November)

Wolfgang Niersbach (Germany, 30 November)

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Meetings

1 November, in Nyon

Marketing Advisory Committee

13 November, in Nyon

National Team Competitions Committee

14 November, in Nyon

Media Committee

20 November, in Nyon

2014/15 European Women's U19 and U17 Championships: first qualifying round draws

2013/14 European Women's U19

Championship: second qualifying

round draw

21 November, in Nyon

UEFA Women's Champions League:

quarter and semi-final draws

Stadium and Security Committee

27 November, in Nyon

Football Committee

Youth and Amateur Football Committee

28 November, in Nyon

2013/14 European U19 and U17

Championships: elite round draws

2014/15 European U19 and U17

Championships: qualifying round draws

2014/15 UEFA Regions' Cup: preliminary

and intermediate round draws

Competitions

5/6 November

UEFA Champions League:

group stage (matchday 4)

7 November

UEFA Europa League:

group stage (matchday 4)

9/10 November

UEFA Women's Champions League:

round of 16 (first legs)

NOTICES

- Marco Casagrande became general secretary of the Football Association of Finland on 15 August.

- The UEFA Executive Committee made the following appointments to its standing committees in Dubrovnik: Gregory Dyke (England) was appointed to the National Associations Committee, Jonathan Hall (England) to the Fair Play and Social Responsibility Committee and Dan Ashworth (England) to the Football Committee.

- The European Club Association (ECA) appointed Andrea Agnelli (Italy), Ian Ayre (England) and Pedro Lopez Jimenez (Spain) as its new representatives on the UEFA Club Competitions Committee, in place of Umberto Gandini, Ivan Gazidis and Sandro Rosell. In addition, Karl Hopfner (Germany) became the committee's first vice-chairman.

OBITUARY

Vlatko Marković, honorary president of the Croatian Football Association, passed away on 23 September at the age of 76. He was a member of the circle of former UEFA committee members having served as member (1996-2004) then chairman (2004-07) of the Technical Development Committee, first vice-chairman of the Football Committee (2007-09), and first vice-chairman (2009-11) then co-opted member (2011-13) of the Development and Technical Assistance Committee.

13/14 November

UEFA Women's Champions League:

round of 16 (return legs)

26/27 November

UEFA Champions League:

group stage (matchday 5)

26 November–8 December, in England

European Women's U17 Championship:

final tournament

28 November

UEFA Europa League:

group stage (matchday 5)



With the UEFA club competitions attracting widespread interest from football fans around the globe, they provide the perfect platform to spread the message that racism and discrimination have no place in the game.

As part of UEFA's Respect campaign, this message will be delivered loud and clear at all 40 matches across Europe on matchday three of the UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa League, as part of the FARE Action Weeks. UEFA is again teaming up with the FARE (Football Against Racism in Europe) network, its long-standing social responsibility partner, to present a united front against racism and discrimination.

Public awareness

The No to Racism message will be the focus of activities during the FARE Action Weeks, which aim to increase public awareness of intolerance and discrimination in football, as well as developing ideas and strategies on how to combat them. Team captains will wear No to Racism armbands, anti-racism messages will be played over clubs' public address systems and a video containing player testimonials backing the campaign will be shown in each stadium and made available to broadcasters around the world to show at half-time of every match.

A No to Racism pennant will also be passed between the players in the pre-match lineups, and ballboys and girls will wear No to Racism T-shirts. No to Racism banners are being prominently displayed on the pitch at the start of every match this season, and on LED perimeter boards during the knockout stage, keeping the campaign forever fresh in people's minds.

UEFA resolution

FARE Action Weeks highlight the resolution adopted at the UEFA Congress last May, when

UEFA's member associations pledged to step up their efforts to eradicate racism from football and impose stricter sanctions on racist behaviour. A video showcasing the 11 points that make up the resolution will be broadcast before each game on matchday three. UEFA has also revised its disciplinary regulations to include tougher penalties against racism.

The resolution – entitled European football united against racism – includes encouragement to referees to stop, suspend or even abandon games if racist incidents occur; the imposition of a ten-match suspension on any player or team official found guilty of racist conduct; and potential stadium closures if fans engage in such behaviour.

Already this season, UEFA's Control and Disciplinary Body has announced sanctions against clubs in UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa League qualifying matches whose supporters participated in racist acts, reinforcing the message that racism will not be tolerated in the European game.

"It was important to send out a clear message that enough is enough, of zero tolerance against racism, of saying No to Racism," UEFA General Secretary Gianni Infantino said. "Since the beginning of our fight against racism, it was impressive how many stars, both players and officials, have encouraged us and actively participated in this campaign. This is very important in terms of awareness."

For more information visit UEFA.org and follow #notoracism. ●



NO TO RACISM





WE CARE ABOUT FOOTBALL

UEFA
ROUTE DE GENÈVE 46
CH-1260 NYON 2
SWITZERLAND
TEL. +41 848 00 27 27
FAX +41 848 01 27 27
UEFA.com
uefadirect@uefa.ch