

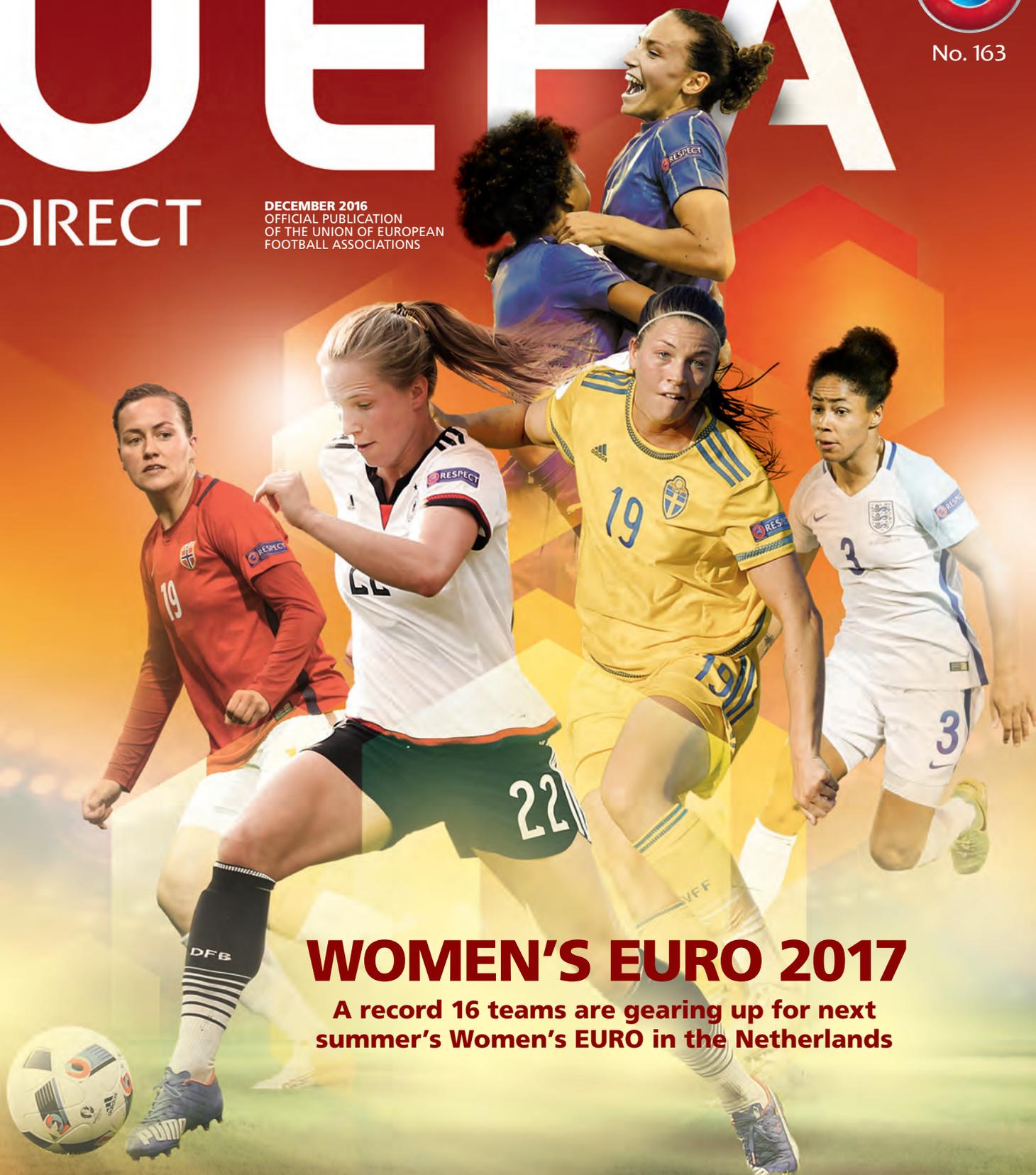
UEFA



No. 163

DIRECT

DECEMBER 2016
OFFICIAL PUBLICATION
OF THE UNION OF EUROPEAN
FOOTBALL ASSOCIATIONS



WOMEN'S EURO 2017

A record 16 teams are gearing up for next summer's Women's EURO in the Netherlands

GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL

Celebrating UEFA Grassroots Week all over Europe

THE TECHNICIAN

Roy Hodgson shares his experience with student coaches

FOOTBALL REVOLUTION

The transformation from leather to synthetic



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TAKING WOMEN'S FOOTBALL TO ANOTHER LEVEL

It may not have been long since I started my mandate as UEFA president, but already I have witnessed how passionate this organisation is about promoting, protecting and developing football in Europe.

It has given me great pleasure to learn more about all the projects and initiatives that we are pursuing with our national associations to reach our common goal of safeguarding the future of our sport.

I recently had the opportunity to attend the draw for UEFA Women's EURO 2017 in Rotterdam and this allowed me to underline my commitment to the development of women's football across the continent. This flagship tournament, which had its first edition in 1984, has grown immensely and will feature a record 16 teams next year. It is a sign that progress has been made and that momentum exists in this sector.

This momentum has largely been driven by the hard work and dedication of the nations who have invested in the women's game and have been leading by example. So I would like to thank the superpowers who have celebrated European success and those who are now taking their first steps at elite level.

I am committed to carrying this momentum throughout my mandate as UEFA president. I want to help take the women's game to another level. My vision is that one day we will speak not about women's football development but just women's football.

This is a vision I think we can achieve by working together with all national associations and investing in making the game stronger. And then, by combining the growing strength of grassroots initiatives and the increasing profile of our competitions, we will surely be able to celebrate many more great accomplishments in the future.



Aleksander Čeferin
UEFA President



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**Official publication of the
Union of European
Football Associations**

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Production:
Touchline

Printing:
Artgraphic Cavin
CH-1422 Grandson

Editorial deadline:
17 November 2016

Cover photo:
Getty Images;
Stef22 / Dreamstime.com





EXPANDED FINALS OPEN DOORS TO NEW NATIONS

There were five debutants among the 16 teams in the draw for UEFA Women's EURO 2017 in Rotterdam on 8 November.

As only 13 different countries had ever qualified for previous European Women's Championship final tournaments, the expansion from 12 teams to 16 for the 2017 edition was guaranteed to bring new names into the mix.

And so it did. While Germany will be going for a seventh straight title in the Netherlands next summer, and both Norway and Italy will be competing in their 11th final tournament, Austria, Belgium, Portugal, Scotland and Switzerland will all be making their debuts at this stage of the competition.

Preliminary round

A record starting line-up of 47 nations, including the hosts, meant a preliminary round was needed to reduce the list of hopefuls to 40 for the main qualifying group stage. Moldova – on home soil – and Georgia came through the preliminary mini-tournaments in April 2015, with first-timers Andorra among the teams failing to progress to the eight main groups, which played home and away in the 12 months from September 2015.

The eight group winners and the six runners-up with the best record against the teams that finished first, third and fourth in their section would qualify automatically, with the other two second-placed sides to play off for the 16th berth in the Netherlands.

Group 1

From the opening fixtures, when Scotland won 3-0 in Slovenia and Iceland beat Belarus 2-0, the group always looked like a two-horse race. Indeed, by the time they met for the first time in June, neither team had dropped a point and, between them, they had 44 goals from nine games.

Iceland, seeking a third straight qualification, prefigured their male team's EURO 2016 heroics by winning 4-0 in Scotland, giving Anna Signeul's side a shudder that they might face the same fate as in 2009 and 2013, when they faced heartbreaking play-off defeats.



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They did not have to worry. By the time they visited Iceland for their final qualifier on 20 September, both Scotland and their hosts were guaranteed at least to be one of the six best runners-up. Scotland celebrated with a 2-1 victory, Jane Ross striking twice to finish as ten-goal qualifying joint-top scorer with Iceland's Harpa Thorsteinsdóttir and Norway's Ada Hegerberg.

Group 2

There was no stopping Spain, who won all of their eight matches with a qualifying

high of 39 goals. Their qualification was confirmed in June, when the only team that could catch them, Finland, were held 0-0 by Portugal.

That proved a crucial result as Finland, chasing a fourth straight qualification, then travelled to Portugal in September and, despite leading 2-0, lost 3-2 to a Cláudia Neto hat-trick. 'CN7' then scored on the rebound from a saved penalty in the Republic of Ireland four days later, with 12 minutes left, to take Portugal – seeded fourth in the group – above Finland on head-to-head record and into the play-offs.

Group 3

Romania booked their place against Portugal as a 2-1 success over Ukraine gave them second place and a first-ever play-off – it would have been a place in the finals had Russia not pipped them to the sixth runners-up berth by a single goal.

Pole position was never in doubt as France claimed eight straight victories without conceding and became the first team to qualify on 11 April. They have now won a record 41 group qualifiers in a row and the 24,835 crowd that watched them beat Greece in Rennes in June was a Women's EURO qualifying record.

Group 4

Sweden comfortably qualified, edging Slovakia 2-1 in September for a seventh successive win, the Scandinavian side fresh from taking Olympic silver the previous month. Denmark, who had endured an unhappy World Cup qualifying campaign, dropped points early on by losing in Sweden and drawing in Poland, but finished with a flourish, clinching second place by defeating their neighbours 2-0 in their last qualifier. The 1-0 loss in the reverse fixture featured the only goal the Danes conceded in the group.

Group 5

Germany qualified with their usual consummate ease, making it official just a day after France with a 2-0 triumph over



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Croatia. By the end they had won all eight matches, scored 35 goals without reply, landed a first Olympic gold and smoothly transitioned from long-standing coach Silvia Neid to successor Steffi Jones. Second place was more of a race as Russia only managed five points from their first four games. They came good in the final straight, but needed the full margin of their concluding 5-0 thrashing of Croatia to beat Romania to automatic qualification as sixth best runner-up.

Group 6

While Switzerland had never reached a Women's EURO and Italy held a joint-record number of qualifications, the Azzurre were far from favourites to top the pile. Switzerland had comfortably seen off Iceland and Denmark to make the 2015 World Cup in Canada, where they got to the last 16, and they kept up that form in EURO qualifying as they won all eight fixtures, overcoming Italy 3-0 away and 2-1 at home.

Italy, meanwhile, found themselves pressed by both Northern Ireland and the Czech Republic for second spot right until the end of qualifying. In their last two matches, though, the Azzurre won 3-0 in Northern Ireland and dismissed the Czechs 3-1 to join Switzerland in the Netherlands.

Group 7

Belgium earned a finals debut by pushing England all the way. Although Belgium were held 1-1 at home by Serbia in November, in their next outing five months later they travelled to England and drew 1-1, the first home qualifying goal conceded by their hosts since 2002; in fact the visitors were only denied victory late on by Jill Scott.

Both teams continued to see off all-comers and by the time England won 2-0 in Belgium in the last fixture, each side was already assured of qualification for the finals. There was a notable feat by England's Danielle Carter, who won

her first two caps away and at home against Estonia, and bagged hat-tricks in both games.

Group 8

Norway, aided by the goals of Hegerberg, made short work of winning the group, dropping points only in a 2-2 home draw with Austria. That result was the highlight of a campaign that took Austria to their maiden finals, making it certain with a 0-0 stalemate in Wales.

Play-offs

A fifth debut finalist was guaranteed as Portugal – beaten in the play-offs of 1997 and 2001 – took on Romania. Portugal, who began qualifying ranked 26th to Romania's 22nd, were drawn to play the first leg at home but despite dominating in Lisbon were held 0-0, Neto hitting the post with a penalty that then rolled into goalkeeper Andrea Părăluță's arms.

The crowd of 3,415 was a Portuguese women's record, but it was bettered five days later in Cluj as 7,110 – the second largest play-off attendance in the competition's history – watched an epic. Again it was 0-0 after 90 minutes, so extra time ensued. Penalties started to loom but just before the change of ends Andreia Norton, who had come on for her Portugal debut in the 78th minute, was sent clear and shot in for a precious away goal.

Fellow substitute Laura Rus levelled on the night with nine minutes to go, but Romania were to run out of time. An unlikely Portugal men's and women's EURO double is still possible. 🇵🇹



Sportsfile

GROUP FORMATIONS DECIDED

On 8 November, in Rotterdam, the Women's EURO 2017 final draw dealt the 16 contenders into the following four groups:

- Group A:** Netherlands, Norway, Denmark, Belgium
- Group B:** Germany, Sweden, Italy, Russia
- Group C:** France, Iceland, Austria, Switzerland
- Group D:** England, Scotland, Spain, Portugal

The group matches will be played between 16 and 27 July, the quarter-finals on 29 and 30 July, the semi-finals on 3 August and the final on 6 August. There are seven host cities for the tournament: Breda, Deventer, Doetinchem, Enschede, Rotterdam, Tilburg and Utrecht.



UEFA

DEVELOPING WOMEN'S FOOTBALL IN POLAND

Recently celebrated as one of the champions of the UEFA Women's Football Development Programme, the Polish Football Association invited UEFA ambassador Nadine Kessler to Warsaw to show her the results on the ground and introduce her to some of the girls benefiting from the work being done.

The Polish Football Association (PZPN) is one of a number of success stories in the UEFA Women's Football Development Programme, which has just completed its first cycle. Launched in 2010, the programme funds national association projects to develop the women's game in a variety of areas and those put forward by the PZPN have been identified as examples of best practice to be replicated where possible.

"The Polish FA works hand-in-hand with UEFA to develop women's football," PZPN president Zbigniew Boniek explains, "increasing access to and participation in football among young girls across Poland, notably by strengthening the relationship between schools and clubs. It is very satisfying to see the impact of our collaborative efforts and we look

forward to continuing to develop women's football throughout the country. We are honoured to be recognised by UEFA as a best practice example."

During the first full cycle of the programme (2012–16), UEFA gave each member association €100,000 a year to spend on women's football development. In Poland, the PZPN decided to invest the money in three main areas: domestic women's competitions, coach education for women and raising the profile of the women's game.

Efforts to increase the number of women's leagues and players, and create a national player development pathway from the grassroots to professional level, have resulted, among other things, in the creation of a women's Under-13 six-a-side competition,

"I come here to play because this is the best club I know in the area, and football is what I love."

Martyna
13 years old

in which each of the 16 regional associations enters their two best teams. Since 2015/16 the event has been included in the domestic competitions calendar.

More female coaches

Encouraging clubs to invest in training female coaches has also proved successful. A total of 203 women now hold a Polish FA licence and 40 have been awarded UEFA B licences. Eight clubs received best practice awards from the PZPN's women's football committee and 12 women now work as full-time coaches of women's teams.

Last but not least, the PZPN's efforts to raise the profile of the women's game have included women's competition branding, broadcasting women's matches online and posting highlights of recorded matches on servers hosted by the PZPN on behalf of the clubs.

Nadine Kessler, former Germany international and recently appointed UEFA women's football development ambassador, travelled to Warsaw to see at first hand what the association has achieved.

On day one of her visit she attended a women's Under-13 tournament just outside the capital, shared her insights with and gave advice to the players and their parents in special Q&A sessions, and then accompanied the girls to the National Stadium, where they watched the men's national team take on Armenia in the European Qualifiers.

On day two Kessler attended another tournament, this time for 8 to 10-year-olds. The girls were not short on enthusiasm, and it was heartwarming to see them hugging their idol and asking for her autograph, on cards, shirts and even lunchboxes.

Sharing her impressions during her first outing as a UEFA ambassador, 28-year-old Kessler – who won the 2014 UEFA Best Women's Player in Europe Award and received the 2014 FIFA Player of the Year Award – said: "It feels really good to be in Poland as a UEFA ambassador. In my new role, I hope to inspire younger girls and give something back. I can share my experience as a player and hopefully encourage more girls to play football."

Kessler also reflected on the work of the PZPN: "I'm really impressed. They have made it easier for girls to get into football. And meeting the girls, chatting and laughing with them and seeing how their eyes sparkle when they go out onto the pitch and do what they love, it makes me very happy."

One of the highlights of the PZPN's implementation of the UEFA Women's Football Development Programme is that the association's large-scale promotion of the women's game has attracted new sponsors and other stakeholders have started taking more of an interest as a result.

The PZPN is one of several associations that have shown outstanding commitment and results in the field of women's football development. Special reports on the exemplary work undertaken in other countries around Europe – Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, England, Estonia, the Faroe Islands, Germany, Hungary and Malta – will be published on UEFA.org throughout 2016/17.

The success of the Women's Football Development Programme in its first cycle has been such that the funding has been extended for another four years as part of HatTrick IV (2016–20). ⚽

"It was great to meet Nadine. She sets an example and proves that girls can also play football!"

**Ania
13 years old**

Nadine Kessler, UEFA women's football development ambassador





Credits: Getty Images / adidas

THE REMARKABLE TRANSFORMATION OF THE FOOTBALL

From the leather models of old to today's synthetic creations, the football has undergone a remarkable transformation since the 70s – a revolution retold by those who experienced it at first hand.

He graced the game's greatest stages, playing in European Cup finals for Juventus and for Poland at the World Cup. Today he is president of the Polish Football Association.

Yet there is a corner of Zbigniew Boniek's mind reserved for a special childhood memory – the simple joy of having a ball at his feet. "When I was a boy, the ball was like a treasure," he says. "The boy with the ball was the king of the playground."

And this being Poland in the 1960s, that ball was made of leather, which stiffened in the cold, and thickened in the rain. "When it was wet, you really felt it," Boniek remembers. "It was not very pleasant when you were standing in the wall at a free-kick and the ball hit you. It was the same with headers."

Chris Waddle remembers the leather ball too. The former England winger can recall clearly the first one his father bought for him at a sports shop in Newcastle one never-forgotten Saturday morning in the mid-60s. "I went in and he bought this leather ball which was lovely," he says. "I even remember the smell. We got the bus home and within 15 minutes of getting home I was on the field with it. All of a sudden you end up with about 30 mates because you've got the best ball in the street. I kicked the leather off it for a good year and a bit."

Waddle's words evoke a different time – and not just for those big games of street football. That old stitched leather ball that he kicked around his neighbourhood would resemble a museum piece to a child today. So too the playground ball of Boniek's boyhood.

Today's footballs belong to a different world. When adidas launched the Beau Jeu, the official match ball for EURO 2016 after an 18-month testing period, it featured six identical panels, thermally bonded to provide a seamless surface, and the promise of a predictable trajectory, better touch and low water uptake.

The transformation in ball technology since adidas produced the first tournament ball, the Telstar, has been remarkable, and so too its impact on the game itself. From the Telstar and Tango through the first entirely non-leather designs of the mid-80s to the UEFA Champions League Star Ball, footballs have grown ever lighter and faster. Never mind the old pig's bladder – as the great Dutch midfielder Ruud Gullit observes, things have changed dramatically even since his playing days.

"The ball was much harder, it was much heavier also and you had to use more power in my days," Gullit says. "If you look at goalkeepers then, they could hardly kick the ball to the middle of the pitch. You can shoot the ball with less effort now and it swirls a lot."

That is not to say players could not get any movement out of older balls, adds Gullit, remembering how "in my days in Italy, [Oleksiy] Mykhaylychenko could do this when he played for Sampdoria. He could do the same with the old ball. That is a matter of technique. But you can do it now with less effort. To get the same kind of speed, you don't need to be powerful to do it." →

'You had to try to find out, as a coach, whichever ball a country was playing with. If you went to some of the new football nations in Eastern Europe at the time you didn't see their games very often and were desperate to find out what type of ball they used.'

Packie Bonner

A journey down the decades

Originally a football was a pig’s or cow’s bladder encased in a leather casing made up of panels held together by lacing. Until 1951 they were generally brown; in that year, white balls were introduced for matches played under floodlights and orange balls for games played in snow. In October of the same year, a football without lacing was used for a match between Denmark and Sweden in Copenhagen.

Adidas began its production of footballs in 1963 and the Telstar – a 32-panel ball made up of 12 black pentagons and 20 white hexagons, and named after a communications satellite – appeared at the end of the 1960s. It was used at the 1968 European Championship before becoming the first adidas World Cup ball two years later at Mexico 1970. The model for the 1974 World Cup in West Germany featured the introduction of a Durlast polyurethane coating which provided waterproofing and helped maintain the ball’s shape and resistance against abrasion. Unlike leather, polyurethane is flexible and does not stiffen in cold conditions.

The 1984 European Championship in France was the first major tournament featuring a wholly non-leather ball, and two years later, the first such synthetic World Cup ball – the Azteca México – was used at the finals in Mexico.

Günter Pfau was working for adidas in this period and remembers: “Adidas were hesitant to tell people it was a non-leather ball in 1984, but when the World Cup went to Mexico with the humid conditions and hard grounds and altitude, that was a perfect moment to



Getty Images

introduce a non-leather ball to show people the advantages.”

The next truly significant design change came in 2004: this was the introduction of the first seamless ball, the Roteiro, for the EURO 2004 finals in Portugal. It was a ball whose carcass, bladder and panels were connected by thermal bonding. Over four million were sold, from mini-balls to the official match ball. “The panels were not handstitched any more,” says Pfau. “That means the ball had much better water resistance. In the 60s or 70s, for example, the ball sometimes gained 20 per cent in weight in wet conditions. Today it is near zero.” Or, to be specific, 0.2%.

‘The Tango was the liveliest football I played with. I loved it, it was really lively, you could fuzz it and do a lot of things with it.’

Chris Waddle

In search of uniformity

It was not until 1 January 1996 that UEFA implemented FIFA-endorsed quality controls for the balls used in international competitions. Footballs were then divided into three quality groups: FIFA-approved, FIFA-inspected, and



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UEFA Champions League Starball

International Matchball Standard. All footballs had to pass six quality controls – seven in the case of top-class footballs.

In the same decade, the Premier League in England introduced an official match ball. Soon other club competitions were following suit. The UEFA Champions League Star Ball appeared for the first time in 2001 – true to its name, it was adorned by eight stars – and since 2006/07 there has been an official adidas match ball used at every UEFA Champions League fixture throughout the season. In times past, it was common practice for teams to spend the days leading up to a fixture training with the ball used by the club they would be visiting for a given fixture. Ruud Gullit, recalling the Dutch Eredivisie in the 1980s, says: “You practised with a ball the whole week. Some had adidas, some had Derbystars. Everyone had their own ball.”

It was the same in the international arena. There may be an official adidas ball for the European Qualifiers for the 2018 World Cup – providing “bursts of red and black colouring, which alludes to the adrenaline felt by supporters in the build-up to a match” – yet Packie Bonner, the former Republic of Ireland goalkeeper, remembers a very different reality in his days coaching his nation’s custodians. “You had to try to find out, as a coach, whichever ball a country was playing with. If you went to some of the new football nations in Eastern Europe at the time you didn’t see their games very often and were desperate to find out what type of ball, so you could find some to train with before you went. We would train in Dublin and then go somewhere and it was a completely different ball.” →



‘Mykhaylychenko could do the same with the old ball. That is a matter of technique. But you can do it now with less effort. To get the same kind of speed, you don’t need to be powerful to do it.’

Ruud Gullit

Getty Images



THE FOOTBALL IN THE 50S

“The ball was so heavy – and on a wet day the weight could increase by 50 per cent – no one considered long-range shooting as a sensible option.” This was the recollection of Tom Finney, the English football legend of the 1950s, writing about the balls of his era in his 2003 autobiography. “Very few goals were scored from distance and free-kick specials, such as the kind David Beckham is known for, were very rare indeed,” he added. “It is astonishing to watch the ball, still rising, zip into the top corner as Beckham bends one past another bewildered goalkeeper from well outside the box. Tell you what, if someone had smacked a shot from 30 yards in my day, it would have been heralded as a flippin’ miracle!”

Impact on goalkeepers

Both Zbigniew Boniek and Gullit suggest that modern footballs are no friend of the goalkeeper. Pascal Olmeta, who played in goal for Olympique de Marseille and Olympique Lyonnais in the 90s, concurs. "You often hear, 'It's the goalkeeper's fault', but connoisseurs know it's because of the trajectories the balls take which are impossible to read." He even suggests that goalkeepers should follow the lead of his old goalkeeping coach, Jean Castaneda, who made him train with rugby balls to help him get used to reacting to balls with a less predictable flight. "It helps you to work on your reactions."



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Packie Bonner, now a UEFA instructor, offers his own insight into how goalkeeping has changed in the face of developments in ball technology. As a young player, for instance, he remembers being instructed to always hold the ball. "If a goalkeeper did not catch the ball from a 20 or 25-yard shot, they were deemed a bad goalkeeper," he recalls. Today, goalkeepers receive a different message. "They don't have that opportunity to hold it," the Irishman continues, "so they are trained to knock the ball into an area of safety away from goal. If they try to catch it, it can come out two or three yards. The ball is not as easy to catch and it is lighter and travels with speed."

Bonner remembers the sight of a Manuel Neuer goal kick during the Germany v England round of 16 match at the 2010 World Cup, when the ball landed 30 metres from David James's goal, teeing up Miroslav Klose to score. "That was incredible to think the goalkeeper can now take the ball from that distance off the ground and it travels all that way."

If the Jabulani aided Neuer in that instance, its movement in the air was such that goalkeepers faced an extra problem when facing strikes from distance. "The biggest issue

THE DIMENSIONS OF A FOOTBALL

The Laws of the Game state that a football must be:

<p>of a circumference of not more than 70cm (28ins) and not less than 68cm (27ins)</p>	<p>not more than 450g (16oz) and not less than 410g (14oz) in weight at the start of the match</p>	<p>of a pressure equal to 0.6–1.1 atmosphere (600–1,100g/cm²) at sea level (8.5lbs/sq in – 15.6lbs/sq in)</p>

Getty Images



WHAT'S IN A FOOTBALL?

The Beau Jeu at EURO 2016 had a bladder of latex and an outer surface comprising six polyurethane panels, bonded to keep the ball the same weight and roundness in even the heaviest of rain (this was a ball with a water absorption rate of just 0.2%). Although based on the Brazuca from the 2014 World Cup, the Beau Jeu was modified to offer a rougher texture and better grip, and it underwent an 18-month period in which first a kicking robot – at adidas's development centre in Herzogenaurach, near Nuremberg – and then professional players put it to the test ...

for the goalkeeper is if he moves too quickly and the ball moves in the wrong direction as then he has lost balance," says Bonner, "so instead of moving and trying to read the strike when it's hit first, you are almost waiting an extra second and a half. That is not easy."

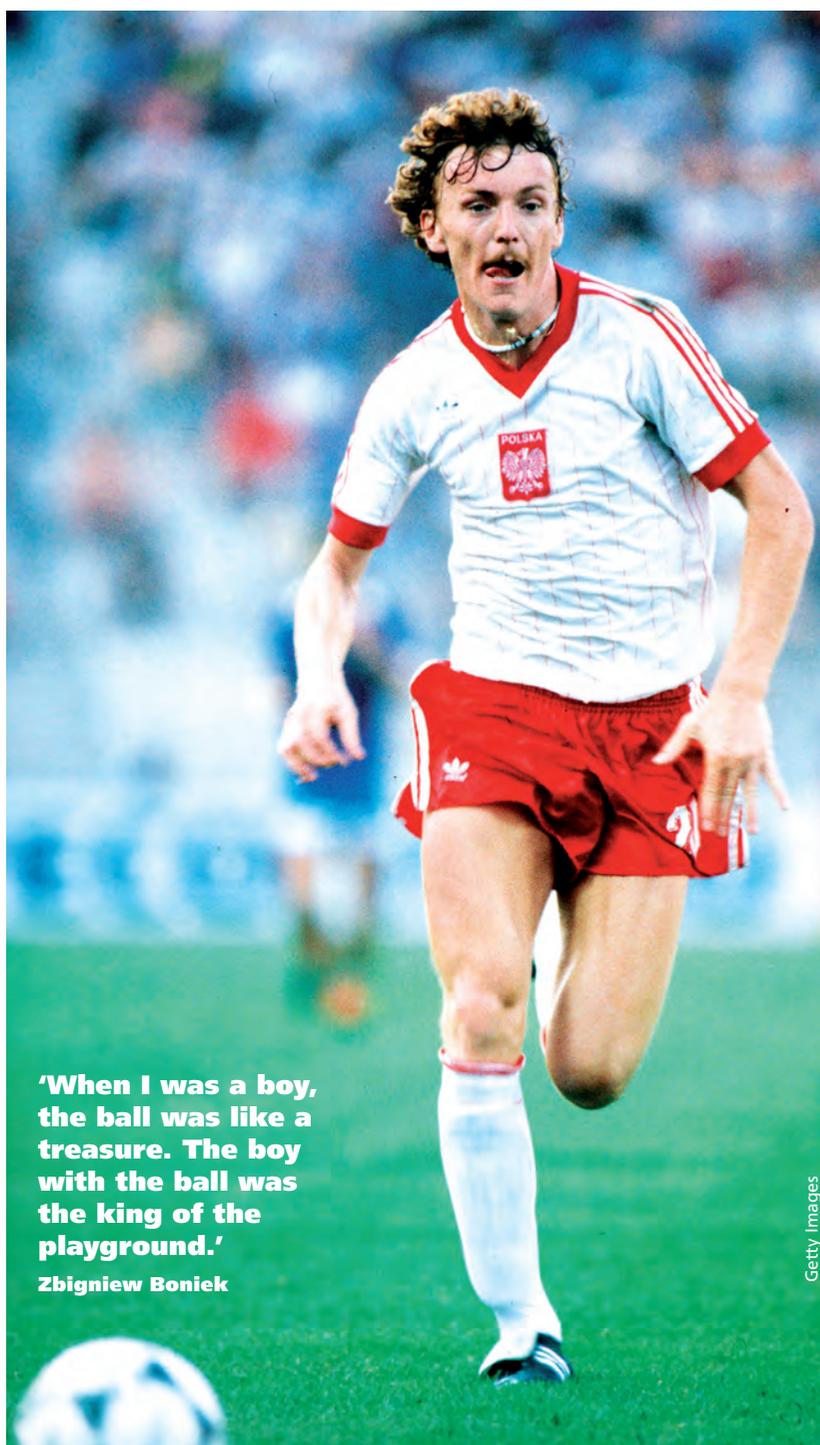
Two to Tango

If the modern ball places different demands on a goalkeeper, how about for attacking players? Chris Waddle, still playing amateur football in Sheffield, likens playing with balls today to playing in the altitude of Mexico at the 1986 World Cup. He cites the care that needs to be taken at corner kicks, when full power with a strike can send a ball flying too far. "How many corners do we see either go flat at the near post because they take a bit off, or go out the other side because they really do smash it?" he says.

Waddle does not hesitate to name his own favourite ball: the adidas Tango, which was first introduced for the 1978 World Cup and had 20 identical panels with 'triads' creating the impression of 12 identical circles. The 1982 Tango España was the last leather World Cup ball, and Waddle played with Tangos in both the old English First Division and in his days in France at Marseille.

"The Tango was the liveliest football I played with," he remembers. "I loved it, it was really lively, you could fizz it and do a lot of things with it. The majority were quite thick and you had to put a lot on them; today you don't have to put as much pace on them and the balls move that much."

Zbigniew Boniek concurs: for a player of the 80s, there was no ball like the Tango. "I really liked it. It was my first World Cup in 1978 and that ball was just perfect. If I could transport something from today's football back to my own playing days it would be the quality of the 'show' – the stadiums and TV coverage. Football is sold so much better than before. But I wouldn't bring the balls with me. I'd want to play with the Tango forever." ⚽



'When I was a boy, the ball was like a treasure. The boy with the ball was the king of the playground.'

Zbigniew Boniek



FOOTBALL'S FIRST TIE-BREAKER

The away goals rule, which was introduced ten years after the European Champion Clubs' Cup was launched in 1955, has been a fundamental part of UEFA competitions for several decades. Brought in during the second half of the 1960s to encourage attacking play, it also helped to ease the pressure on an already congested calendar for European clubs, as well as saving organisational and travel costs.

Splitting two teams who are on level terms after a two-legged encounter may sound simple, but there are numerous ways of doing it, and the methods used differ from sport to sport and from competition to competition. The away goals rule has been an intrinsic part of UEFA competitions for almost 50 years. The current regulations of the UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa League state that: "For matches played under the knockout system, if the two teams involved in a tie score the same number of goals over the two legs, the team which scores more away goals qualifies for the next stage." Although it is now used in numerous competitions across the world, this rule was the brainchild of UEFA or, to be more precise, of Swiss Hans Bangarter, the organisation's general secretary from 1960 to 1988.

In the mid-1960s, Bangarter resolved to tackle a problem that blighted many European matches at the time: the extremely defensive style of play adopted by away teams, who were often content to shut up shop in an effort to concede as few goals as possible, an approach

that was clearly spoiling the game as a spectacle. With the support of the European Champion Clubs' Cup and European Cup Winners' Cup organising committees, and of the UEFA Executive Committee, Bangarter devised a rule that he would later describe as 'revolutionary': each goal scored by the away team would count double if the scores were level after two legs.

Shortly after the goal average system had been replaced by the goal difference rule in April 1965, the away goals rule was introduced on a trial basis in the 1965/66 season, solely in the Cup Winners' Cup, following a decision taken by the Executive Committee in Rome on 24 March 1965. The impact was immediate: in the last 16, Budapest Honvéd (Hungary) and Dukla Praha (Czechoslovakia) finished their two-legged tie on level terms (4-4 on aggregate, the Hungarians winning the first leg 3-2 in Prague before losing the second leg 2-1 at home). Instead of the play-off that would normally have been used to separate the sides, Budapest Honvéd qualified thanks to their three goals in Prague. The first chapter had been

Above: Mimis Domazos in action for Panathinaikos against Ajax's Sjaak Swart in the 1971 European Cup final. Panathinaikos benefited twice from the away goals rule to reach the final: against Everton in the quarter-finals (1-1, 0-0) and against Red Star Belgrade in the semi-finals (1-4, 3-0).

written in the story of the away goals rule, and many more quickly followed. From 1967/68 onwards, the rule was gradually applied to the early rounds of the Champion Clubs' Cup up to the last 16, and then to all UEFA competitions from the 1969/70 season. The first notable beneficiaries included Panathinaikos FC of Greece, who lost to AFC Ajax in the final of the 1970/71 Champion Clubs' Cup after relying on the away goals rule to see off Everton FC in the quarter-finals and Red Star Belgrade in the last four.

Play-offs scrapped

Since its introduction, the rule has had a huge impact on away teams' approach to matches. Nowadays, it is hard to imagine a team winning the UEFA Champions League without registering a single away victory in the competition, as Manchester United FC did in 1967/68, when they failed to win any of their four away matches. Since 1970, the proportion of goals scored by away teams has grown decade on decade, reaching 41.7% for the period since 2010. The added value of an away goal often encourages visiting teams to try to score and thereby secure a significant advantage. It is difficult in this day and age to spot any major differences between home and away teams in terms of tactics or attacking ambition, which is exactly what Hans Bangertter wanted to achieve. The away goals rule also enabled the former UEFA general secretary to address another significant problem that had arisen in the early days of the UEFA competitions: the large number of play-off matches and the cost of organising them.

Before the new rule was adopted, a play-off match was held whenever the aggregate score was level after two legs. Played on neutral territory, these matches drew very small crowds, cost the clubs a lot of money and forced UEFA not only to ask for additional dates in the calendar, but also to try to find dates that suited both clubs concerned. This was a real conundrum, but one that became rarer once teams began to be separated by away goals. Play-offs were now only required if the scoreline in both legs was identical, with each team netting the same aggregate number of goals and the same number of away goals, or if both matches finished goalless, of course. Play-offs were scrapped completely when the penalty competition was introduced in 1970/71 to decide the winner of such ties.

Sometimes debated, but never under threat

Since it was adopted, the away goals rule has decided the winner in 8.3% of two-legged

UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa League ties, a figure that has changed little over time. It is also used, albeit less often, to split teams that finish level on points and total goals scored in group stages. With travel much easier today than in the 1960s and greater consistency in terms of styles of play across Europe, whether it is still appropriate for an away goal to carry more weight than one scored at home is frequently a topic of debate. Some think that the impact of the rule nowadays runs counter to its original purpose, claiming that it dissuades home teams – especially in first legs – from attacking because they fear conceding a goal that would give their opponents a crucial advantage. However, despite these occasional criticisms, the away goals rule has, over the last 50 years, become a fully-fledged part of the very culture of the UEFA club competitions and continues, each season, to decide important football matches. In 2016, for example, Club Atlético de Madrid won their UEFA Champions League semi-final against FC Bayern München (1-0, 1-2) thanks to a goal from Antoine Griezmann at the Fußball Arena München. Meanwhile, Paris Saint-Germain, the most notable and frequent victim of the away goals rule in recent years, missed out on a semi-final place two seasons running when they lost in the last eight to FC Barcelona in 2013 (2-2, 1-1) and Chelsea FC in 2014 (3-1, 0-2). Did the French club's supporters think the rule was unfair? If so, they probably changed their minds when their side knocked out Chelsea FC in 2015, also on the away goals rule. Although the rule is far from perfect, it is hard to imagine a simpler, more effective mechanism for deciding the fate of some of Europe's biggest clubs. 🌐

“Since its introduction, the rule has had a huge impact on away teams' approach to matches”

This season, FC Viktoria Plzeň (in red) qualified on away goals in the UEFA Europa League, eliminating Qarabağ FK in the third qualifying round.





CLUBS SAY 'NO TO RACISM'

Clubs competing in this season's UEFA Champions League, UEFA Europa League and, for the first time, UEFA Women's Champions League have been campaigning against discrimination and celebrating diversity.

Clubs, players and officials from all over Europe said no to racism, intolerance and xenophobia at 60 matches in UEFA's top club competitions played between 6 and 20 October.

The message was clear: we are all members of the football family, whatever our background, language, nationality or skin colour, and we reject discrimination of any kind.

As has become customary, UEFA's annual No to Racism campaign was held during the Football People action weeks organised by Football Against Racism in Europe (aka the FARE network), a long-standing UEFA social responsibility partner.

Millions of spectators and TV viewers witnessed the campaign, which included activities on and off the pitch. With a TV ad featuring the likes of Cristiano Ronaldo and Lionel Messi saying 'No to racism' in their mother tongue, official team photos with the No to Racism flag, No to Racism armbands,

children wearing No to Racism T-shirts and No to Racism supplements in match programmes, the campaign was omnipresent and received universal support.

UEFA's efforts to eliminate all forms of discrimination from football extend beyond the No to Racism campaign, not least through its ongoing implementation of the anti-racism resolution adopted by the UEFA Congress in May 2013. The resolution imposes a zero-tolerance approach to racism and requires strict sanctions against anyone found guilty of racist behaviour.



Watch the No to Racism video

"I believe strongly that we must stand up to racism and all forms of discrimination, which have no place in football"

Aleksander Čeferin
UEFA President



Credits: Getty Images



FUTSAL EURO 2018 QUALIFYING DRAW

With the dust barely having settled on the Futsal World Cup in Colombia, Europe’s national teams are already gearing up for their next challenge, the qualifiers for UEFA Futsal EURO 2018 in Slovenia.

On 21 October, the names of the 47 teams with their sights set on reaching the finals in Slovenia went into the hat for the preliminary and main round draws, conducted at UEFA’s headquarters in Nyon. The entrants include two newcomers to the European Futsal Championship: Germany and Kosovo.

By the end of the main round, the 47 hopefuls will have been whittled down to 11, who will join hosts Slovenia in the final tournament.

The preliminary round, consisting of the following five groups of four and two groups of three, will be played between 23 January and 1 February.

The winners of the groups will go through to the main round, where they will join those teams exempted from the preliminary round:

- Group A:** Georgia, Switzerland, Israel, Scotland
- Group B:** Greece, Moldova, **Wales**, San Marino
- Group C:** Latvia, Armenia, Estonia, Germany
- Group D:** England, **Bulgaria**, Albania, Malta
- Group E:** Norway, Denmark, **Cyprus**, Kosovo
- Group F:** France, Andorra, **Lithuania**
- Group G:** Sweden, Montenegro, **Gibraltar**
(Mini-tournament hosts in bold)

The following groups were drawn for the main round, which will be played between 3 and 12 April 2017:

- Group 1:** Italy, Netherlands, **Belarus**, winner of Group A
- Group 2:** **Azerbaijan**, Hungary, Bosnia and Herzegovina, winner of Group D

Russia take silver

In the final of the Futsal World Cup in Cali, Colombia, on 1 October, Russia were pipped at the post 5-4 by Argentina.

Having made it to the last four but no further in 1996, 2000 and 2008, Russia made it through to the final this time, beating Iran 4-3 in the semi-finals. Along the way, Russia and Iran had knocked out two former champions, Russia having sent European champions and two-time world champions Spain (2000 and 2004) packing in the quarter-finals, while Iran had cut short the hopes of five-time world champions Brazil (1989, 1992, 1996, 2008 and 2012) in the round of 16.

Portugal finished in fourth place, having lost the third-place play-off against Iran on penalties. Portugal’s star player, Ricardinho, achieved the accolade of top scorer in the tournament with 12 goals, edging out Russia’s Eder Lima and Brazil’s Falcão, who notched up 10 goals each. Spain and Azerbaijan went out in the quarter-finals, while Europe’s three other representatives (Italy, Kazakhstan and Ukraine) saw their hopes dashed in the round of 16.

- Group 3:** **Ukraine**, Croatia, Belgium, winner of Group G
- Group 4:** Portugal, **Romania**, Finland, winner of Group C
- Group 5:** Spain, Serbia, **Poland**, winner of Group B
- Group 6:** **Kazakhstan**, Czech Republic, FYR Macedonia, winner of Group E
- Group 7:** Russia, Slovakia, **Turkey**, winner of Group F
(Mini-tournament hosts in bold)

The seven main-round group winners will qualify directly for the final round, to be held in Ljubljana from 30 January to 11 February 2018. Meanwhile, the seven group runners-up and the best third-placed team will contest play-offs over two legs (10–13 and 24–27 September 2017) to determine the four remaining finalists. 🌐

UEFA FOUNDATION FOR CHILDREN AWARD WINNERS

The first UEFA Foundation for Children award winners were announced at a ceremony held at the House of European Football in Nyon on 24 October.

The UEFA Foundation for Children selected five organisations or projects for its 2016 awards, the purpose of which is to acknowledge and reward efforts to promote peace, integration, social harmony, respect for differences and non-discrimination.

The inaugural award winners are:

- **streetfootballworld:** a network that unites more than 100 community organisations behind a common goal – changing the world through football.
- **Colombianitos:** a non-profit organisation that improves the quality

of life of children and young people and their communities through sport, recreation, education and health.

- **Just Play:** a programme that improves the lives of children in the Pacific through football.
- **Right To Play:** an initiative that uses the power of play to educate and empower children to overcome the effects of poverty, conflict and disease in disadvantaged communities.
- **Magic Bus:** a scheme that steers children towards better lives, with better awareness, better life skills and better opportunities in their journeys ‘from childhood to livelihood’.

UEFA president Aleksander Čeferin joined foundation trustees José Manuel Durão Barroso (chairman of the board of

trustees), Viviane Reding, Norman Darmanin Demajo and Sándor Csányi to present the 2016 awards.

Responsibility for UEFA’s annual €1m charity cheque was passed from the UEFA Fair Play and Social Responsibility Committee to the UEFA Foundation for Children in 2015, when it was decided to use the funds to finance annual UEFA Foundation for Children awards.

The board of trustees has established strict criteria for the awards. Nominees must be charitable or philanthropic non-governmental organisations that are active on a European or international scale and put forward a project that is both linked to football, or sport in general, and in line with the principles and objectives of the foundation. ☺

HONOURING SUPPORTERS

At its meeting in Athens on 15 September, the Executive Committee decided to present awards to the national associations of Iceland, Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and Wales in recognition of their supporters’ outstanding conduct at EURO 2016.

The four associations received magnificent backing from their fans throughout their participation in the tournament, helping to create a festive, convivial atmosphere both inside and outside the stadiums. They not only supported their own teams but also respected their opponents and applauded good football, regardless of which side produced it.

They were presented with commemorative plaques at European Qualifiers played in October and November.

The UEFA president, Aleksander Čeferin, chairing an Executive Committee meeting for the first time since his election the previous day, said: “EURO 2016 was a celebration of football and this is thanks in



large part to the passion and dedication of fans at all the stadiums in France. UEFA wanted to reward some of the groups of supporters that were particularly

enthusiastic and passionate during the tournament. Congratulations to the national associations who are receiving this award.” ☺

"A manager needs to be a people person - you've got to like people, you've got to care for people"



ROY HODGSON

“FOOTBALL COACHING IS NOT A SCIENCE, IT’S A GAME”

After 40 years of club and national team coaching in nine different countries, former England manager **Roy Hodgson** has a wealth of experience to share with the next generation of elite coaches. Taking questions from UEFA Pro licence students at a recent coach education student exchange in Nyon, he covered a wide variety of topics, from his first steps on the coaching ladder to the delicate task of dealing with the media.

“I was very lucky in my education with the English FA in the 60s and 70s. They simplified things for us coaches in those days. We didn’t have anything like the wealth of information you have now and we didn’t work as hard to get our qualifications as you do to get your Pro licences today. But we had to follow very closely the simple methodology that the English FA, under Allen Wade and Charles Hughes, had set up. They taught us good habits. They taught us a lot about how we should approach a group: where we should stand, how we should take care of our appearance, our coaching manner, that we should be sympathetic when we coached. They didn’t want people screaming and shouting abuse at players; they wanted us to coach in a way that would show our sympathy for the players.

They were very strong on words like energy, enthusiasm and passion, and they gave us very simple tasks. They said: “When you’re doing your coaching session, first you must prepare it in detail. Second, before you start coaching, you need to

observe. When you’ve observed and you’ve found something you think needs to be said, that’s when you go in and give your instruction.”

They always wanted us to build training sessions up. You started at a certain level and then you moved it on so the players didn’t get bored just doing the same thing over and over again. That led to progression. They also told us everything we did had to be with opposition. Now, of course, I don’t do absolutely everything with opposition. Let’s say your topic was coaching your full-backs to go forward and help out in attacking situations.

First you had to think about what sort of practice to do to create the opportunity to coach the player. What sort of things am I going to be looking for in the session? What sort of things will the full-back need to know? Then I observe carefully and try to find a situation where it’s valid for me to go in and coach. When I’ve found that situation, I stop the game, I coach in the way that I’ve been taught to coach, and then the game moves on.

Changing attitudes

I don’t know that players have changed that much deep down. I think society changes. Today, players are much more serious, much more professional in some ways. For example, if I take the England team, the way the players look after themselves, the way they think about their diet, the extra training they want to do themselves without you having to ask them, the seriousness with which they approach the training sessions, the intensity they’re prepared to work at – all of those things are as good if not better than anything I’ve experienced in the past.

When I first went to Italy from the Swiss national team, what struck me was the seriousness with which the players approached things, the enormous attention to the physical side of the game, the importance of the conditioning trainer. We hadn’t paid that degree of attention to that. We thought that the work in training every day would take care of it. I saw another level of professionalism and I see an even greater level of professionalism today. →



Getting your message across

Unless you can see in matches the effects of the work you're doing in the training sessions – such as the tactical patterns and ideas that you have in possession and out of possession, even if they might not be succeeding – then something's wrong with the way you're preparing it. One of the things I've learned in the last two years was overestimating players' understanding of exactly what you want. You have to make certain that they themselves take ownership of the situation. In the last couple of years [with England], we filmed training sessions, we filmed the games in wide angle, and we started having meetings in smaller groups. The goalkeeper and the defenders, the midfield players, the attackers.

Sometimes defenders and midfield players, sometimes midfield players and attackers. We went through things, but we got them to tell us back what we'd been trying to tell them. We'll work on it in training, but then I want the player in the unit meetings, when he sees it, to say: "I should have gone out there, I should have gone quicker there," or "I've gone too fast, I should have slowed down there – I've gone so quickly that the guy's gone past me before I can hold him up with the ball." That type of thing. We got the players to take ownership.

Managing the media

It's important you have someone with you who you trust, and who understands the media world, who can give you some

advice before you go into press conferences. I think it's dangerous, directly after a game, to go out with the emotions that you're feeling because you can make mistakes. You need to settle down. It could just be your assistant coach, who says: "Don't forget, be careful." At top level a media officer might tell you what's being said in social media, so you don't get caught out.

The television is the most important media because people see your face and they hear the nuances in your voice, and they feel to some extent what they think you are feeling. The written press is very dangerous. They can take the words that you say and make it sound very, very different to how it actually was. But you can't beat them. You've got to try to avoid the temptation to get some sort of revenge the next time you're in front of that media group when you've read something you don't like.

Most importantly, speak through the mass media to three very important groups of people: your players, your fans, and the owner [of the club] and other people above you. Use the media to get your message out. Be aware that whatever is written, or whatever you say, whether those people like it or not might be the most important thing. They'll be watching every word you say, and they can be very, very disappointed sometimes in your comments to the media. You can lose them by saving yourself with the mass media, protecting yourself.



Roy Hodgson is thrown in the air as Halmstads BK celebrate their first Swedish league title in 1976.

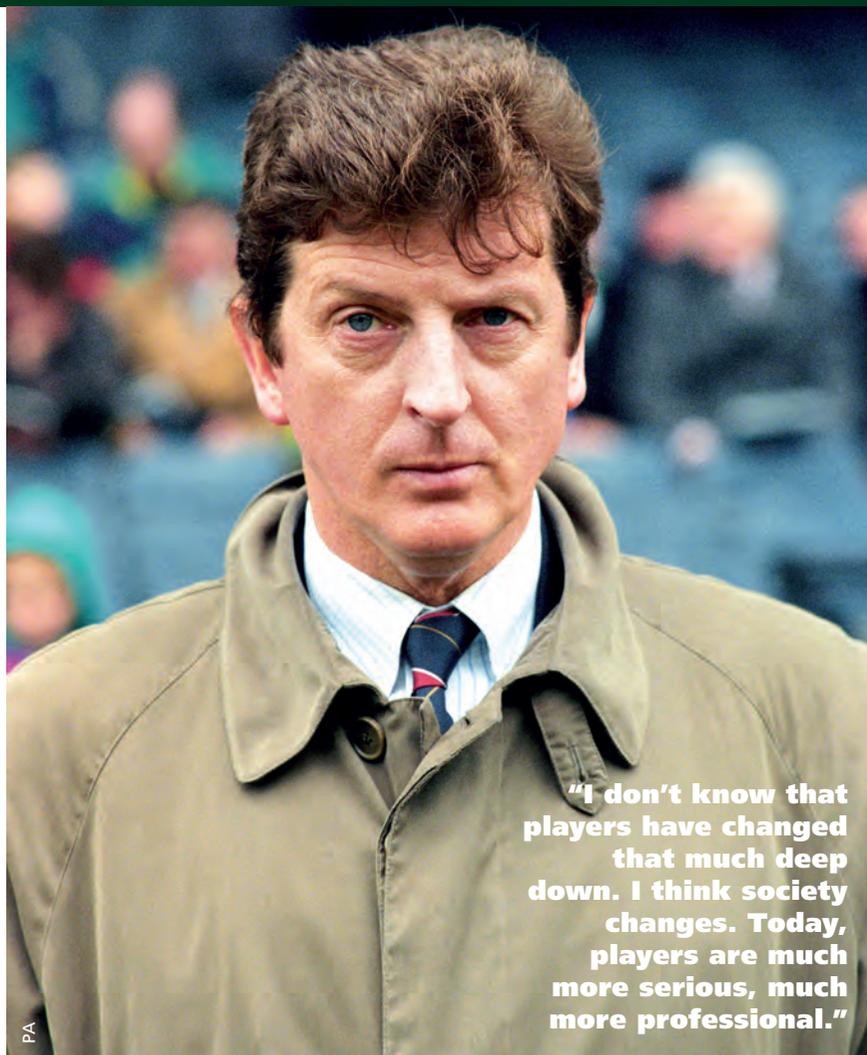
ROY HODGSON CAREER FACTFILE

Roy Hodgson has managed a number of club and international sides during his long career in football:

Halmstads BK (SWE)	1976-1980
Bristol City FC (ENG)	1982
IK Oddevold (SWE)	1982
Örebro SK (SWE)	1983/1984
Malmö FF (SWE)	1985-1989
FC Neuchâtel Xamax (SUI)	1990-1992
Switzerland	1992-1995
FC Internazionale Milano (ITA)	1995-1997
Blackburn Rovers FC (ENG)	1997/1998
FC Internazionale Milano (ITA) (caretaker)	1999
Grasshopper Club (SUI)	1999/2000
FC Copenhagen (SWE)	2000/2001
Udinese Calcio (ITA)	2001
United Arab Emirates	2002-2004
Viking FK (NOR)	2004/2005
Finland	2006/2007
Fulham FC (ENG)	2007-2010
Liverpool FC (ENG)	2010/2011
West Bromwich Albion FC (ENG)	2011/2012
England	2012-2016

First coaching experience

I didn't even have an assistant coach when I went [to Halmstads BK in 1976], so it's a very different world to the world we're talking about, and certainly the world I've just come from with the England national team. In those days from the moment the players arrived I did everything – I took the warm-up, I took the cool-down, I did the physical training, I did the technical training, I did the tactical training. It's a bit different today. Going into a job today you'll be thinking: "Who am I going to take with me? What people do I need?" You need a balance in the people around you. People travel in groups – you don't just appoint a manager; you appoint a team and they become very, very close. I've never done that, and I'm not certain it's such a good thing. You might lose people in the club who could help you, because they've got a good knowledge of the club. Over the years, the people that I've inherited at



"I don't know that players have changed that much deep down. I think society changes. Today, players are much more serious, much more professional."

football clubs have turned out to be not only good coaches but very good people. I've benefited from them. It would have been a mistake to go in and say: "Right, all of you out."

The qualities of a top coach

If you believe in your coaching skills, you've got to believe that you'll make the team better. Even though they might not be as good, player for player, as the top teams, you'll make them into a better unit. The top side might have better individuals but they might not be a better team. When you're coaching, you've got to be prepared to take some risks, because football and football coaching is not a science, it's a game. You never know quite what's going to happen in the game. You've got to sell everything you do to the players. You've got to make certain that the players understand it and they agree with it and then it's well worth taking risks sometimes.

You need a philosophy of leadership. A manager must be able to transmit to his players his passion and his enthusiasm for the game – and that takes energy. I would never employ anybody, if I was a chief executive or owner of a football club, that I didn't think had those qualities: energy, enthusiasm and passion.

The manager must always be thinking of the players and putting himself in their shoes: what's best for them, not what's best for me. You need to be a people person – you've got to like people, you've got to care for people. Bobby Robson was fantastic for that. That's a great skill. When they lose a game, you've got to feel sympathy with them, and not anger that they've let you down.

There's a lot more. One is resilience, being able to bounce back; another is humility. It's very easy in football to get carried away – a sense of perspective is important in coaching, just as it is in life. 🌱



UEFA

LEARNING THE GAME

Two recent student exchange events in Nyon have helped budding coaches move a step closer to obtaining the UEFA Pro licence.

The lecture hall may not be somewhere you would normally expect to find some of the world's top players, but for those looking to stay in football after ending their playing days, it is becoming an increasingly popular destination. That is thanks in part to the UEFA coach student exchange programme, which is equipping the next generation of coaches with the skills they need to obtain their UEFA Pro licence and make a career in the game after hanging up their boots. The likes of Fabio Cannavaro, Andriy Shevchenko, Filippo Inzaghi and Marcel Desailly are among the programme's successful alumni who, in the short term at least, have swapped the pitch for the pen as they look to broaden their knowledge.

UEFA is committed to helping train the new wave of coaches, and its four-day student exchange events at UEFA headquarters in Nyon

give Pro licence students from member associations the opportunity to share experiences on a European level and participate in practical and theoretical sessions to deepen their understanding of the profession.

Since the exchange programme began in 2011, students have also profited from the insights of experienced top-level coaches, with David Moyes, Georges Leekens, Gareth Southgate and Ottmar Hitzfeld having all attended as special guests. So far this term, Thomas Schaaf and Roy Hodgson have made themselves available to pass on their knowledge, with Q and A sessions proving particularly popular as the coaches are quizzed on every aspect of the job.

"This programme allows attendees to benefit from access to some of Europe's top coach educators, but also to meet and interact with

"This programme allows attendees to benefit from access to some of Europe's top coach educators, but also to meet and interact with students from other countries"

Ioan Lupescu
UEFA chief technical officer

students from other countries and use the opportunity to broaden their coaching experiences by exchanging opinions and examples of best practice," UEFA chief technical officer Ioan Lupescu said.

More than 150 students from Moldova, Poland, Scotland and Ukraine (October) and Belgium, Denmark, England and Kazakhstan (November) came to the most recent courses in Nyon. Topics addressed in the classroom included trends in the game, decision-making, team-building and elite youth player development, before the focus shifted to the training ground at the Colovray sports centre across the road from UEFA HQ.

The first of the practical teaching sessions for the November course was inspired by that night's UEFA Champions League tie between Manchester City and Barcelona, with an emphasis on the two teams' different attacking styles and how to combat them. Grouped by association, the student coaches were asked to prepare and run a 45-minute practical session involving one head coach, one assistant coach and one goalkeeping coach, using video clips to illustrate the objective of the training session. Coaches were given ten minutes to introduce the exercises, explaining what they wanted to train (i.e. the goal of the session), how they wanted to do it and why they wanted to do it that way. Each session was reviewed, giving the coaches the chance to evaluate their performance. The different groups were also asked to analyse the evening's match and conduct a ten-minute presentation, including video clips, illustrating the teams' strengths and weaknesses.

Further subjects covered by UEFA's technical instructors included learning from the best and a talk from former Republic of Ireland international Packie Bonner on the goalkeeper coach. The aim is to balance theory and practice, and the students were on their feet to conduct flash interviews during a session on handling the media. A discussion on match-fixing, meanwhile, highlighted that getting the most out of players and a squad is not the only challenge facing coaches.

The UEFA Pro licence is the highest level certification available to coaches, and can be obtained after completion of the UEFA A and B licences. Head coaches must have the Pro licence (or the highest licence available if the association is not a member of the UEFA Coaching Convention at Pro level) in order to work for a top-division club, or in the UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa League.

The student exchange programme has become an important step towards achieving that target. Since 2011, some 21 events have

taken place, with an impressive figure of 1,800 students having attended courses on the UEFA campus. Coach educators from the different associations also participate in the programme, and for the Football Federation of Kazakhstan's technical centre director, Kairat Adambekov, who was at the November course, there was plenty to pass on to colleagues back home. "We had 21 students and five coach educators there and we are really benefiting from what was a great experience," he said. "We received lots of information and knowledge about organising, structuring, conducting and analysing training and have had the chance to communicate with colleagues from Belgium, Denmark and England. The course really helped both our students and our educators to develop."

For Peter Rudbæk, who delivered a talk on possession at the November course and is a technical director of the Danish Football Association, the international perspective that the students gain from the programme should serve them well in the future. "The students really benefit from being with other countries and seeing what they do," said Rudbæk, a member of UEFA's Jira Panel, the group of respected technicians helping nurture the next generation. "The Danish students we've brought here always leave happy and go home with new information and a more international view on things." 🌐

Since 2011, some 1,800 student coaches have taken part in the UEFA coach education exchange programme.



LATEST ELITE CLUB INJURY STUDY PUBLISHED

UEFA is helping top European clubs measure the injury rate of their players in a renowned medical study that is entering its 16th year.

Each season, the UEFA Elite Club Injury Study provides clubs, associations and the scientific community with crucial data that helps them in their own work in treating and preventing player injuries.

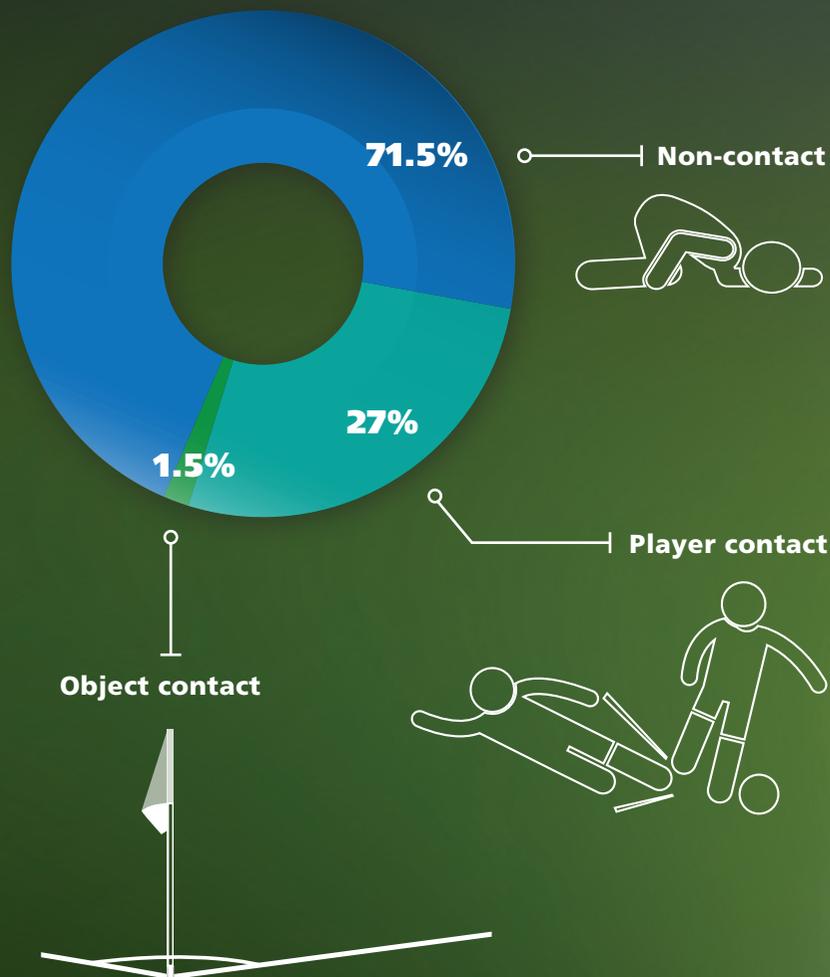
Launched in 2001 and coordinated

by former UEFA Medical Committee vice-chairman Professor Jan Ekstrand, the study is heralded as an unrivalled historical archive of football injury data. The data provided represents a comprehensive information source about injury patterns, risks and the likely prevalence of certain injury types, as well as for diagnosing when a player will be fit to return to action after injury.

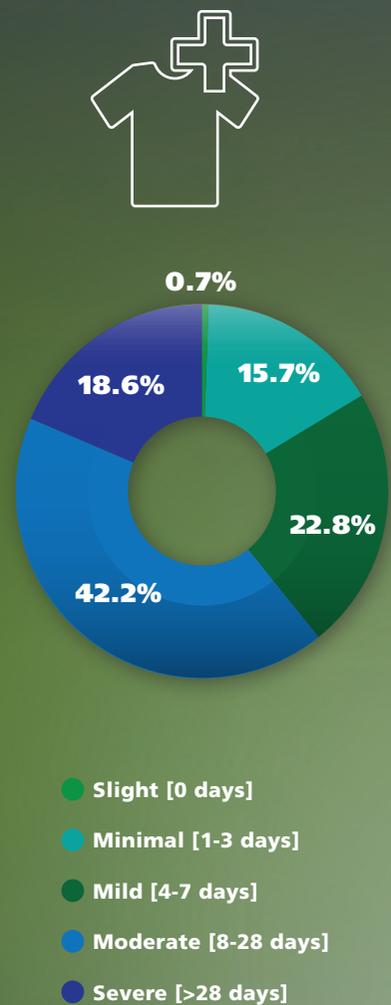
Among other statistics, there is data on exposure time, general injury patterns, training injuries, match injuries, severe injuries, muscle injuries, ligament injuries, recurring injuries, and squad attendance/availability and absences.

The latest report contains results from July 2015 to June 2016 for 29 elite clubs and is available on UEFA.org.

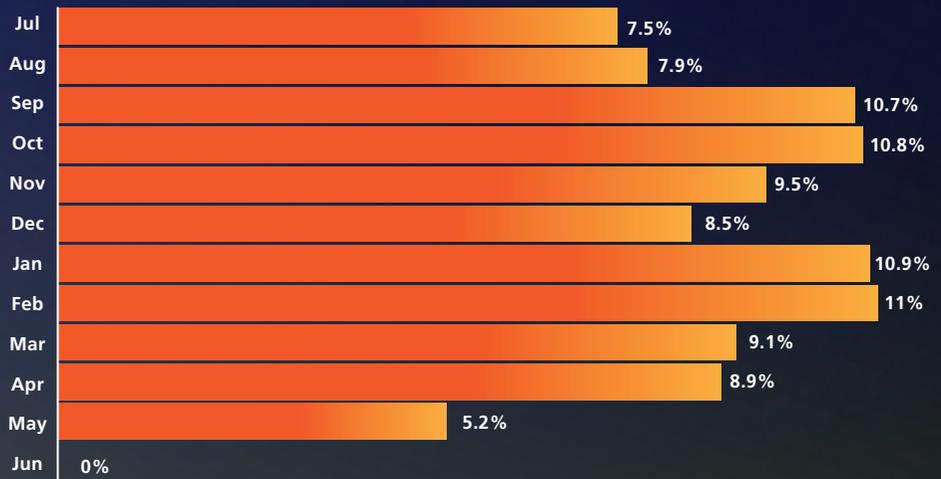
Contact/non-contact incidence



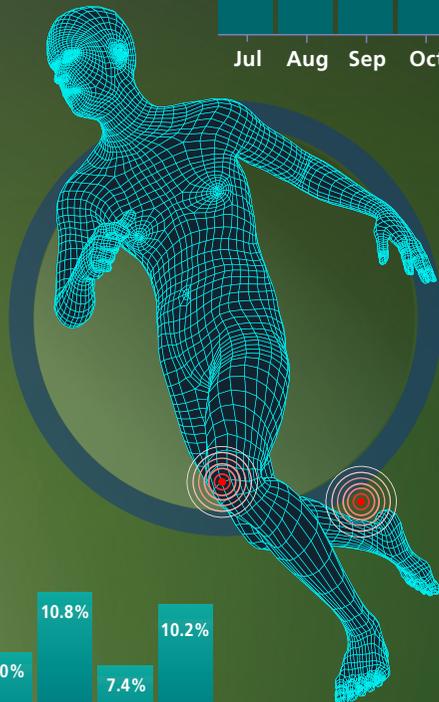
Injury severity



Occurrence of injuries (by month)



Occurrence of muscle injuries (by month)



Occurrence of ligament injuries (by month)



UEFA GRASSROOTS WEEK TAKES HOLD

The second edition of UEFA's annual week of football development activities grabbed the imagination of organisers and participants throughout Europe.



A futsal marathon in Belarus; a champions festival for Down's syndrome children in Romania; a tournament in Scotland involving families from Syria; and a maxi-pitch handover in the Czech Republic. These were just some of an amazing number of events that took place across Europe from 10 to 17 September to mark the second UEFA Grassroots Week.

In conjunction with the European Commission's European Week of Sport (#BeActive), UEFA asked its member associations to advertise, facilitate, encourage and inspire participation in all forms of football to celebrate the grassroots game in Europe. Events were aimed at all

age categories, and at promoting football and sports activities for everybody.

Czech Republic

Local primary school pupils in the Prague suburb of Suchdol were the first to enjoy playing on a brand-new maxi-pitch donated by UEFA as part of Grassroots Week. Prague was selected for this honour as the European Capital of Sport 2016.

"A few months ago this place was a car park and storage place, so this is a miraculous change," said the school's head teacher, Alexandra Kejharová. "The maxi-pitch will be a great attraction for our pupils and will tremendously improve our possibilities to play sport."

Latvia

In Latvia a staggering total of 11,300 people took part in 114 separate events as the Latvian Football Federation (LFF) encouraged people from outside the football family to organise football-related activities. They were given just one guideline: to 'let football into their backyards'.

Event organisers were entered into a competition with prizes including VIP tickets for the national team's next home match and a trip to Portugal with the national squad. Celebrities from the worlds of television, theatre, music and sport took part, many of them featuring in a charity football tournament that was part of the festivities.



“We consider this a unique chance for everyone to be involved in popularising football and healthy lifestyles,” said Jānis Mežeckis, LFF general secretary. “Grassroots Week in Latvia highlights the vast accessibility of football and shows it as a sport with no limits.”

Malta

In Malta the activities kicked off with the women’s Super Cup between Hibernians FC and Birkirkara FC, where children from Frame Football Malta (FFM) accompanied the players and referees as player escorts for the game. Frame Football is specifically designed for players who require the use of a walker-style

frame. After the match the Birkirkara FC players presented their medals to the FFM children.

The Malta Football Association also teamed up with the armed forces of Malta to support the activities of the ministry of health’s child development and assessment unit for this year’s World Physiotherapy Day, which coincided with UEFA Grassroots Week. During the day a number of fun races, obstacle courses and football activities were organised for the children taking part.

Belarus

Gomel, home to nearly half a million people, is Belarus’s second largest city,

and at the national football centre in Brdo, Slovenia, UEFA Grassroots Week was an opportunity to celebrate the joy of football with children and adults of all ages and from all walks of life.

and it was here that 30 teams and 300 players took part in 15 matches during a futsal marathon on the first day of UEFA Grassroots Week. At a festival in Minsk, meanwhile, they found the Best Football Family in Belarus: every player won points for their family according to the results of their team, and with teams drawn by lot, many new friendships were formed. For the seven regions of Belarus, there were seven festivals for 700 girls →

and boys aged 9–10, while the 16 professional clubs held masterclasses in local secondary schools. Back in the capital city of Minsk, four teams involving 40 players with cerebral palsy took part in one tournament, while six teams and 42 players with learning disabilities played in another. There was also a masterclass for younger players with learning disabilities.

Turkey

In Turkey UEFA Grassroots Week was celebrated in 14 cities. A total of 56 schools and around 3,000 children took part in events under the supervision of 14 regional coaches and 56 volunteer coaches, mostly from professional or amateur clubs. With no PE teachers in Turkish primary schools, UEFA Grassroots Week represented a golden opportunity to nurture a love of football in the youngsters, 30% of whom were girls.

Armenia

Five events were organised by the Football Federation of Armenia (FFA) across the regions of Gegharkunik, Shirak, Aragatsotn and Syunik. More than 500 children took part, learning about football, making new friends and gaining in confidence. Supported by parents, volunteers, local communities and municipalities, the instructors organised ball games, relay races, mini-tournaments, football quizzes and round-table discussions.

“The Grassroots Week activities inspired them, and they felt confident as full members of the children’s community,” said Lala Yeritsyan, the FFA’s grassroots specialist. “The event gave them moments of happiness, participation, communication with friends, freedom and fantasy.” Local community leaders also emphasised the positive impact that Grassroots Week had on the Armenian children and their families.

Ukraine

The Football Federation of Ukraine (FFU) used UEFA Grassroots Week as the launch for its Open Fun Football Schools. These five-day programmes aim to help internally displaced children throughout the country overcome alienation from local children through grassroots football. As well as organising football games and providing kit, psychological and social help was offered, plus excursions to football



Above: Heads up in Lithuania, where girls took part in football festivals across the country, while over in Malta special Frame Football sessions were organised for children with limited mobility. Right: The maxi-pitch laid in Prague, the 2016 European Capital of Sport, as part of UEFA’s contribution to the European Week of Sport.

museums, autograph sessions with famous players, involvement in pre-match ceremonies for big games and much more.

Open Fun Football Schools took place during UEFA Grassroots Week in the historic city of Rivne, Oleshyn village in Khmelnytskyi, Kyiv’s Spartak stadium and in Pidhaitsi, in the Ternopil region. These were the first of more than 50 schools scheduled between now and April 2017. Along with the FFU’s other major social project, Play Away, Play Everywhere, it is intended that Open Fun Football Schools will significantly expand the network of grassroots volunteers in every region of Ukraine.

Serbia

In the summer, more than 100,000 people a day visit the Ada Ciganlija peninsula in Belgrade to take advantage of its beaches and sports facilities, and it was at the technical centre here that the Serbian FA celebrated UEFA Grassroots Week. Around

200 children took part in a festival that drew together young and old, boys and girls, children at risk, children with learning disabilities, volunteers and parents. Former national team coach Ilija Petković and fellow former internationals Stanislav Karasi, Mitar Mrkela and Perica Ognjenović also lent their support.

“Working with young people has always been one of the main tasks of the Football Association of Serbia,” said deputy secretary general Jovan Šurbatović. “Football is a game that connects people and brings a lot of joy, and that is what we can see on the pitches of Ada Ciganlija.” Ilija Petković added: “We need to provide more of this action all over Europe and the world, because grassroots is the essence of football. I can say only the best about UEFA Grassroots Week and I hope this event will become a tradition that lasts for years.”

Liechtenstein

The Liechtenstein Football Association (LFV) and its seven clubs marked UEFA Grassroots Week by taking part in the country's biggest trade fair, the LIHGA. The LFV had its own hall designed as a football stadium, with plenty of games and prizes on offer, while the clubs promoted their grassroots activities.

Hungary and Slovenia

They were not so fortunate in Hungary, where a deluge forced the cancellation of a large-scale event involving 800 children in Budapest, while in Slovenia the main event was planned for the national football centre in Brdo, with children playing non-competitively and policemen, Special Olympics and veterans also taking part.

Scotland

In Scotland over 3,000 people of all ages from a diverse range of backgrounds took part in UEFA Grassroots Week, a highlight of which was an open futsal event at Oriam, Scotland's new sports performance centre in Edinburgh. Futsal is a developing game in Scotland and, as player Michael Ade said: "It was good for us to meet and compete against other futsal players. This was our first time participating, and we were very impressed with the organisation and progression of futsal here."

A Syrian families football session for 5 to 12-year-olds in Paisley, western Scotland, engaged refugee children and adults in football. Summing up the week's different activities, Andy Gould, head of regional development at the Scottish FA, said: "The grassroots events that took place this week have been embraced by communities across Scotland. Football provides a great way to bring together people from different backgrounds, and the turnout we have had demonstrates the appeal our national game has. This has really been a week of football for all."

Lithuania

Women and girls were very actively involved in UEFA Grassroots Week events in Lithuania, with football festivals taking place in the regions of Marijampolė, Tauragė and Kaunas. One of the most active organisers was Martynas Karpavičius, who was named Best Leader in the 2015 UEFA Grassroots Awards and who is continuing his outstanding

grassroots work in the small town of Kačerginė and beyond, involving people of different ages and social groups.

"We've had four events in total, with families participating, schoolchildren and kids from foster homes involved, but what really stands out is that two-thirds of the participants were female," said Karpavičius. "I like the challenge of involving people from the local community who have not played football before. Their emotions are very high and pure. It helps when you use the concept of football as fun, not just a standard match between two teams. If you are creative, not even a real pitch is necessary."

Romania

Over 2,000 people enjoyed the activities and competitions in Romania during UEFA Grassroots Week. The Romanian Football Federation (FRF), in partnership with local county associations, organised ten events in different parts of the country, from big cities such as Bucharest and Timisoara to smaller communities such as Husi, on the Moldovan border, where 240 boys and girls took part in a football festival with the best free-kick taker winning a prize.

A tournament dedicated to children with Down's syndrome in Bucharest demonstrated the ability of football to bring happiness to all, while another special event took place in Jucu, a small

village in Cluj county, where the FRF's scouting caravan stopped for a day and invited children to a training camp and to watch the 2018 World Cup qualifier between Romania and Montenegro with their families.

And it was not only children who celebrated UEFA Grassroots Week in Romania, as an over-35s beach soccer tournament demonstrated. "This year's UEFA Grassroots Week in Romania proved to be an outstanding celebration, dedicated to football values and to our people who love football, no matter their age or their gender," said Răzvan Burleanu, president of the FRF.

There were many other events in many more countries, all of which ensured the growth of UEFA Grassroots Week. But the last word goes to Costel Baicu, who organised a grassroots tournament in eastern Romania. "The Hușana Cup was a real success because the participants, the Romanian Football Federation and the Vaslui county football association got involved with all their hearts and souls," he said. "The framework of UEFA Grassroots Week gave us the opportunity to challenge ourselves and our children. We gained the most important thing, the trust of our children, and we gave them back the biggest prize – the chance to compete in their most beloved sport, football!" 🏆



Jan Tauber

SUPPORTING REFUGEE AND MIGRANT CHILDREN ACROSS EUROPE

In light of the sharp increase in migration to Europe and the humanitarian disasters this has triggered, the UEFA Foundation for Children has invested €2 million donated by UEFA to support those most affected by the crisis, including 15 countries across Europe, using football to help them offer new hope to refugee and migrant children.



Greece: Terre des Hommes, Diogenis, and Organization Earth
Hungary: Oltalom Sport Association
Italy: Balon Mundial
Netherlands: Johan Cruyff Foundation
Northern Ireland: Sport Against Racism Ireland
Republic of Ireland: Sport Against Racism Ireland
Serbia: Football Friends
Spain: Red Deporte y Cooperación
Ukraine: Scort Foundation and FC Basel 1893
United Kingdom: Sport4Life, Start Again Project, and Tigers Sport and Education Trust

While continuing to support countries bordering conflict zones, the UEFA Foundation for Children has been supporting the efforts of Terre des Hommes to provide emergency humanitarian assistance to unaccompanied children and families with children under five in FYR Macedonia and Greece since March 2016.

In addition, the foundation has created a €1,250,000 fund to support the integration of migrant populations, and child refugees in particular, in host communities in Europe. Activities have been run by NGOs, national football associations and

the wider football family, with the street-footballworld network helping to coordinate operations.

So far, 23 organisations in 15 countries have benefited from this fund:

Belgium: Royal Europa 90 Kraainem FC
Bosnia and Herzegovina: Football Friends
France: Sport dans la Ville
Georgia: Cross Cultures Project Association (CCPA)
Germany: AMANDLA EduFootball, Champions ohne Grenzen, KICKFAIR, and RheinFlanke and FC Internationale Berlin 1980 e.V.

The activities run by these organisations in support of young refugees include:

- weekly football sessions;
- tournaments involving local host communities;
- language courses and training for coaches;
- CV writing and interview technique workshops for young adults.

More than 30,000 people have already benefited from these programmes. Of these 30,000, 65% are child refugees themselves and 35% are the teachers, coaches and social workers who have been trained to keep the various activities going.

The UEFA Foundation for Children is also supporting displaced persons in Ukraine and has donated €250,000 to the 'Play away, Play everywhere' project run by the Football Federation of Ukraine. The aim of the project is to promote the social integration of displaced children and encourage them to adopt healthy lifestyles by playing sport, in particular football. 🌐



MENTAL HEALTH IN SCOTTISH FOOTBALL

To give its readers a taste of the work supported by the UEFA Research Grant Programme, UEFA Direct is showcasing a selection of research projects funded by the 2015/16 programme. This month, Katy Stewart presents details of her study, which investigates the incidence of mental health issues in Scottish football.



Getty Images

The Mental Health in Football project supported by the Scottish FA and PFA Scotland (players' union) aimed to investigate the incidence of mental health issues in Scottish football – an area where anecdotal suggestion of a significant incidence has, until now, not been subject to scientific study.

Over 600 questionnaire responses were received in phase 1 of the study and the results indicated that 64% of players admitted to having had or known someone with mental health issues, including problems with alcohol, drugs or gambling. Our data suggested that players would be most likely to contact their own family doctor (58.9%) or club doctor (51.8%) if they were having issues, with a preference for face-to-face counselling rather than a telephone helpline.



Katy Stewart currently works at Hampden Sports Clinic as a researcher. She is an affiliate of the Institute of Cardiovascular and Medical Sciences at the University of Glasgow, with her previous work focusing on cardiovascular screening of athletes.

Subsequently, 160 players completed phase 2 of the study, which looked to identify players 'at risk' of mental health issues. Using existing validated questionnaires, this identified 25% of players as having mental health problems that required medical intervention, with a further 5% of players currently undergoing specialist therapy with a clinical psychologist.

Results also identified key times in a player's career when they were more 'at risk':

- Those nearing the end of their contract/ career: uncertainty regarding their future
- Those out on loan from their club: lack of support and social isolation
- Those out of the game due to long-term injury: uncertainty regarding their future, social isolation and increased frustration at themselves

The highly significant results of this study have demonstrated the need to provide coordinated support for players and the need for this to be specialist-led with expertise beyond that available at club or even family doctor level. This has resulted in the creation of a mental health action plan for Scottish football which will provide support and a referral pathway for club doctors and coaches for players who would benefit from additional specialist intervention, with input from counsellors, clinical psychologists and psychiatrists. Players will also be able to self-refer, and it is planned to extend this support to coaches and women's football.

In addition to the mental health action plan, the continued commercial funding the initiative has secured will allow educational and awareness resources to be developed and maintained. These will include business cards for all players with details of how to contact the programme, posters for dressing rooms, and development of a specialist application for mobile devices containing self-help information, details of the programme and contact information. ♻️

POSITIVE TRENDS IN CLUB FINANCES

From 21 to 23 September, representatives of UEFA’s member associations, the AFC, CONCACAF and CONMEBOL gathered in Malta for the 14th UEFA Club Licensing and Financial Fair Play Workshop, which addressed a wealth of current licensing challenges and financial trends.

Financial fair play is creating a positive turnaround in European club football finances, as demonstrated by the encouraging figures revealed at the workshop hosted by the Malta Football Association.

Some 160 licensing and financial experts from across Europe and further afield heard that the latest UEFA research confirmed the turnaround in the finances of European club football. A detailed review of over 700 clubs indicated that combined club losses had decreased for the fourth consecutive year, and currently stood at just over €320m. This means European losses now stand at just 19% of the level recorded before the introduction of financial fair play in 2010.

Figures indicate that the number of European countries reporting that their clubs are in a net profit position has increased steeply, from 15 in 2014 to 25 in 2015.

Other evidence demonstrating the strong effect of financial fair play is the decline in overdue payables from €57m in 2011 to just over €5m as at 30 June 2016 (a decrease of nearly 92%), and the reduction in disputed and deferred payments to players (down almost 72% and 37% respectively between June 2014 and June 2016).

Financing football development

This year’s gathering also focussed on how club licensing can support women’s and youth football, as well as influence long-term decision-making within club administration and management.

Executive Committee member David Gill, who chairs the UEFA Club Licensing Committee, welcomed the future focus on football development. “We should not rest on our laurels,” he said, “but always

strive to improve the system and develop it further, especially in areas such as women’s and youth football, whereby I firmly believe the system can contribute significantly to their development.”

The workshop featured panel discussions to gather feedback and support from UEFA’s member associations on how to improve the two development areas in the UEFA Club Licensing and Financial Fair Play Regulations.

Delegates agreed that, in the space of relatively few seasons, financial fair play had succeeded in meeting all the objectives set out in 2010, the legality of which have been recognised several times by the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) in Lausanne – a result that would not have been achieved without the constant hard work and support of licensing managers and experts across UEFA’s member associations. 🌐



FIRST UEFA GRADUATES IN FOOTBALL LAW

From 12 to 15 September, the final session of the first edition of the UEFA Football Law Programme was held at the House of European Football in Nyon.



A total of 24 graduates from national associations, professional clubs and law firms dealing with football legal matters graduated from the first edition of the UEFA Football Law Programme after 12 intensive months of work and study. The highly diverse group consisted of participants of 21 different nationalities.

The Certificate of Advanced Study in Football Law (worth 10 ECTS credits) is issued by Kadir Has University (Istanbul, Turkey) in cooperation with the University of Padova (Italy), Rey Juan Carlos University (Madrid, Spain) and UEFA.

Taking football law experts to a new level

The Football Law Programme is one of UEFA's newest educational programmes. It was developed to respond to the challenges brought about by the complex, fast-changing world of sport. In this environment, it is essential that the UEFA member associations and other football stakeholders are aware of the legal stakes involved in the modern game and are fully equipped to handle them appropriately.

Given the inherent complexity of legal matters and the constant developments in this field, it is also crucial to foster cooperation between all parties to better address upcoming challenges.

"The legal field is constantly evolving and is, as such, a permanent challenge. The UEFA Football Law Programme is an excellent way to gain a greater understanding of the legal environment, in terms of both evolutions and specificities. I am convinced this programme helps to better address the legal challenges sports organisations, in particular the national associations, face today and will face in the future," said Alasdair Bell, UEFA's general counsel and legal affairs director.

The programme comprises four week-long sessions, which are held in academic institutions across Europe, and during which participants examine key issues and topical aspects of football law. The programme has been developed and is run by UEFA, in close collaboration with internationally renowned academic experts and practitioners. The underlying aim of the programme is to enable more members of the football family to acquire new skills

specific to sports law – and, even more specifically, football law – equipping them to take on new challenges in this rapidly developing domain.

"Given the complexity of the legal topics in football, it is important that all members of the football family cooperate and understand their respective positions.

Participants on this programme gain stakeholder knowledge, as well as the tools and ideas needed to improve overall cooperation," explained Wouter Lambrecht, legal manager of the European Club Association (ECA).

Second edition coming in 2017/18

The sporting world has reacted very positively to this new specialised educational offering, and enquiries are already being received about the second edition, which is planned to start in autumn 2017. Preparations are under way and potential participants can mark spring 2017 in their diaries as the date when the application process will begin. More information will be provided on UEFA's website and in its publications as and when available. 🌐

NATIONAL GRASSROOTS CONFERENCE

The Football Association of the Czech Republic (FAČR) recently organised its first-ever grassroots conference, bringing together representatives of all the country's regional and district associations.



More than 110 grassroots delegates gathered in Prague to hear about the UEFA Grassroots Charter, the FAČR's brand-new four-year strategic grassroots plan and several other exciting new projects in the field of grassroots football.

There were many decision-makers in attendance, including the national association's general secretary, Rudolf Řepka, the vice-presidents and members of the executive committee, and the head of the grassroots department, Otakar Mestek, and his team.

"The FAČR is the governing body of football in the Czech Republic and as such it is responsible for all the football activities in the country," the general secretary reminded the delegates. "We promote the values of respect, humility, cooperation, healthy living and positive emotions and feelings – values that football brings to the whole community. These values are as important for the senior national teams as for talented youth players and the rest of the football family at grassroots level, which it must be said accounts for the bulk of our work." The general secretary emphasised how

the FAČR nurtures the grassroots of the game and how successful it has been in this area, receiving UEFA HatTrick awards in 2012 (membership project) and 2015 (Football (R)evolution), as well as picking up UEFA's 2015 grassroots project of the year award for the My First Goal programme, which has helped the association to attract thousands of new grassroots players all over the country. "But still we need to work on the image of football in the Czech Republic and promote our new grassroots projects," the general secretary urged. Those projects are presented in the FAČR's 2016–20 strategic plan, which was unveiled at the inaugural national grassroots conference.

Quality seal

"We are here to exchange ideas and projects, to inspire people throughout the Czech Republic and to make sure the necessary information reaches all our regions and districts," the head of the grassroots department, Otakar Mestek, told the conference. "Nowadays, everything is so fast-paced, and we must reflect this evolution in our work. That is why we have drawn up a new strategic

plan taking us up to 2020. Next spring we want to organise conferences like this one for the clubs in each of our 14 regions, because we need to cascade information from UEFA and the FAČR right down the pyramid," he said.

A comprehensive membership database gives the national association all the information it needs about membership and player numbers in every region and district. "Thanks to that we can see which regions and districts are strong and which are struggling, and we can focus attention on increasing those membership numbers," FAČR grassroots manager Michal Blažej concluded. "This is one of the main targets for our regional grassroots managers. We've had positive feedback on our new grassroots coach education initiatives and on our quality seal for non-professional clubs, through which each club can apply for gold, silver or bronze licences. We want to put a strong emphasis on girls' and women's football as well," he said.

'Flying coaches'

The FAČR currently has one grassroots manager and a 'FAČR-mobile' in each of the country's 14 regions. The aim is to have one in each of the 76 districts in the near future. Grassroots managers are responsible for running teams of 'flying coaches' who help to train coaches in small clubs, teachers in schools and kindergartens, and parents. Under the new strategic plan, a lot of effort will be put into supporting traditional and walking football for over-60s, as football is considered one of the healthiest sports for people in this age bracket, and new features will be added to the My First Goal programme, including a DVD for parents, containing basic football exercises and skills, a summer camp for 100 children and new equipment packs designed especially for girls. ♻️

ALBANIA

www.fshf.org

PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY IN THE STADIUM

TRITAN KOKONA



'HeForShe in the stadium' is an initiative of UN Women (the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women) in partnership with the Albanian Football Association which will involve ten Albanian Superliga matches in nine cities between October and December.

The initiative is all about informing and raising the awareness of fans inside and outside stadiums about the issue of gender equality. The Albanian Football Association is supporting this initiative by making its infrastructure available. The campaign has already been run at five stadiums staging Superliga matches, as well as before the Albania v Spain World Cup qualifier at the Loro Boriçi stadium in Shkodër, where solidarity messages were read out and the player escorts wore HeForShe T-shirts.

The national and indeed global movement for gender equality is mainly led by women. However, the commitment of boys and men (the other half of humanity) is key in order to develop it further – hence the creation of HeForShe, set up by UN Women as a solidarity



movement to engage men and boys as agents of change and promoters of gender equality – to create an environment in which boys and men from around the world speak openly, are committed and take action against the inequalities faced by women and girls every day.

In Albania, renowned figures in the worlds of sport, culture and politics, and even ordinary people, have joined the HeForShe initiative to defend the rights of women and girls – a cause which the Albanian Football Association is proud to support.

ANDORRA

www.faf.ad

FUTURE TALENT

XAVI BONET



Andorra recently hosted mini-tournaments in the first qualifying rounds of both the European Under-17 and Under-19 Championships.

In the Under-17 competition, the Andorrans were drawn into Group 2 alongside Greece, the Republic of Ireland and Kazakhstan. The Greeks and Irish qualified for the second round with a game in hand having both won their first two matches, against Andorra and Kazakhstan. The Republic of Ireland went on to finish top of the group after a 1-0 win over Greece on the final matchday.

Behind these results were some outstanding performances by a number of players we expect to see a lot more of in the future, including Irish defender Lee O'Connor, Kazakh striker Yerkebulan Seidakhmet, Greece's Alexandros Gkargkalatzidis and Andorran defender Joël Guillén.

In the Under-19 competition, Andorra hosted Scotland, Israel and Liechtenstein. Israel won all three of their matches to top the group, beating Andorra 3-2 in their opening game with a penalty four minutes from time after the hosts had come back



from 2-0 down. The Israelis then secured a 5-0 win over Liechtenstein and a 1-0 win over Scotland, who finished as group runners-up.

In this age category, the future looks particularly bright for Israel's Anas Mahamid, Scottish striker Oliver Shaw, Liechtenstein's Silvan Marxer and Andorrans Álex Martínez, Jordi Aláez and Miguel Del Castillo.

WHY NOT?!

NIGAR GASIMOVA

 On 30 August, just before the start of the qualifying competition for the 2018 World Cup, the Association of Football Federations of Azerbaijan (AFFA) launched the #NIYEDEYOX?! (Why Not?!) campaign, which has become the motto of the senior national team. Though competing in a rather difficult group, the team have pledged not to be easy opponents for anyone and to fight until the end to achieve the best results.

And it is working! The team made a promising start to their World Cup

qualifying campaign, with a 1-0 triumph over Norway, added to September's victory in San Marino and away draw against the Czech Republic. Sceptical at first, the supporters' attitude changed after the first win, and by the away match against the Czech Republic, the campaign had gone viral. The motto could be seen almost everywhere: on posters, on the streets, in a promotional video on TV, in all the social media posts associated with the match, and even in interviews with the head coach and players.



A whopping 4.5 million people were reached on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, and 8.7 million impressions were viewed.

What is more, following these three matches, Azerbaijan rose from 117th to 88th position in FIFA's world rankings.

WOMEN'S UNDER-17S ON THE RISE

FUAD KRVAVAC

 The Bosnia and Herzegovina senior national team have got off to a mixed start in the European Qualifiers for the 2018 World Cup. After beating Estonia 5-0 in their first match, Mehmed Baždarević's men lost the second 4-0 away to Belgium in Brussels, before beating Cyprus 2-0 three days later in Zenica.

Meanwhile, the Under-21s failed in their attempt to qualify for next year's European Under-21 Championship final round in Poland, losing their last qualifying match 5-0 against England and finishing their group in last place with just three points and no wins. The Under-19s have, however, made it through to the elite round of their European championship. In the qualifying round, Toni Karačić's boys first conquered mini-tournament hosts Lithuania 3-0, followed by a 2-1 win against Azerbaijan and finally, in the fight for top place in the group, a 3-1 defeat against Austria. On the club front, HŠK Zrinjski lost the second leg of their first round UEFA Youth League tie 6-0 against FC Zürich, having already lost the first leg in Mostar 3-0.

Over in futsal, our national team played two friendly matches against FYR



Macedonia in Zenica, with Bore Mattan's team winning the first one 7-3 and the visitors taking their revenge 3-1 in the second. In the main round of the UEFA Futsal Cup, playing in Foligno (Italy), MNK Centar Sarajevo came bottom of the group after losing all three of their matches, against Sporting Clube de Portugal (7-1), hosts Real Rieti (7-3), and FP-Halle Gook from Belgium (4-3).

On a much more positive note, our women's Under-17s have achieved remarkable success by qualifying for the elite round of their European Championship, finishing their qualifying round group in Skopje in second place with six points, behind Austria. Following a 4-0 win against Northern Ireland, Ilija Lučić's girls then lost 4-1 against Austria, before beating the hosts from FYR Macedonia 4-0. Our women's Under-19s were not as successful, falling at the qualifying round of their European championship. In the mini-tournament hosted by our federation in Bijeljina and in Stanišić Ethno Village, Nikola Nikić's players lost 3-0 against Portugal and 5-1 against Sweden, before beating Georgia 1-0 to finish third.

Last but not least, our representatives in the UEFA Women's Champions League, SFK 2000 Sarajevo, did themselves proud, making it through to the round of 32, where their journey ended, having come away from their first-leg home match against Russia's FC Rossiyanka with a goalless draw and losing the return leg in Moscow 2-1, Rossijynka's winning goal coming in the fourth minute of added time.

BULGARIA

www.bfunion.bg

SPORTS CLINICS NAMED FIFA MEDICAL CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE

PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MEDIA DEPARTMENT



The Eurovita sports clinic and the Dr Dimitar Shoilev traumatology, orthopaedics and sports medicine hospital have officially become FIFA Medical Centres of Excellence. Both clinics received their accreditations from the chairman of the FIFA Medical Committee, Dr Michel D'Hooghe, at a special ceremony in Sofia. The event was attended by the minister of youth and sports, Krassen Krlev, and the president of the Bulgarian Football Union, Borislav Mihaylov, who had strongly supported the clinics' bids for FIFA accreditation.

"Congratulations to the managements of the two clinics. I hope their FIFA

accreditation will help the development of sports medicine in Bulgaria. At the same time, I really hope the clinics will have fewer patients, which means healthier athletes. This could be achieved by using the excellent concepts for the prevention of injuries which the two clinics already have," Borislav Mihaylov said.

"So far, only 33 medical institutions have received FIFA accreditation, which is an acknowledgment of the service and high level of our specialists. I am extremely pleased with the recognition they have received. I hope they will continue to hold high standards in the coming years, which will help the

development of football and sport in our country," the sports minister said.

The two clinics in Bulgaria are the first in the Balkan region to achieve FIFA accreditation.



CROATIA

www.hns-cff.hr

TAKING A STRONG SOCIAL STANCE

TOMISLAV PACAK



With the Croatian national team capturing six points in the European Qualifiers for the 2018 World Cup, October was a successful month for the Croatian Football Federation (HNS), which used the media and public focus on football to deliver strong messages on important social issues.

First up, the HNS and Croatia's top division clubs took part in the FARE Football People action weeks by promoting the fight against racism, discrimination and violence at football stadiums. The Croatian national team spent some time with Romani children, while the city of Bjelovar hosted the sixth national minorities football camp, in which 85 boys and girls from different backgrounds took part.

Then, the Croatian national youth teams gave their support to World Heart Day by taking Healthy Heart Selfies to promote healthy habits and inform the public about cardiovascular diseases.

In other news, the HNS hosted the first



regional marketing meeting, bringing together marketing and commercial directors from Bosnia and Herzegovina, FYR Macedonia, Romania, Serbia and Slovenia to discuss different marketing issues and projects. Welcoming the participants, UEFA Executive Committee member and HNS president Davor Šuker, who also serves as a deputy chairman

of the UEFA Marketing Advisory Committee, said: "We share similar challenges in this region and I strongly support meetings such as this in order to share knowledge, experience and information among marketing experts. Football associations need greater income from marketing to support their development projects."

ALL DIFFERENT, ALL EQUAL

CONSTANTINOS SHIAMBOULLIS

One of the priorities of the Cyprus Football Association (CFA), within the framework of its social responsibility, is to eliminate racism from football and from Cypriot society in general, and to promote tolerance and acceptance of differences.

In its efforts in this direction, the CFA has the cooperation and support of the ministry of education. Together, they have launched a four-year programme to be rolled out in all the country's educational establishments.

The programme and its various activities, which are grouped under the slogan 'All different, all equal', were presented at a press conference given by the CFA president, Costakis Koutsokoumnis, and the minister of education, Costas Kadis. The aim is to educate pupils against racism and



Costakis Koutsokoumnis (right) and Costas Kadis

other forms of discrimination, including discrimination against people with physical or learning disabilities. In this context,

Special Olympics Cyprus has accepted the CFA's invitation to support and participate in the implementation of the programme.

UNDER-17S WRITE HISTORY

TERJI NIELSEN

For the first time ever, a Faroese national youth team has progressed from a UEFA qualifying tournament, thanks to our Under-17 boys, who finished second in their European Under-17 Championship qualifying group in October.

The Faroe Islands were in the same group as Switzerland, the Czech Republic and mini-tournament hosts Luxembourg. They got off to a flying start, beating the Czech Republic 2-0 in the opening game in the group, to everyone's great surprise. Apart from being a very good win for our boys, it also meant that they stood a very good chance of qualifying from the group if they could manage even just a draw from one of their remaining matches in the group.

Switzerland were next up, but this was a very different match, with the Swiss team well on top throughout the game, which finished 4-0 to Switzerland. But in

their last match, the Faroe Islands drew 2-2 with Luxembourg, after being 2-0 up, and at the same time Switzerland and the Czech Republic drew 3-3. This meant that the Faroe Islands finished second in the group, behind Switzerland but above the other two teams.

The boys now go through to the elite round, to be played in the spring in the form of eight four-team mini-tournaments. From there, the group winners and seven best runners-up advance to the finals to join the hosts, Croatia.



FRANCE

www.fff.fr

MEN'S AND WOMEN'S UNDER-19S FETED

LAURA GOUTRY



 France's men's and women's Under-19 teams, who became European champions within days of each other this summer, were congratulated by the president of the

French Football Federation (FFF), Noël Le Graët, at two special ceremonies.

On 30 August, Ludovic Batelli's boys were honoured at a reception held at Clairefontaine, the national training centre.

The team were greeted at the 'official residence' of the French national team by Noël Le Graët and by Didier Deschamps and his players. Congratulating the Under-19s, Deschamps said: "The fact you're here is very symbolic. This special place is normally reserved for senior national team players. So you're heading in the right direction."

Meanwhile, Gilles Eyquem's girls were special guests at France's World Cup qualifier against Bulgaria at the Stade de France, where they were introduced to Noël Le Graët and the new coach of France's senior women's team, Olivier Echouafni, before the game. Noël Le Graët said he was very proud of the FFF's training strategy, which was behind the success that the youth teams were now enjoying. "It has been a fabulous summer of football for France," he concluded.

GEORGIA

www.gff.ge

WOMEN'S TITLE GOES TO KUTAISI

OTAR GIORGADZE

 The first ever full-format Georgian women's football championship took place this year, initiated and backed by the new

leadership of the Georgian Football Federation (GFF). Six teams from various regions of Georgia took part, and the new format was a subject of great

interest among girls across the country. Martve Kutaisi secured the title early, having conducted a consistent and dominant campaign.

"When you look at our girls' determination and attitude towards their job, you will see that women's football has a future in Georgia. The women's game is developing fast in Kutaisi, as well as in other cities across the country. It's great that the championship is now being played in a full format, and the girls will be getting a lot of playing time. I'm delighted that we've managed to win the title – this is a great incentive for the young players," said Paata Dograshvili, the head coach of Martve.

The final round of games took place on 4 November. The champions received their awards from GFF and UEFA representatives at the Mikheil Meskhi Stadium in Tbilisi.



92 NEWLY QUALIFIED COACHES

STEVEN GONZALEZ

 As part of the Gibraltar FA's coaching partnership with the Welsh Football Trust (WFT), three different coaching courses were delivered in October, during which a total of 92 candidates were successfully assessed.

For the first time ever, a futsal coaching course was held in Gibraltar. 48 candidates were assessed and all passed their futsal level 1 certificate, meaning that Gibraltar can now boast 48 newly qualified futsal coaches.

Goalkeeper coaching is one of the most specific areas of football coaching and all 21 candidates passed

the inaugural course in that field.

In addition, 23 coaches completed their general level 1 certification, bringing the total number of newly qualified coaches to 92.

Three tutors also received the necessary qualifications to enable the Gibraltar FA to deliver its own level 1 and futsal level 1 courses in the near future, under the supervision of the WFT.

Before establishing a coaching partnership with the WFT, the Gibraltar FA relied on coach educators coming out to Gibraltar to deliver basic coaching courses, with candidates having to travel abroad to undertake the more



specific courses such as for goalkeeping and futsal. The continued support of the WFT to coaching in Gibraltar, and its commitment to the long-term partnership with the Gibraltar FA, is something that everyone at the GFA is immensely grateful for, as it will ensure the progression, education and development of Gibraltarian football coaches.

REPORT ON THE ECONOMIC VALUE OF FOOTBALL IN ITALY

DIEGO ANTENZIO

 The Italian Football Federation (FIGC) has published a report that reveals football's contribution to the Italian economy. The report analyses revenues, expenditure and the overall economic value of the football industry, with a breakdown of the contribution made by different sections of Italian football, including the FIGC itself, the organisers of the various leagues, and the professional and amateur clubs involved at the various levels of the game.

Entitled *Il Conto Economico del Calcio Italiano* ('The income statement of Italian football'), the report was produced in collaboration with Deloitte, with additional input from the economic research division of the Italian finance ministry, and the national institute of statistics.

"As a big football nation, we consider this comprehensive study to be in keeping with our leadership role in the international footballing community", the FIGC president, Carlo Tavecchio, said. "This report is the first of its kind to cover



both professional and amateur football. It's a sort of MRI of Italian football as a whole, giving us a picture of what lies under the surface."

The analysis brings together quantitative and qualitative data on a sport whose national governing body represents 1.4 million registered players, coaches, club officials and referees and oversees 600,000 official matches each year. In 2014/15 Italian football accounted for 11% of football's global market value, generating aggregate revenues of more than €3.7 billion. Of this total, 70% was generated by the professional game (nearly €2.6 billion), while youth and

amateur football accounted for 24%, or €913.3 million. The FIGC's net revenues totalled €153.5 million (4% of the total), while the organisers of the various leagues produced revenue of around €68 million (2%). Overall expenditure was just below €4.3 billion, with professional clubs accounting for 73% (€3.1 billion), and youth and amateur football accounting for 21% (nearly €920 million). The FIGC's spending amounted to €149.5 million (4% of Italian football's overall expenditure), resulting in a net profit of around €4 million, its best result since 2008.

As CEO Michele Uva explains, "Football is one of Italy's great passions, but it is more than that. It drives economic growth and social development, and creates jobs. This document is the first of its kind – a new type of research that, over the years to come, will help us to better understand football's contribution to the Italian economy as a whole."

The report (available in Italian and English) can be downloaded from the 'Transparency' section of www.figc.it.

LATVIA

www.lff.lv

NEW LEAGUE CHAMPIONS CROWNED

TOMS ĀRMANIS

The 2016 season in Latvia's top division, the Virslīga, has given Latvian football new champions, with FK Spartaks Jūrmala becoming the strongest football club in Latvia for the first time in their history.

This season has seen a complete change at the top of the Virslīga table. From last season, only FK Ventspils succeeded in defending their position among the top three, and while last year's champions, FK Liepāja, finished this season in fourth place, FK Jelgava managed to finish in the top three for only the second time in their history.



FK Spartaks Jūrmala hail from the resort town of Jūrmala and were founded in 2007. They managed to win the Latvian second division (third tier) in the first year of their existence and then spent the next four seasons in the Latvian first division (second tier), making their Virslīga debut in 2012. Until now, their best result was to finish in fifth place, which they did in 2012 and 2015. This year they also reached the final of the Latvian Cup for the first time, but lost 1-0 against FK Jelgava.

Since 1992 Latvian football has had six different Virslīga champions.

LIECHTENSTEIN

www.lfv.li

FOOTBALLER OF THE YEAR, PETER JEHLE

ANTON BANZER

National team goalkeeper Peter Jehle was named Liechtenstein's footballer of the year for 2016 at the annual awards ceremony held at the beginning of October. The 34-year-old FC Vaduz goalkeeper, who already has 124 caps under his belt, was awarded the coveted trophy for the second time (the first was in 2014). He was chosen by experts and fans for his outstanding performances for both club and country, and was presented with his award by long-time Liechtenstein team-mate Mario Frick, whose record of 125 caps Jehle is fast approaching. The other nominees for footballer of the year were Marcel Büchel (Empoli FC), Simone Grippo and Stjepan Kukuruzović (FC Vaduz), and Sandro Wieser (Reading FC).

Meanwhile, the coach of the year award went to FC Vaduz's head coach Giorgio Contini, who also picked up the prize in 2014. The 41-year-old Swiss, who once again steered his team to safety in the Swiss Super League last season, was selected ahead of Nathanael Straub (FC Schaan) and Vito Troisio (FC Ruggell).

The 2016 special award for outstanding achievements went to

27-year-old goalkeeper Benjamin Büchel in recognition of the determination with which he has pursued his football career.

And last but not least, tribute was paid to the principality's tireless volunteers and their vital contribution

to football in Liechtenstein. This year's volunteer of the year award was presented to Lorenz Gassner of FC Vaduz, who has played an active role in the club's youth football activities for many years now.



Mario Frick (right) and Peter Jehle

SEMINAR ON BRIBERY AND BETTING IN FOOTBALL

ALEX VELLA



On the recommendation of the Malta FA's executive committee, the association's integrity office recently held a seminar on bribery and betting for premier league and first division club administrators. In line with its efforts to guide all the game's stakeholders, the association's input in this area is commendable. It runs programmes for football participants aimed at tackling difficult situations involving match-fixing and other malpractices which they may come up against.

The seminar, introduced by the association's integrity officer, Franz Tabone, also covered initiatives introduced by the Malta FA in recent years.

Franz Tabone announced that another integrity event would be held soon in collaboration with Sportradar AG for Premier League players, coaches and

committee members. Media and task force members would also be invited to a special edition of this integrity programme. Tabone then spoke about the Malta FA's local and international collaboration with several organisations. This created an important relationship which assisted the association in its intelligence-building process, he explained.

Another speaker, Adrian Camilleri, the association's prosecutor, focused on the technicalities of regulations and laws, and on the responsibilities of players and club officials aware of bribery attempts. Betting regulations prohibiting players and officials from placing wagers on matches at all levels were also emphasised.

The chief enforcement officer of the Malta Gaming Authority, which works closely with other European gaming



D. Aquilina

bodies, was another speaker. He explained the secure systems the Maltese authority puts into practice and the information it can access in relation to punters. This work makes it possible to identify suspicions about illegal betting.

The Malta FA is constantly on the lookout for new opportunities and partnerships to strengthen its approach in the battle against match-fixing.

NEW VISUAL IDENTITY LAUNCHED

MARKETING DEPARTMENT



The Football Association of Moldova (FMF) is going through a phase of modernisation and continued development. As part of this process, a new visual identity

was introduced at the beginning of November.

The new logo retains the shield shape and the key element – a ball – and is completed by an eagle, which signifies

bravery, victory and power, and can also be found on Moldova's national coat of arms. The association's image will also feature a modern font already used on the national team's kit.

The new visual identity aims to share the association's passion for football with each citizen of the country, and to bring fans even closer to its events. A new FMF website will be launched shortly. It will be easily accessible from any device, especially mobile ones, where match results and other information will be just a click away. The website will also feature an online shop, where fans will be able to buy products licensed by the national team as well as match tickets.

The new visual identity will gradually be rolled out on promotional material from the end of the year.



NORTHERN IRELAND

www.irishfa.com

NATIONAL STADIUM UP AND RUNNING

NIGEL TILSON



Northern Ireland's new national football stadium has been officially opened by the FIFA president, Gianni Infantino. The inauguration of the redeveloped ground at Windsor Park in Belfast took place before Northern Ireland's 2018 World Cup qualifier against San Marino in October.

The FIFA president, who unveiled a plaque to mark the occasion, said: "With this project the Irish Football Association is both safeguarding its historical legacy and reshaping its football home in a way that fits the country's needs. Windsor Park has been transformed into a compact, world class stadium."

Northern Ireland first minister, Arlene Foster, and deputy first minister, Martin McGuinness, were among the guests at the opening ceremony hosted by the Irish FA president, David Martin.

The Northern Ireland Executive and the department for culture, arts and leisure (now the department for communities) provided the £38m funding for the redevelopment of the home of Northern Ireland football. The project, which took 29 months to complete, has seen three new stands built at the stadium, which now has a capacity of 18,600.

The Irish FA chief executive, Patrick Nelson, said it was a fitting home for Northern Ireland's involvement in the



David Martin (right) and Gianni Infantino

number one sport in the world. The ground is also now the Irish FA's HQ and houses the offices of both the Northern Ireland Football League (NIFL) and Linfield FC.

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

www.fai.ie

DUNDALK CLINCH THIRD CONSECUTIVE TITLE

STEPHEN FINN



Dundalk FC have become the most talked about Irish club across the football world thanks to their exploits in the UEFA Europa League this season, but on the domestic front they are just as focused on creating history. Managed brilliantly by Stephen Kenny, the Lilywhites recently secured their third premier division title in a row after an incredible end to the domestic season.

The County Louth club showed unbelievable energy across a number of fronts. In the space of 30 days, Kenny's side had to squeeze in a testing ten fixtures in the FAI Cup, premier league and Europa League, starting on 29 September, when Dundalk beat Maccabi Tel Aviv 1-0 in a thrilling UEFA Europa League Group D encounter at Tallaght Stadium thanks to a Ciaran Kilduff winner.

While closest rivals Cork City were ready to pounce on any slip-ups by the champions, it did not turn out that way. Dundalk's 2-1 win over Cork at their Oriel



Park home proved to be pivotal, and despite an impressive campaign on all fronts themselves, John Caulfield's City could not catch Dundalk.

Dundalk sealed the title with a 2-1 win over Bohemians on 23 October and the country hailed manager Kenny and his history-making squad. They become just the third Irish club to win the title three seasons running and will seek to equal Shamrock Rovers' legendary four-in-a-row side of the 1980s next term.

Having also become the first Irish club to pick up a point in a Europa League tie and then win a group game at that stage of the competition, Dundalk are bidding to head into uncharted territory by qualifying from their group this winter.

Their achievements this year saw Daryl Horgan voted the Professional Footballers' Association of Ireland's player of the year by his fellow professionals. Cork City's success was recognised with striker Sean Maguire earning the young player of the year award.

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

PAUL ZAHARIA

 Concerned by the poor results achieved by the Romanian national youth teams in recent years, the Romanian Football Federation (FRF) decided it was necessary to address this problem by modifying its national club licensing regulations and, in particular, by introducing a monitoring and control system with regard to the way clubs redistribute money to their academies.

This was the main point on the agenda of the FRF executive committee meeting held on 24 October, where it was decided that, starting from the 2018/19 season, 10% of the income

generated by the transfer of players will have to be redistributed by clubs to their own academies. To begin with, this will only be a mandatory part of the licensing process for the top two leagues, in order to allow all the clubs to adjust their budgets, provisions and strategy accordingly.

Clubs will have three years to comply fully with the requirement and to reinvest the money generated by the transfer of players in buying kit, organising training camps, covering the costs of accommodation, coaches' salaries and infrastructure, as well as in recruiting players who would be eligible

for the Under-19 national team. If, after those three years, the relevant amounts are not be invested accordingly, the difference between the amount which should have been invested and the amount which was actually invested will be payable to the FRF, which will redirect the funds to its affiliated clubs according to the number of youth teams at each club. The executive committee also decided that clubs which do not provide the mandatory financial information requested by the FRF will face fines of around €22,000.

This is the first time that the FRF has introduced such a monitoring and control mechanism, which should be regarded as a further step in persuading its affiliated clubs to pay the necessary attention to youth development, to ensure the future of Romanian football.

GETTING MORE GIRLS INTO FOOTBALL

PETER SURIN

 As part of its activities to promote women's football in Slovakia, the Slovak Football Association is involved in organising sports festivals for girls, exposing more girls to football and promoting the sport among them.

As the girls who come along are mainly interested in having fun, the programme offers a variety of physical activities, from sack races to goal-shooting practice, with prizes for the winners. However, it is the football tournament that draws in the crowds. The girls throw themselves into the matches with incredible passion and enthusiasm.

"It's extraordinary to see how girls of nine or ten who may never have kicked a ball before get excited during the matches, about the goals and supporting each other. We even saw tears of sadness when a girl missed a goal. Football brings up all sorts of emotions, from the first moment till the last. Our main objective is to give the tournament participants a positive feeling while realising that football is



just a game. Even if some of the girls do not become active players in the future, we hope they will remain active football fans." These are the words of the Slovak FA's women's football coordinator and active footballer, Alexandra Biróová, who currently plays for Austria's reigning champions, SKN St. Pölten.

The festivals are aimed at girls under the age of 12, some of whom encounter a football for the first time. They started three years ago and the number of participants and events is now increasing

year on year. In the first half of 2016, three festivals were held, attended by 241 girls and 58 volunteers in total. Financially, the festivals are supported by the Slovak FA and individual clubs or regional associations.

After the summer break, two more events took place, with another two scheduled before the end of the year and eight pencilled in for 2017. "With 60 participants having come to one festival, our goal is to get at least 500 girls involved next year," Biróová added.

SWITZERLAND

www.football.ch

REACHING OUT TO REFUGEES

PIERRE BENOIT



At the end of October, Switzerland's professional football clubs took part in Together2016, a campaign organised by the Swiss Football League and the clubs in partnership with the State Secretariat for Migration, the Swiss Refugee Council and the Office for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to highlight football's all-important role in fostering social integration.

During the week-long campaign, club officials, players and coaches spoke of their personal experiences, and activities were held in local communities to raise awareness of what it means to be a recognised refugee or a temporarily admitted person, and of how important their successful integration is for society as a whole.

Activities included a 'match of peace' involving locals and refugees, training sessions to which refugees were specifically invited, and the distribution of free tickets to football matches.

Swiss international Admir Mehmedi,



speaking on behalf of many a professional player, described his early years in Switzerland: "It was very hard to begin with because I only spoke Italian and Albanian. Because I wasn't able to talk to anyone, it wasn't an easy time for me. It was only when I could understand German that I felt good and was able

to make lots of friends." BSC Young Boys midfielder Leonardo Bertone, who describes himself as Bernese born and bred, was delighted when 300 refugees were invited to a Young Boys match and given the opportunity not only to watch a match but also to meet people with similar interests.

UKRAINE

www.ffu.org.ua

OPEN FUN FOOTBALL SCHOOLS IN EASTERN UKRAINE

YURI MAZNYCHENKO



For three days, from 30 September to 2 October, the Football Federation of Ukraine organised a seminar for 120 Open Fun Football Schools volunteers, with a view to providing grassroots festivals for displaced children in the Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk and Zaporizhzhya regions. The workshop was held at FC Metalist Kharkiv's stadium and on the fields of the local football academy.

The participants – PE teachers, football coaches, school psychologists and police representatives – shared their experience about the development of grassroots football and social projects.

Since the seminar, the first Open Fun Football Schools project in eastern Ukraine has been implemented in the Derhachi district of the Kharkiv region. On 21 October, nearly 200 children gathered in the local stadium to take part in different football activities.

"This year has been one of the most prolific in the history of the Open Fun Football Schools," said project coordinator Yevhen Stolitenko. "The schools have already covered 56 districts and cities in Ukraine, involving 12,000 children, half of them displaced, and 1,500 adult volunteers."



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DIARY OF EVENTS

The UEFA president, Aleksander Čeferin, has continued to meet with European football leaders, as well as with other public figures.



The president of the Cyprus FA, Costakis Koutsokounnis



The president of the UEFA Foundation for Children, José Manuel Barroso, and board members (from left to right) Sándor Csányi, Viviane Reding and Norman Darmanin Demajo



The president of the Swedish FA, Karl-Erik Nilsson



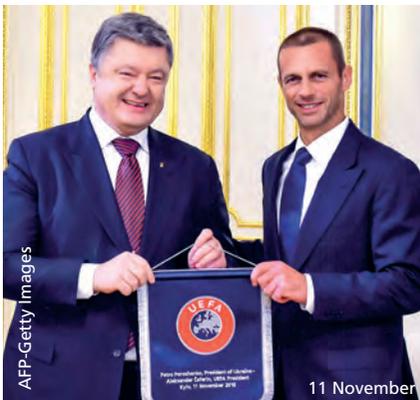
The president of the German FA, Reinhard Grindel (left), and the mayor of Munich, Dieter Reiter



The president of the Turkish FA, Yıldırım Demirören



The secretary general of the international basketball federation (FIBA), Patrick Baumann (right), and the president of FIBA Europe, Turgay Demirel



The president of Ukraine, Petro Poroshenko



The president of the Hungarian FA, Sándor Csányi (right), and the mayor of Budapest, István Tarlós



The president of the Bulgarian FA, Borislav Mihaylov

BIRTHDAYS

John Ferry (Northern Ireland, 1 December)
Sergei Roumas (Belarus, 1 December)
David R. Griffiths (Wales, 2 December)
Carmel Agius (Malta, 2 December)
Ligita Ziedone (Latvia, 2 December)
Sean Dipple (England, 3 December)
Juan Antonio Fernández Marin (Spain, 3 December)
Gylfi Thor Orrason (Iceland, 3 December)
Josipa Flam (Croatia, 3 December)
Janusz Basalaj (Poland, 4 December)
Miroslav Liba (Czech Republic, 4 December)
Ioannis Farfarellis (Greece, 4 December)
Ján Kováčik (Slovakia, 4 December)
Georg Lüchinger (Liechtenstein, 4 December)
Adrian Ixari (Moldova, 4 December)
Desislava Ralkova (Bulgaria, 4 December)
Maurizio Montironi (San Marino, 5 December)
Christiaan Timmermans (Belgium, 6 December)
Heather Rabbatts (England, 6 December)
Antonio Manuel Almeida Costa (Portugal, 6 December)
Stilian Shishkov (Bulgaria, 6 December)
Andrea Agnelli (Italy, 6 December)
Andreas Akkelides (Cyprus, 7 December) **70th**
Ray Ellingham (Wales, 7 December)
Johan van Geijn (Netherlands, 7 December)
Raili Ellermaa (Estonia, 7 December)
Andrea Manzella (Italy, 8 December)
Michel D'Hooghe (Belgium, 8 December)
Vitaly Mutko (Russia, 8 December)
Konstantin Sonin (Russia, 8 December)
Les Reed (England, 9 December)
Dušan Bajević (Bosnia-Herzegovina, 10 December)
Leif Lindberg (Sweden, 10 December)
Christian Andreasen (Faroe Islands, 10 December)
Alain Hamer (Luxembourg, 10 December)
Trefor Lloyd Hughes (Wales, 11 December)
Avi Levi (Israel, 11 December)
Ilcho Gjorgjioski (FYR Macedonia, 11 December)
Alvaro Albino (Portugal, 12 December)
Fiona May (Italy, 12 December)
Kaj Natri (Finland, 13 December)
Stefan Messner (Austria, 13 December)
Antonio Mortagua (Portugal, 14 December)
Bülent Konuk (Germany, 14 December)
Ged Poynton (England, 15 December)
Dušan Svoboda (Czech Republic, 15 December)
Steve Stride (England, 16 December)
Karel Vertongen (Belgium, 17 December)
Bobby Barnes (England, 17 December)
Michael Riley (England, 17 December)

Artan Hajdari (Albania, 17 December)
Guntis Indriksons (Latvia, 18 December)
Niklas à Lidarenda (Faroe Islands, 18 December)
Rainer Koch (Germany, 18 December)
Jacco Swart (Netherlands, 18 December) **50th**
Patrick Filipek (Czech Republic, 18 December)
Ludvik S. Georgsson (Iceland, 19 December)
Harri Talonen (Finland, 19 December)
David Casserly (Republic of Ireland, 19 December)
José Nebot (Spain, 20 December)
Edgars Pukinskis (Latvia, 20 December)
Willie Young (Scotland, 21 December)
Bjarne Berntsen (Norway, 21 December) **60th**
José Henrique Da Costa Jones (Portugal, 22 December)
Olzhas Abrayev (Kazakhstan, 22 December)
Josef Geisler (Austria, 23 December)
Pia Hess-Bolkovac (Germany, 23 December)
Laszlo Vagner (Hungary, 24 December)
Irina Mirt (Romania, 24 December)
Noël Le Graët (France, 25 December)
Patritiu Abrudan (Romania, 25 December)
Laura Montgomery (Scotland, 25 December)
Nikola Muzikova (Czech Republic, 25 December)
Guy Goethals (Belgium, 26 December)
Servet Yardımcı (Turkey, 26 December)
Rudolf Repka (Czech Republic, 26 December)
Bernhard Heusler (Switzerland, 27 December)
Nils Fisketjonn (Norway, 27 December)
Dušan Tittel (Slovakia, 27 December) **50th**
Krisztina Varga (Hungary, 27 December)
Bernard Carrel (Switzerland, 28 December)
Martial Saugy (Switzerland, 28 December)
Otakar Mestek (Czech Republic, 28 December)
Evangalos Mazarakis (Greece, 29 December)
Anders Solheim (Norway, 29 December)
Dagmar Damkova (Czech Republic, 29 December)
Hans-Hubert Vogts (Germany, 30 December) **70th**
Wolfgang Thierriecher (Austria, 30 December)
Matt Crocker (England, 30 December)
Jean Fournet-Fayard (France, 31 December)
Horst Brummeler (Austria, 31 December)
Christian Moerger (Switzerland, 31 December)
David Findlay (Scotland, 31 December)
Jens Larsen (Denmark, 31 December)
Liene Kozlovskā (Latvia, 31 December)

NOTICES

- Esther Gascón Carbajosa has replaced Jorge Juan Pérez Arias as general secretary of the Royal Spanish Football Federation.
- Koen De Brabander has replaced Gérard Linard as general secretary of the Royal Belgian Football Association.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Meetings

1 December, Cracow

European Under-21 Championship: final draw

1 December, Nyon

Development and Technical Assistance Committee

2 December, Nyon

Stadium and Security Committee

8 December, Nyon

Youth and Amateur Football Committee

9 December, Nyon

Executive Committee

12 December, Nyon

UEFA Champions League: round of 16 draw
 UEFA Europa League: round of 32 and round of 16 draws
 UEFA Youth League: play-off draw

13 December, Nyon

2016/17 European Under-19 and Under-17 Championships: elite round draws
 2017/18 European Under-19 and Under-17 Championships: qualifying round draws

Competitions

6/7 December

UEFA Champions League: group matches (matchday 6)
 UEFA Youth League – Champions League path group matches (matchday 6)

8 December

UEFA Europa League: group matches (matchday 6)

8–18 December, Japan

Club World Cup



NO TO RACISM



RESPECT

1999