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# Message of the president

## Invaluable contribution of the committees

Photo: UEFA-pjwoods.ch

During the last week in February, the House of European Football in Nyon saw a steady stream of UEFA committee meetings. For the most part, this was the first time that the committees had convened since they were formed and embedded in the UEFA Statutes at the extraordinary congress in Zurich last year.

These consultative committees are an exceptionally valuable resource for the Executive Committee. Football nowadays affects so many incredibly vast domains that meetings of UEFA's executive body would be both endless and tiresome if the committees were not there to study matters relating to their areas of specialisation and facilitate the executive's decision-making process by means of pertinent recommendations.

The work of the committees is all the more effective now that they are presided over by members of the Executive Committee who are fully abreast of the strategy and direction chosen by UEFA and are therefore in no danger of straying into futile discussions or losing focus.

At the congress in Zagreb, for the first time, the chairmen of the committees that had already held meetings presented their committees' areas of activity and tasks to the national association delegates. My wish was not only to pay homage to their work and underline the importance of these organs, but also to ensure that UEFA's activities were presented transparently and that information was communicated by the most direct means possible.

It was also a deliberate choice to include all the presidents and general secretaries of UEFA's member associations in one or other of our committees, alongside other experts. After all, it is also the responsibility of those who manage football at national level to help stimulate the smooth running of international football and share the benefits of their experience.



**Michel Platini**  
UEFA President

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### COVER

Schalke 04 qualify for the quarter-finals of the Champions League for the first time in their history after knocking out FC Porto in a penalty shoot-out. Halil Altintop dodges the Portuguese Pedro Emanuel.

Photo: Queimadelos Alonso/Bongarts/Getty Images

# Less than 100 days until kick-off at EURO 2008



Coffrini/AFP

**THE EURO 2008 COUNTDOWN WAS PAUSED BRIEFLY ON 28 FEBRUARY**

**IN BERNE TO MARK THE START OF THE LAST 100 DAYS BEFORE THE EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP FINALS KICK OFF.**

The occasion provided the opportunity for the public release of a few extra pieces of information, notably the plans for the opening ceremony on 7 June in St Jakob Park in Basel, which, although short, will involve a thousand or so participants. Volunteering at the championships has also proved extremely popular with more than 17,000 people from 150 countries having put themselves forward. Yet more fans have tried to get hold of tickets: UEFA has now received 8.7 million requests for the 1.05 million tickets it put on sale at euro2008.com, and

it has therefore had to organise a draw to allocate them.



A new version of the official tournament website has just been launched and will provide extensive coverage of the tournament's 31 matches. Some 130 people will be working on the event to deliver all manner of information, making maximum use of all the new multi-media technology resources available.

Since January, the EURO Experience Tour has been travelling all over Austria and Switzerland. The exhibition is scheduled to call at

13 different venues, giving visitors a taste of what EURO 2008 will have to offer with the help of interactive games, photographs and films. The Henri Delaunay trophy is also on display and can even be seen flying over each venue in the form of a hot-air balloon.

Still on the agenda before June are the finalists' workshop in Vienna from 12 to 13 March and the referees' workshop near Zurich from 14 to 17 April, as well as the volunteer training sessions and the volunteers' pre-tournament assignments.

Until EURO 2008 kicks off, it will be up to club-level football to keep the fans entertained with the UEFA Cup final on 14 May in Manchester and the final of the UEFA Champions League seven days later in Moscow.



The 2007 finalists pose together before kick-off: the Regions' Cup is a celebration of friendship.



# 2008/09

## UEFA Regions' Cup

### Growing in popularity

THIS SUMMER WILL SEE THE START OF THE SIXTH EDITION OF UEFA'S AMATEUR COMPETITION. WITH ENTRIES FROM 41 REGIONAL AND NATIONAL TEAMS, THE COMPETITION HAS MORE PARTICIPANTS THAN EVER BEFORE: PROOF OF THE GROWING POPULARITY OF THE REGIONS' CUP.



Pole, Szymon Jaskulowski, (in white) and Bulgarian, Petar Petrov, in a mid-air tussle during the 2007 final between Dolnoslaski and Bulgaria's South-East Region.

Amateur football is a fundamental part of the European football pyramid. By organising an amateur competition UEFA not only shows that it recognises the importance of recreational sport, but also provides amateur footballers with the chance to contest an international competition.

#### The first attempt

UEFA's Committee for Amateur Football first suggested the creation of a tournament for amateur players in 1965. However, once the plans had been approved by the Executive Committee, the competition had difficulty getting off the ground, because only those countries with professional leagues were able to take part and the top divisions in many countries, notably in eastern Europe and Scandinavia, were still amateur. Only 12 countries participated in the first edition in 1967, which was won by the Austrian line-up. After the fourth edition, which was entered by just ten teams, the competition was discontinued.

#### The relaunch

In 1996, the newly formed UEFA Amateur Football Committee decided to relaunch the European amateur competition. The participation problem resolved itself and, in 1999, the inaugural edition of the new Regions' Cup was contested by 32 teams and won by an Italian side from the Veneto region. The second edition (which had 35 participating teams) was

... which continues off the pitch as well.



The Regions' Cup attracts ever bigger crowds.

Sportfile

taken by a Czech side in 2001 and in 2003, the third (with 40 participating teams) went to another Italian team, this time from Piedmont. In the fourth edition, which was entered by 37 teams, a Spanish side from the Basque country came out on top. The most recent finals took place in Bulgaria in 2007 – this time, a Polish team took the title in front of a record crowd of 3,500. Once again, this competition was contested by 37 teams.

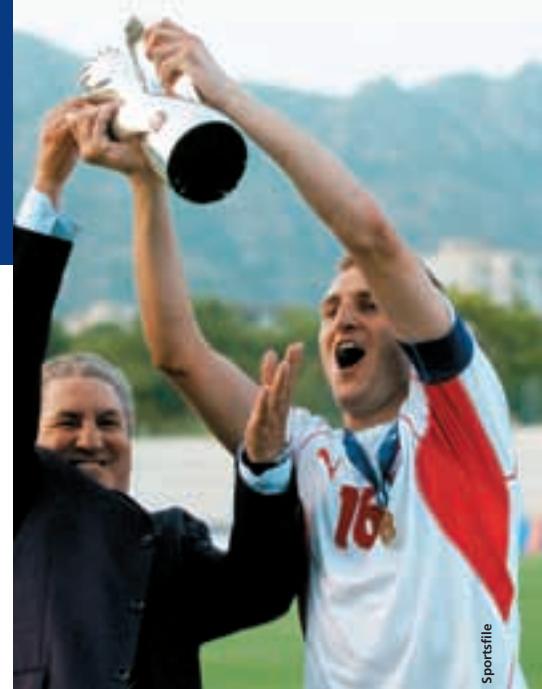
### Record participation in 2008/09

The draw for the sixth Regions' Cup took place on 26 February in Nyon. Since entries were received from no less than 41 teams, three preliminary-round groups were formed, each containing four teams. The winner from each group will advance to the intermediate round which consists of eight groups of four teams. In June 2009, the winner from each of the eight groups will compete for the European amateur title in the country of one of the finalists. UEFA's Youth and Amateur Football Committee chairman, Viacheslav Koloskov, emphasised the importance of the UEFA Regions' Cup: "Amateur football is the basis for football in Europe in general. Amateur football also has a social function to perform. Our task is not only to organise the final tournament but also to provide an impetus for the national associations to develop grassroots and amateur football within their own countries."

### Changes to the regulations

There have been some changes to the regulations of the UEFA Regions' Cup as approved by the UEFA Executive Committee at the beginning of the year. At the request of the coaches of those teams that participated in the 2007 finals, an additional rest day has been incorporated between the

second and third matchdays of the group stage. Moreover, the criteria relating to players who are transferred to a higher league in the course of the competition have been relaxed and the upper age limit has been raised from 35 to 40. Both of these changes should benefit the smaller associations. Finally, the financial contributions made to the host associations and the visiting teams have been increased.



Jim Boyce, the then president of the Youth and Amateur Football Committee, hands over the trophy to Polish captain Adrian Szymczak after Dolnoslaski's 2007 victory.

Sportfile

## Result of the draw

(Team selections from San Marino, Liechtenstein and Malta are national rather than regional.)

### Preliminary round

(mini-tournaments: 1 August to 20 September 2008)

Group 1: **San Marino**, Liechtenstein, Hungary, F.Y.R. Macedonia  
Group 2: **Israel**, Czech Republic, Malta, Wales  
Group 3: **Lithuania**, Sweden, Georgia, Turkey

*Host associations of the mini-tournaments in bold.*

### Intermediate round

(mini-tournaments: 1 August to 31 December 2008 for groups not involving preliminary-round teams, 1 October 2008 to 30 April 2009 for all other groups)

Group 1: **Germany**, Belgium, Northern Ireland, Winners of preliminary round Group 2  
Group 2: **Italy**, Scotland, England, Republic of Ireland  
Group 3: **Croatia**, Slovenia, Netherlands, Switzerland  
Group 4: **France**, Winners of preliminary round Group 1, Spain, Portugal  
Group 5: **Russia**, Belarus, Winners of preliminary round Group 3, Greece  
Group 6: **Romania**, Bulgaria, Moldova, Ukraine  
Group 7: **Serbia**, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Poland, Finland  
Group 8: **Slovakia**, Azerbaijan, Estonia, Latvia

*Host associations of the mini-tournaments in bold.*



From left to right: Viacheslav Koloskov, member of the Executive Committee and president of the Youth and Amateur Football Committee, Jim Boyce, vice-president of the committee, and Andy Roxburgh, UEFA's technical director, carried out the draw in Nyon.

UEFA photo/woods.ch



Olympique Lyonnais before their meeting with LFC Arsenal.



# UEFA Women's Cup semi-finals

## The Olympique Lyonnais adventure

**TITLEHOLDERS ARSENAL LADIES FC HAVE BEEN KNOCKED OUT IN THE QUARTER-FINALS OF THE UEFA WOMEN'S CUP BY NEWCOMERS OLYMPIQUE LYONNAIS.**

On 30 March and 6 April, Olympique Lyonnais now face Sweden's Umeå IK, who have twice taken the title. The French women's success is the fruit of the club's concerted efforts because the women in Lyon are not restricted to the meanest share, even though they still only have amateur status.

To recap, it was four years ago that Olympique Lyonnais adopted a women's club which, despite having been French champions numerous times, was plagued by financial trouble. The local council helped the club, and then the idea took root at Olympique Lyonnais and

enticed the managers there. "We had to try to make up for the past. We couldn't crow about gender equality while clinging to a few privileges," explains Robert Beroud, the club's educational director, responsible for the school and university education of the amateurs, i.e. the youth and women's players.

### The president jumps in

On the Olympique Lyonnais website, the women's team features next to the men's. The club has 160 registered women players, and 25 on its A list. They enjoy the same facilities and the

same support as the men, be that medical care, catering or accommodation when travelling. The men and women mix, socialising and eating side by side. They are united by a strong bond and a healthy sense of rivalry. The club has launched a mixed billboard and poster campaign. Before the Olympique Lyonnais-Manchester United match, the club's TV channel broadcast extended interviews with the women, who had just knocked out Arsenal.

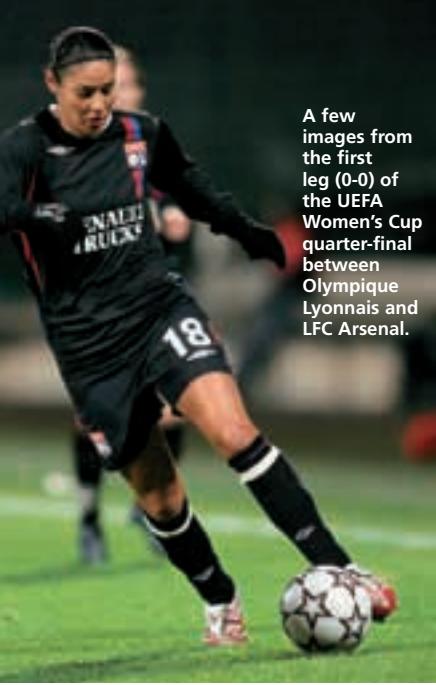
*"The president [Jean-Michel Aulas] set himself an objective: that of his women's team winning the French championship and competing for the UEFA Women's Cup within three years. He threw himself into this venture with passion and determination," Robert Beroud says with a smile. "What's more, Jean-Michel Aulas took a private jet to London, as well as to the French cup final. He sat down with us to decide on the dates for the semi-finals because he wanted to attend the women's match as well as the men's."*

Lyon's men are sharing their Champions League experience with the women. They have the same protocol in place for receiving opponents and the club has been preparing for Umeå IK's arrival for weeks. *"The commercial department is collaborating actively. It is trying to rally Olympique Lyonnais' partner companies and the press. These semi-finals are a major event for Lyon as a whole."*

Some 7,000 spectators came to watch the women play Arsenal, although it was not the best day for the match. Olympique Lyonnais hopes to see 10,000 to 12,000 at the Umeå match, which will take place on a Sunday. It is receiving requests from all corners of France, as to whether the match will be shown live on



Rude awakening for Emeline Mainguy in the Olympique Lyonnais goal, but the English fail to take advantage.



A few images from the first leg (0-0) of the UEFA Women's Cup quarter-final between Olympique Lyonnais and LFC Arsenal.



Coach Farid Benstiti.

### UEFA Women's Cup: a passionate experience

Champions in June 2007, the women are discovering the UEFA Women's Cup, which didn't exist when they won their previous titles, before being adopted by Olympique Lyonnais. *"The women's competition is very similar to the men's UEFA Cup. It is based on the same model. None of the pomp and ceremony surprised the club, but the players were marked by the experience and by their incredible success."*

The A side has been progressively reinforced, working on any weaknesses identified. Most of the women are internationals and Olympique Lyonnais have paid special attention to the social aspect. *"These are not mercenaries but young women who want to put down roots. We make sure that they complete their studies and have jobs."*

They are coached by Farid Benstiti, a former Olympique Lyonnais professional, assisted by Vincent Yé, who knows the club equally well. *"Lots of former players are employed by the club. They pass on its values to the young ones. Is that not the key to Bayern Munich's success, for example?"*

Robert Beroud refuses to single out any one of the Olympique Lyonnais players: *"Umeå field a Brazilian, Marta, who is without a doubt the best female player in the world. We have no star player. We focus on solidarity and complementing each other."*

Olympique Lyonnais reckon they have a 50-50 chance without abandoning the philosophy that has spelt success up to now: *"We tackle each match one at a time. We drew 0-0 against Arsenal at home, after a tough match. Over there, we played without really pushing for a win (3-2). And the match could have ended differently, because Arsenal played well."*

Whatever the semi-final result, this first European campaign will have been a success. It has already been a great experience for the players. *"Until very recently, they had met only one or two journalists. Now they're everywhere. The women also feel that the club supports them and shares their excitement. Lyon has two teams in European competitions. In sporting terms, these games are very instructive: they help our women take their game more seriously. The players put a huge amount of effort into preparing for European matches because the slightest error is fatal. They may be relaxed before a championship match, but I can assure you this is not the case prior to a UEFA Cup tie! They are also gaining lots of experience from their contact with the best women players on the continent."*

Pascale Pierard

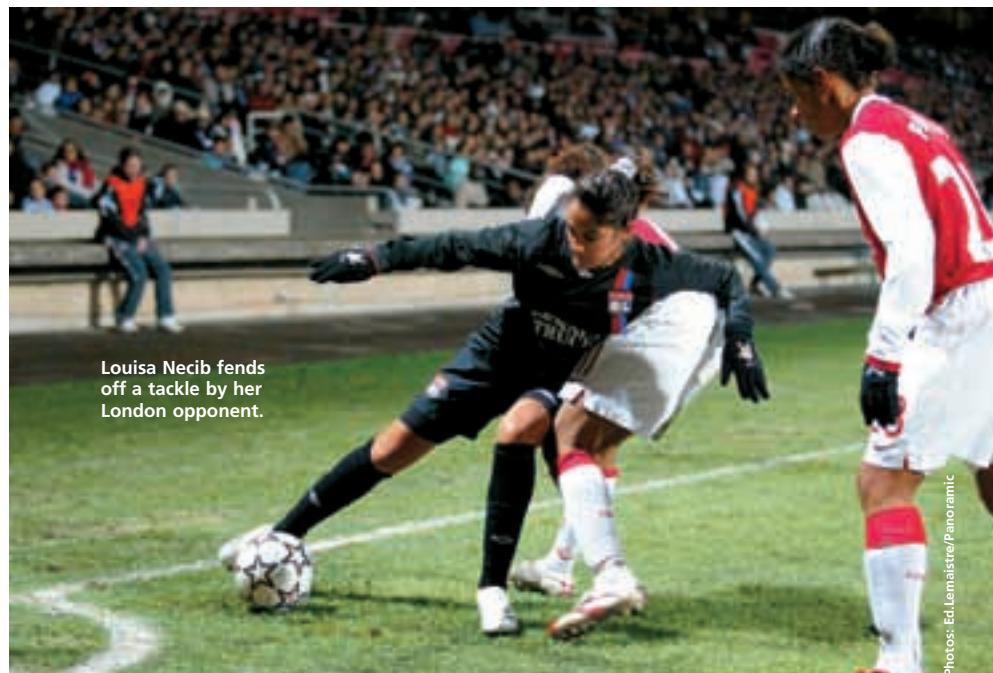
■ The other semi-final is between 1. FFC Frankfurt and CF Bardolino Verona.

## No professional status in France

In many countries, women footballers are professional, but not in France. They cannot be paid to play. When they finish studying, they must find a 'proper' job, i.e. gainful employment. Top women basketball and volleyball players are considered as professionals, but not their footballing counterparts. Robert Beroud explains: *"Women's football [in France] is behind other countries. It is essentially a Latin phenomenon, despite the higher female presence since the 1998 World Cup. Women are going to watch matches more often, and girls are interested in football. We have about 60,000 registered women footballers. That's not very many. When will we have contracts? It will be months or years. Discussions have yet to start, but we are all aware that there is a corner to turn."*

Half of Olympique Lyonnais' women footballers are students. Others are employed by the club. One works for the Olympique Lyonnais TV channel, for example, another is in the merchandising department, and a third looks after the youth players' physical preparation. *"They can work part-time. They train once a day, but not in the evenings. This way they have a semi-pro routine."*

P.P.



Louisa Necib fends off a tackle by her London opponent.



Malta (in red) in its first-ever qualifiers for the Futsal World Cup.

D.Aquilina



UEFApiwoods.ch

# Futsal Cup Heading for Moscow

The final phase of the 7th UEFA Futsal Cup will take place from 25 to 27 April at the 5,000-seater Krylatskoe Sport Palace in Moscow. 25 April will be semi-final day, followed by the third-place match and the final on 27 April. The semi-finalists have been known since last October but on 6 March the draw took place in Moscow to determine the semi-final line-up.





Scorza/AFP/Getty Images

This year, the FIFA Beach Soccer World Cup will leave behind the beaches of Brazil for Marseille.



UEFA/Pjwoods.ch

The Futsal and Beach Soccer Committee meet in Nyon.

# Beach soccer Future prospects

**BEACH SOCCER HAS EXPERIENCED AN AMAZING SOAR IN POPULARITY IN RECENT YEARS. CATERING FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS, AND COMBINING FOOTBALL, MUSIC, FUN AND A BEACH ATMOSPHERE, IT IS A SPORT THAT IS ATTRACTING INCREASING PUBLIC AND MEDIA INTEREST, PARTICULARLY, AS FAR AS THE PUBLIC IS CONCERNED, BECAUSE IT IS FREE TO PLAY AND WATCH. HENCE ITS GROWING APPEAL TO PLAYERS OF ALL AGES.**

This soar in popularity prompted the UEFA administration to send a questionnaire to all its member associations in February to find out more about the situation and organisation of beach soccer in each country, as well as to assess whether the time is right to introduce a European beach soccer competition.

Since 2005, FIFA has been organising an annual Beach Soccer World Cup – to be held in Marseille this year. However, it has now decided that it will become a biennial competition after the tournament in Dubai in 2009, which therefore opens the way for a biennial UEFA competition in even-numbered years, starting from 2010, which could serve as the European qualifying competition for the World Cup.

## Futsal and Beach Soccer Committee

At its meeting in Nyon on 25 February, the UEFA Futsal and Beach Soccer Committee, chaired by Grigoriy Surkis, gave initial consideration to how this possible new UEFA competition could look.

Beach football competitions already exist in Europe and the main

ones could serve as qualifiers for a UEFA tournament, assuming that UEFA does not want to organise qualifying rounds itself. The final round could involve 12 teams divided into several groups.

## Same host city for several years

At its meeting in Nyon, the Futsal and Beach Soccer Committee envisaged the possibility of the tournament being hosted by the same city – with the support of the respective national football association – for three or four consecutive years, which would allow closer cooperation with the sponsors and facilitate the promotion and organisation of the event.

It is now up to the UEFA Executive Committee to decide whether such a competition should go ahead. Beach soccer probably has considerable growth potential and the organisation of a UEFA competition could enable it to reach a new level.

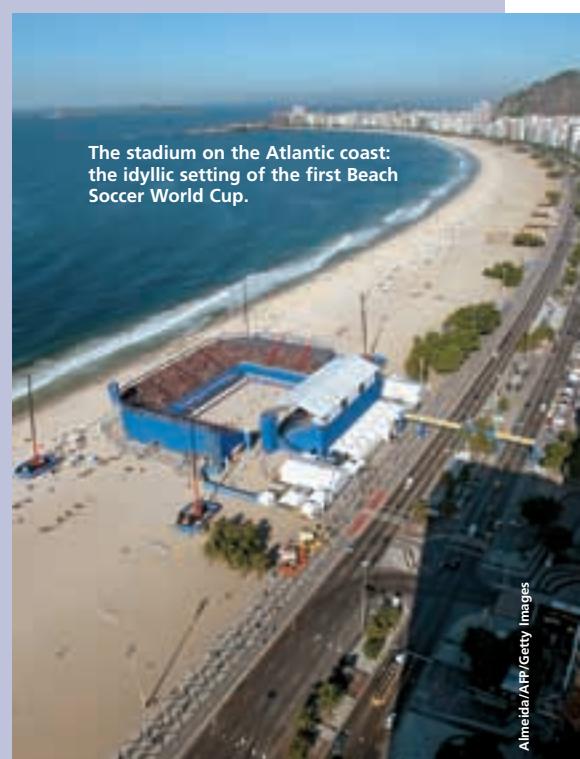
## World Cup for France in 2005

Although beach soccer has been around for some time, laws of the game were only established in 1992. A year later, following an experimental tournament, the first professional beach soccer competition was organised at Miami Beach. In 1995, the first world championship took place in Brazil.

In Europe, the growing attraction of beach soccer led to the creation of a European professional league, the European Pro Beach Soccer League, which later became the EBSL.

Beach soccer then joined the FIFA family, which organised the first World Cup in May 2005 at the Copacabana beach in Rio. The inaugural competition was won by France, at the expense of Portugal. The next two editions, also held in Rio de Janeiro, were won by Brazil.

European qualification for the FIFA World Cup is currently organised via the EBSL competitions.



The stadium on the Atlantic coast: the idyllic setting of the first Beach Soccer World Cup.

Almeida/AFP/Getty Images



The model of the House of European Football and the project site.



# New UEFA administration building

## The project is off the ground!

**THE UEFA ADMINISTRATION HEADQUARTERS, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE HOUSE OF EUROPEAN FOOTBALL, ARE SET TO EXPAND OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS. THE NEW PREMISES ARE EARMARKED FOR SOME 150 STAFF MEMBERS WHO ARE CURRENTLY TUCKED AWAY IN A BUILDING ON THE FAR SIDE OF TOWN. SURROUNDED BY GREENERY JUST METRES FROM THE MAIN BUILDING, THE NEW CONSTRUCTION IS SCHEDULED FOR COMPLETION IN 2010.**

Since its inauguration in 1999, the House of European Football has not stopped growing. Initially designed to contain 110 workstations, it now houses 150. The headquarters, which were also originally intended to serve as a place to entertain guests in a building that represents UEFA, are saturated with offices to the point where certain areas (meeting rooms, library, media

working room, etc.) have had to give way to additional office space. The layout and usage of La Falaise, the villa next door to the UEFA headquarters, has had to be modified and 30 extra workstations integrated into even more tightly-packed offices. To satisfy the immediate and growing needs of its subsidiaries, UEFA Media Technologies and Euro 2008 SA, UEFA also decided

to take out a short-term rental contract on a 3,250m<sup>2</sup> building near Nyon station.

### New solution

In light of these developments, a comprehensive review was considered necessary, leading UEFA to seek a solution close to the House of European Football. The idea was to buy or construct a functional building that would offer complete flexibility in its usage as time went on. The building would assume a distinctly secondary, functional role.

Six different avenues were explored before the project on the grounds of the La Métairie clinic was retained. Acquiring the site was no mean feat. Studies were carried out



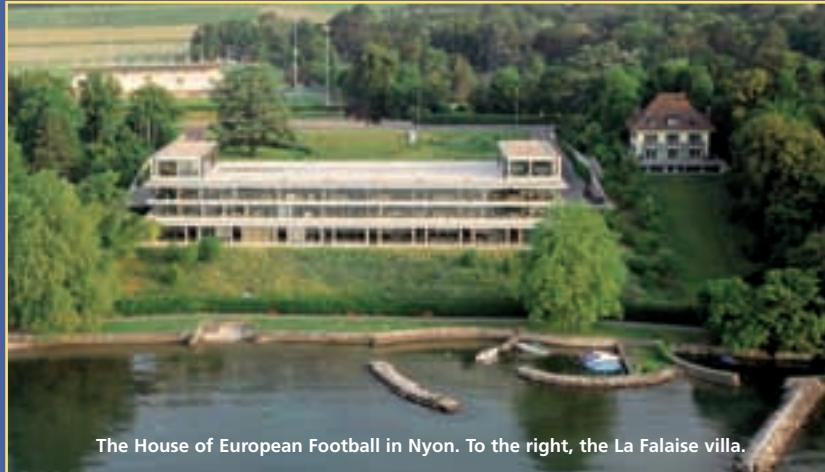
In blue, the plot of land designated for the new building opposite the current headquarters. The houses currently on the plot will be demolished.



The project has already been the focus of numerous meetings.



## A brief history



The House of European Football in Nyon. To the right, the La Falaise villa.

- **1954** – Creation of UEFA – the first general secretariat is based at the French federation headquarters in Paris.
- **1960** – The general secretariat moves to Berne.
- **1962** – UEFA moves into the House of Sport in Berne.
- **1974** – UEFA buys premises for its offices in the suburbs of Berne.
- **1995** – UEFA moves to temporary premises in Nyon.
- **1999** – The House of European Football is inaugurated in Nyon.

into the impact on access, traffic, noise, plants and animals, and negotiations were needed with all the relevant authorities in order to change the official land use, initially designated as medical. The project then had to overcome all the legal hurdles and be approved by the cantonal authorities at the council after a public consultation process and a few short-lived objections from local residents. Eventually, UEFA received a unanimous green light from the council. The purchase of the site was finalised on 5 November last year. Construction costs are estimated at CHF 35 million.

The next step was to get the Zurich-based Botta Management Group on board to manage the project. Four architects have been invited to submit plans for the new building and present their work at the end of April to a jury that will include the president of UEFA, Michel Platini, vice-presidents Senes Erzik and Marios Lefkaritis, the

general secretary, David Taylor, and Patrick Berger, the architect behind UEFA's House of European Football.

The jury will reach a verdict by the end of April.

### Tight agenda

An invitation to tender will then be launched to find a construction firm and UEFA should make its selection at the end of September. Construction will begin in February 2009. A real challenge has been laid down, with the keys already set to be handed over at 11am on 28 March 2010! Between now and then, UEFA still needs to decide exactly which divisions and units will move into the new premises and which facilities it will contain.

Once the new building is up and running, La Falaise, could be put to different use, as a place for the members of the Executive Committee to work and convene when in Nyon.

## News from Brussels

*Only a Game?*, a cultural, fun and educational UEFA exhibition that draws a parallel between the history of European football and that of the European Union is heading to the UK. The exhibition will be based at the World Museum in Liverpool from October of this year until February of next.

Bolstered by its success in Brussels, the *Only a Game?* exhibition will soon be crossing the Channel to spend the winter in Merseyside.

Liverpool was anything but a random choice. Not only does the city have an inherent passion for football, being as it is the proud home to Everton FC and Liverpool FC, two clubs of mythical proportions; Liverpool has also been named a 2008 European Capital of Culture.

The World Museum, one of Liverpool's national museums, will host the exhibition for four months. The museum, located in the heart of the city, was created in 1853 and enjoys international renown.



Olivier Guilbaud, the man behind the exhibition, says: "It's great to be able to take *Only a Game?* to Liverpool because it is a city whose passion for football remains second to none in Europe. Thanks to its location, the World Museum should enable people from all over the region and beyond to visit the exhibition."

The aim of *Only a Game?* is to invite the public to (re)discover and contemplate Europe through football. To this end, the recipe for success that proved itself in Brussels will be applied in Liverpool. *Only a Game?* will bring together a whole host of objects and images, characteristics of the city's attachment to local and European football, and various high-tech elements, with a view to making the exhibition as fun and as interactive as possible.

Football fans should get their diaries out: this winter *Only a Game?* will take up residence in the World Museum in Liverpool.



The Club Competitions Committee during its meeting in Nyon.  
UEFA/P. Woods



AC Milan will not defend their title in Moscow. The Italians were knocked out in the first knock-out round by Arsenal. Milan player Pato is tackled by Diaby.



# Meetings and other activities

## Final edition of the UEFA Intertoto Cup

**SEVERAL COMMITTEES MET AT UEFA HEADQUARTERS IN NYON DURING THE LAST WEEK OF FEBRUARY TO DISCUSS A WIDE RANGE OF TOPICS, MANY OF WHICH WILL APPEAR ON THE AGENDA OF UPCOMING EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS.**

Presided over by Friedrich Stickler, the Club Competitions Committee had previously met last August in Monaco for the beginning-of-season club competition draws. The committee was the first to meet since these bodies were recast at the extraordinary congress in Zurich. It met again in Nyon on 27 February in the presence of the UEFA president, Michel Platini,

who attended all of the meetings during committee week.

Amongst other things, the meeting provided an opportunity for an intermediary review of the current season, which has seen positive spectator figures both in the stadiums and watching on television. The Champions League group stage attracted 40,000 spectators per match and the figures available for televi-

sion audiences in the six biggest markets (Germany, Spain, France, Italy, Netherlands and the UK) indicate an overall increase of 2.5%. The UEFA Cup has even seen a 13.5% increase across the same markets. Inside the stadiums themselves, the UEFA Cup group matches were watched by an average of 16,000 spectators.

### Club competition finals

The committee also took stock of developments in the preparations for the Champions League and UEFA Cup finals in Moscow and Manchester respectively. Considerable renovation work is being conducted on the Luzhniki stadium in Moscow and a week or so before the final, a grass pitch is due to be laid over the current artificial one. The stadium will be able to seat a total of 69,500 spectators for the final. 75% of tickets



## President's Award for Alfredo Di Stéfano

**At a ceremony on 17 February in Madrid, Michel Platini presented Alfredo Di Stéfano with the UEFA President's Award.**

The former Real Madrid defender – the club for whom he is now honorary president – was given the award in recognition of his unparalleled lifelong contribution to football. *"You have been a great among greats,"* said the UEFA president before adding: *"It is impossible to imagine football's history without having a thought for you. The Real Madrid team during your time as a player marked history forever, and there is no doubt that you have left an imprint which can never be erased."*

The same day, a statue of Di Stéfano was unveiled at the stadium which carries his name in Valdebebas.



Alfredo Di Stéfano and Michel Platini.

Narvarte/AFP/Getty Images



Another shock exit in the first knock-out round as Real Madrid, the most successful team in the competition's history, are beaten twice by AS Roma under Francesco Totti's captaincy.



Michel Platini and Marios Lefkaritis, UEFA vice-president, hand over a cheque for CHF 1 million to Vassilis Gagatsis, president of the Hellenic Football Federation.

are available to the fans, with 60% of these going to the supporters of the two finalist teams. This equates to roughly 21,000 tickets per team. Tickets went on sale to the public at uefa.com on 28 February and were available until 19 March.

The City of Manchester stadium will have a total capacity of 44,000 for the UEFA Cup final and 13,000 tickets will be made available to each of the finalist teams.

### Draw for the UEFA Intertoto Cup

Next season will see the final edition of the UEFA Intertoto Cup. Entries have been particularly high this year: not only have all 50 national associations who are eligible for a place put in a request, but 30 or so have also applied for an additional place should one become available. The draw to determine the match schedule for each of the three rounds of the competition will be carried out on Monday 21 April at UEFA headquarters in Nyon.

### New logo for Women's EURO

**The new logo for the Women's European Championships was revealed at the beginning of February.**

The new logo, which was designed by British company, The Works, uses an image of the competition trophy to evoke a sense of dynamism intended to reflect the current vitality of the women's game, which is rapidly expanding in many European countries.

The logo will be used for the 7th edition of the competition, the finals of which will take place between 23 August and 10 September 2009 in the Finnish cities of Helsinki, Tampere, Turku and Lahti.



### Tribute to Artemio Franchi

**25 years ago this August, the UEFA president Artemio Franchi was killed at the wheel of his car on the roads of Tuscany.**

ACF Fiorentina has decided to pay tribute to Artemio Franchi – who started his managerial career in Florence – by organising a gala match on 30 July. UEFA will be represented at this tribute event by its Executive Committee.

### UEFA helps Greece rebuild football infrastructure damaged by fires

**UEFA presented the Hellenic Football Federation (HFF) with a CHF 1 million cheque to help finance the rebuilding of football facilities damaged by the fires in Greece last summer.**

UEFA President Michel Platini handed over the cheque on behalf of European football's governing body to HFF President Vassilis Gagatsis at a ceremony held on 20 February in the Greek capital. A financial donation to the HFF had been proposed at the inaugural meeting of the UEFA Fair Play and Social Responsibility Committee last year. The UEFA Executive Committee approved an ad hoc donation of CHF 1 million at its meeting in Istanbul last September.

Following a series of catastrophic fires which devastated the country last summer and led to dozens of people losing their lives, the relief contribution made to the Hellenic Football Federation will be used for the reconstruction of football infrastructure destroyed in the fire-ravaged regions. UEFA President Michel Platini said: *"It is exactly UEFA's role to help football people when such help is needed."*

*"This shows football's social face, and emphasises the fact that UEFA is close to its national associations,"* Mr Gagatsis commented.

### FC Barcelona to host II EFPA Congress in April

Under the theme Still Playing, the II EFPA Congress (Sports Group of European Former Football Players Associations) will be held on 11 and 12 April at FC Barcelona's premises. The congress will be organised in the city where it is based with the aim of bringing a great number of former players together to discuss the role of the former professional footballer in today's wide football spectrum.

After the successful first congress in March 2007, which gathered representatives from over 30 former player associations from across Europe, the EFPA president, Ramon Alfonseda, considers this second congress as a key event for further developing the EFPA and publicising its activities among clubs, football associations and former footballers



David Cuellar

Arrigo Sacchi, Toño de la Cruz and Víctor Muñoz at the EFPA congress last year.

throughout Europe. The first EFPA congress was attended by prominent players as well as European-level coaches such as Arrigo Sacchi, Pep Guardiola, Víctor Muñoz, Paulo Sousa and Enzo Scifo, who took part in round tables to discuss the situation of former footballers in Europe.

This year's event will be officially inaugurated by FC Barcelona President Joan Laporta, Spanish Secretary for Sport Jaime Lissavetzky and FIFPro Spain President Gerardo González. Coaches Javier Clemente and Terry Venables are expected to participate in a round table. Other well-known names on the guest list include Dariusz Dziekanowski, Emilio Butragueño and Vicente Miera.

The main objective for this year is to double the number of former player associations attending the congress so as to strengthen the EFPA's representation in Europe and develop new programmes in the fields of social integration and promoting the values of football.



Dishes from all over Europe at the Sunday brunch.



Posters generate publicity for the campaign.



# Liechtenstein Football Association

## Greater respect for others

THE LIECHTENSTEIN FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION HAS STARTED A CAMPAIGN  
FOR GREATER TOLERANCE AND RESPECT TOWARDS OTHERS, WITH THE SUPPORT  
OF BOTH UEFA AND THE LIECHTENSTEIN GOVERNMENT.

Football teaches us some good lessons for life. Within a team, everyone is equal, regardless of religion, skin colour, wealth, talent or status. What's more, refereeing decisions must be accepted and both respect and tolerance must be shown towards the opposition.

### No place for violence and racism

Such qualities are also desirable in our everyday lives, but unfortunately they are not always evident on or off the pitch. The Liechtenstein Football Association wants to highlight this deplorable state of affairs with its campaign "all dif-

ferent – all the same". The aim is to leave no place for violence and racism in our lives.

### A creative advertising campaign

The stand-alone image for the campaign, which depicts the same ball with different players from different cultural backgrounds, symbolises that everyone is fundamentally equal; everyone deserves to be treated with decency and dignity.



Photos: LFV

Adverts have been placed in the Liechtenstein media and on billboards across the country.

### A special youth tournament

72 under-10s from a total of 12 nationalities played in a tournament based around the "all different – all the same" principle. Teams were put together at random (so that everyone played with people that they had not known previously) and in order to score, the ball had to hit a bench which was positioned long-ways to form a goal. The teams were all named after teams which will be competing in EURO 2008. The Netherlands team took the title from Liechtenstein who took part in the tournament "non-competitively".

### Brunch with foreign clubs

The tournament ended with a Sunday brunch. Many of the foreign clubs provided traditional food and drink from their countries for the event as well as music and dance displays, which were enjoyed by the 500 guests.

### Widespread media coverage

The campaign was highly successful. It received widespread coverage in the media and sparked a lively debate. It can now only be hoped, that it has succeeded in changing people's behaviour and way of thinking even just a little, and that it has promoted tolerance and respect in a wider context, both within and outside of football. The Liechtenstein Football Association campaign was generously supported by both UEFA and the Liechtenstein government. The association therefore wishes to sincerely thank UEFA President Michel Platini and the Liechtenstein Minister for Health, Martin Meyer.

Reinhard Walser

## ARMENIA



### Grassroots diploma

Every three years the SGS auditing service certifies associations' licensing offices in accordance with international standard qualities.

The licensing office of the Football Federation of Armenia (FFA) underwent its first certification process on 29 November 2004 and was granted a QUALICERT certificate as a result. Successful spot checks in 2005 and 2006 left the FFA licensing office optimistic about the outcome of the 2007 audit, for which revised, complex conditions had to be met.

The FFA is pleased to report that on 13 December the SGS certification committee decided to renew its QUALICERT certificate for another three years.

The certificate was sent to the FFA on 7 February.

In other news, the FFA is an active participant in all events connected with UEFA's grassroots football programme, which



Marina Tashchyan holds up her UEFA grassroots football diploma.

aims to develop football for the masses in all UEFA member countries.

In 2007, the FFA received a diploma from UEFA in recognition and appreciation of its work in the grassroots field (Most Valuable Grassroots Football Event of 2007).

On 20 February, the diploma was presented to the head of the grassroots department, Marina Tashchyan, who coordinates the Open Fun Football Schools (OFFS).

Tigran Israelyan

training session with head coach Josef Hicklersberger, or equipment vouchers. The enthusiasm of the UEFA president also demonstrates that the success of the SUPERKLUB campaign was not confined to within Austrian borders. *"Congratulations! The SUPERKLUB campaign is precisely what UEFA was looking for from a EURO 2008 host country. It takes the European Championship to even the smallest clubs,"* said Michel Platini.

Claudia Pekar

## BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA



### Support for new football centre development

The Football Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina welcomed UEFA representatives Andreas Kuhn, head of assistance programmes, and Thierry Favre, stadiums and security coordinator. The UEFA delegation visited the city of Zenica and were hosted by Husejn Smajlovic, chairman of the Zenica municipality, Iljo Dominkovic, president of the federation, Sulejman Colakovic and Bogdan Ceko, both vice-presidents, Munib Usanovic, the secretary general, and Veliid Imamovic, international affairs secretary.

The purpose of the visit was to watch a video recording of the first phase of development in the federation's football centre project, have a tour around the area where the centre will be built, and visit all the sports facilities that have already been built in Zenica.

The new football centre will be built on the Crkvica plain in Zenica, on a 30,000 m<sup>2</sup> plot of land. According to Sulejman Colakovic, first vice-president of the football federation, the national teams' accommodation expenses during preparations will be greatly reduced once the centre is built.

*"By visiting the city of Zenica, we wanted to support the best interests of football. UEFA finds that there is no better way to help the development of football than by building centres like this one, which is one of the most interesting projects we have been presented so far. This is the*



Visiting the site of the future centre.

## AUSTRIA



The youngest members of SV Spittal are not the only ones to enjoy their success.

### The search is over for Austria's SUPERKLUB

On 17 February – exactly 111 days before EURO 2008 kicks off – arguably the most successful national association campaign to promote the tournament drew to a close.

The Austrian FA launched its SUPERKLUB campaign in December 2006. The aim was to trigger 'EURO fever' in even the smallest clubs and thus spread enthusiasm right across the country. All Austrian clubs were given the chance to collect bonus points through specific EURO activities in a huge range of categories. Fourteen months later around 18,000 entries had been received, with over 30,000 pictures from all over the

world, plus poems, songs, drawing contests, EURO 2008 club parties, home-made films and much, much more. And it was not just creativity that helped the SUPERKLUBS to rack up the points – bonus points were also awarded for anti-racism campaigns, trips to watch the national side, payments made into the Austrian FA's Charity08 account, new players registering with the club, and training courses completed by various types of club official. The clubs worked flat out to accumulate points because they all wanted to get their hands on the main prize: the chance to play against their national team!

The result was not immediately clear however, because in the final stages the top teams – St. Peter am Hart (Upper Austria), SV Walchsee (Tirol), FC Mönichkirchen (Lower Austria) and SV Spittal an der Drau (Kärnten) – all flooded the Austrian FA with entries. Eventually, SV Spittal an der Drau (Kärnten) was declared the overall winner. The president of the Austrian FA, Friedrich Stickler, said: *"The SUPERKLUB campaign demonstrated that we have many SUPERKLUBS in Austria. In the end, however, one of these clubs managed to collect more points than the rest and is therefore the SUPERKLUB."*

A match against the national team is clearly a very special prize, but the other SUPER prizes (for places 2-10) are impressive too: runners-up received a trip for 100 club members to the Austria international match of their choice (including transport and catering), a poster of the club with the Austrian national team, a

F. Kravac

place where young people will be able to learn to play football," said Andreas Kuhn.

"I am extremely satisfied with the co-operation and dynamics of the current work. We expect to have the first phase of building, which will start in couple of months, finalised by the end of the year. The city of Zenica and the football federation will also, in the next phase, include experts from different fields. The future usage of the centre is highly important. We are sure that Zenica, together with the national federation, will manage to realise this project, which is important not only for football but for all sport in Bosnia-Herzegovina," Iljo Dominkovic, president of the football federation, said.

Fuad Kravac

## CYPRUS



### Increased interest in the game

The progress and development of grassroots football is the Cyprus Football Association's top priority and it is with great pleasure that we note a huge increase in interest in the game from many young kids in our country. Over the last few months, the Cyprus FA has completed another five mini-pitches, from a total of 20 all over the island, as a result of co-operation with the UEFA HatTrick programme.

Moreover, the association's coaching school organised its first-ever UEFA C licence course for youth development, which ran from 28 January to 1 February. Jim Fleetling, director of football development in the Scottish Football Association and member of the UEFA Grassroots Panel, was hosted by the Cyprus FA as an official inspector of the above course.

In cooperation with the Cypriot Coaches Union, the Cyprus FA coaching school also organised a coaching seminar on modern football tactics in Nicosia. This



Delivering sports equipment for the state central prison team.

seminar was particularly interesting and appealing to coaches since the main speaker was UEFA Technical Director, Andy Roxburgh.

From 3 to 7 February, Cyprus hosted one of UEFA's major refereeing events. The UEFA referees' course was successfully organised and international referees are now even better educated on how to apply the regulations in the correct way.

Finally, to demonstrate the emphasis he places on the social side of football, association president, Costakis Koutso-kounnis, visited the state central prison, where he offered sports equipment (footballs, tracksuits, football shirts, etc.) to the prisoners' football team. They play various friendly matches throughout the year.

Kyriacos Giorgallis

## DENMARK



### First official futsal championships in Denmark

It was history in the making as the first official Danish futsal championships were held in Kalundborg on 15/16 of February. Albertslund IF's men and Fortuna Hjørring's women hold the titles of first-ever Danish champions.

In both the women's and men's finals, six teams had qualified through the preliminaries and went on to compete for the title. The tournament itself was very exciting, with great futsal, a nice atmosphere and some very close matches.

Suburban Copenhagen club Albertslund IF met DMI in the men's final. DMI has got something of a cult status due to the fact that the village they are from has no more than 300 inhabitants. Despite this fact they were greatly supported throughout the tournament, including at the final.

The match itself was very exciting and dramatic. At the final whistle the teams were tied at 3-3 and the game went into extra time. Here Albertslund IF took the lead with an absolute corker: most valuable player of the tournament, Dennis Jacobsen, acted on instinct as he rose from the ground to bicycle kick the ball into the net from ten metres. Everybody thought the game was sealed but, with just eight seconds to go, DMI made the 4-4 equaliser, taking the game to penalties. The penalty shoot-out went Albertslund IF's way, with their keeper saving all three kicks and becoming the hero of the day.

The women's final was won by Fortuna Hjørring. In a match that looked very tight to start with, Fortuna Hjørring closed down in the second half to take home a 6-2 victory, thereby becoming the first national futsal champions.

Danish international Janne Madsen was delighted after the title win: "We are

all very pleased with ourselves. Becoming Danish champions is a wonderful feeling and being the first ones only makes it better."

Players and fans all enjoyed the tournament and the technical style of play. Unsurprisingly, it was a very proud chairman of the Danish FA futsal committee, Hans Henning Jacobsen, who concluded: "It's a historic event. We have found the first Danish champions and it is very nice to see the way the clubs, players and spectators have welcomed the game of futsal."

Marc Thevis



DBU

Fortuna Hjørring, winners of the women's futsal trophy.

## ENGLAND



### FA referees lead the way in Ecuador

The Football Association despatched two of its top referee instructors, Ray Olivier and Keith Hill, to Ecuador to deliver a four-day workshop targeting elite match officials in January.

It is the fourth time in five years that The FA has been invited to Ecuador as part of the cooperation agreement signed with CONMEBOL, the South American football confederation, in 2003.

The Ecuadorian Football Federation (FEF) has placed a firm focus on improving the standard of officiating and is reaping the benefits of expert help from The FA's Referees Department.

Following the four-day workshop, and at the special request of the FEF, Ray Olivier stayed on for an additional three weeks to work and deliver training sessions with the country's referee match inspectors.

He visited Ecuador's first division clubs to improve awareness of their league's referee training programmes with a view to changing players' behaviour towards match officials.

"It was our most successful programme so far, with all those who attended the workshop agreeing that The FA visit has further enhanced the profile of referees and the difficult nature of their jobs," said Olivier.

"The clubs fully support our endeavours and are delighted that the FEF is util-



Ray Olivier (3rd from the left)  
and the Ecuadorian referees.

ising the knowledge and experience of The FA in the area of refereeing.

"Since The FA started collaborating with FEF, it now only appoints FEF officials for all league games. The FEF has always had a policy that they would bring in 'foreign referees' to do the really important games and I am really pleased to hear that now this is no longer the case.

"This is the experience these referees need, particularly if they wish to progress to the FIFA list. More noticeable are the many positive comments about the improved performances of referees over the past few years by many players and club officials.

"Hopefully, this effort to speak to all the clubs' officials and players will bring all parties much closer together with mutual respect for each other's positions."

Nada Grkinic

## FAROE ISLANDS



### Bobble-hat goalie assists

Faroese national coach, Jógvan Martin Olsen, has got a new assistant on the bench. Jens Martin Knudsen has replaced John Petersen as assistant coach for the Faroe Islands national team.

John Petersen, currently manager of Skala IF in the top Faroese division, struggled to combine his managerial duties with the job as national assistant. The new assistant, Jens Martin Knudsen, is 40 years old and has played 65 national matches for the Faroe Islands, right up until 2006.

Knudsen became famous throughout footballing Europe when, in his trademark bobble hat, he saved a goal in the memorable match against Austria on 12 September 1990 – the Faroe Islands' first international since gaining UEFA membership. The Faroe Islands won 1-0.

Since Knudsen stopped playing at international level, he has been attached to the national team as goalkeeping coach. Now he also has the role of assistant coach.

As luck would have it, the Faroe Islands have ended up in the same group as Austria for the upcoming World Cup qualifiers. For Knudsen it will be rather special



New assistant coach,  
Jens Martin Knudsen.

to play Austria again, at home on 11 October this year and in Austria on 5 September 2009. For the Austrian fans, and especially the Austrian coach, Josef Hicklersberger, it will also be very special, as Hicklersberger also coached Austria in 1990.

Jens Martin Knudsen is not forgotten in Austria, as demonstrated by the huge amount of fan letters which still arrive in the Faroe Islands from the Alpine nation.

Jens Martin Knudsen was active as goalkeeper for his club, NSÍ Runavík, until last autumn, retiring after NSÍ won its first-ever national championship.

Jens Martin Knudsen has a UEFA A coaching licence. Besides being the national goalkeeping coach, he has been assistant manager at NSÍ Runavík.

Ingi Samuelsen

## GERMANY



### Under-21 international on dfb.de

The German Football Association (DFB) celebrated an online first in February: the first-ever German international to be broadcast live through dfb.de. Fans all over the world were able to go online and watch the trial run, showing Germany's Under-21s beat the Belgian Olympic selection 2-1 on 5 February in the Oberwerth stadium in Koblenz.

"We are very pleased to have been able to offer our fans this service for the first time, in collaboration with UEFA. The match was followed by internet users on all five continents. We consider this result ➤

## KAZAKHSTAN



### Start of a new season

The 2008 football season in Kazakhstan was launched on 2 March, with reigning league champions Aktobe facing cup holders Tobol in the Kazakhstan Super Cup at the Almaty central stadium. The match marked the reintroduction of the Super Cup after 14 years and so it was a unique "start to the season". Aktobe won the first trophy of the season in front of 12,000 spectators, winning the match 2-0.

The top division championship, which starting this year will be known as the premier league, began on 8 March. 16 clubs will compete in this elite division and at the end of the season the bottom four will be relegated to the first division. Thus, the premier league will be reduced to 14 clubs for the 2009 season.

The first division championship has undergone some structural changes this year. In previous years, the competition has been split into two leagues on the basis of geographical location, but this idea has now been abandoned. First-division matches will start at the beginning of May with 14 clubs involved.

On 29 February, members of the Football Federation of Kazakhstan Executive Committee, club managers and coaches, heads of the regional federations and referees attended a meeting in Almaty, during which the federation president, Adilbek Dzhaksybekov, called on everyone to respect the Fair Play principle, reminding them that last season Ekibastuzets had been excluded from the Super League for violating this very principle.

The meeting was also shown the new emblem for the Football Federation of Kazakhstan which had been approved by the Executive Committee on 14 February.

Alexandr Keplin



Aktobe after their victory in the Kazakhstan Super Cup.

→ *to be a great success," said the DFB's marketing director, Denni Strich.*

According to an analysis by UEFA Media Technologies, over 5,000 internet users watched the match via [dfb.de](http://dfb.de) and [uefa.com](http://uefa.com) in over 40 European countries. Over 31% of viewers were in Germany and about 7% watched in Belgium. Even in far-off countries such as Burkina Faso, Guatemala and Kazakhstan, internet users tuned into the Under-21 tie live at [dfb.de](http://dfb.de).

*Maximilian Geis*

## LATVIA



### Enlarged LMT Virsliga season kicks off

On 5 April, the Latvian Football Federation (LFF) will launch its revamped LMT Virsliga, the highest Latvian football division, with ten clubs (up from eight) and a new 6/4 competition system according to which the first two rounds will involve all ten clubs, but the last two will be contested separately by the top six clubs in the table and the bottom four. The club that finishes last will be relegated to the



The Latvian Football Association can count on reliable commercial partners.

second division championship, and the second-to-bottom club will play a two-legged tie against the runners-up in the second division to decide who gets their place in the following season's top flight. The Virsliga partners – mobile operator Latvijas Mobilais Telefons (LMT), Nordea Bank, adidas and WESS Motors – have not changed.

In addition, the Latvian cup competition will kick off in the regions and all the other championships will be under way by 1 May, when the second division championship, known as the first league, begins.

In other news, four issues of a new magazine, simply entitled "Football", will hit Latvian shelves this year. The Latvian Football Federation signed a deal with media company Mediju Nams over the 60-page magazine, which will be published once a quarter in 2008. The first issue will be available in April.

Latvia's national team head coach, Aleksandrs Starkovs, has challenged the entire football community to participate in the 5km Nordea Riga mini-marathon on 18 May to support running as the basis for almost all team sports.

And finally, the annual LFF member conference was held in the run-up to the start of the season, with UEFA Executive Committee member Per Ravn Omdal in attendance.

*Martins Hartmanis*

## LITHUANIA



### Football museum in Kaunas

The Lithuanian Football Federation (LFF) is setting up an authentic football museum in the newly established football academy in Kaunas. The official museum will be the first of its kind in Lithuanian football history. Even though the museum is still in its infancy, something new appears every day.

The idea for a football museum in the academy was put forward by the federation's general secretary, Julius Kvedaras:

*"Some of Lithuania's football clubs have their own history corners at the stadiums. That is very good. But we didn't have a museum dedicated to Lithuanian football history as a whole. We thought that was a shame, so decided to compile*

*a separate, big football museum that anybody who is interested in Lithuanian football could visit."*

Unfortunately it is not very easy to select exhibits and visual material, particularly from Lithuania's pre-war days. There are, however, several people, such as Gediminas Kalinauskas, Stasys Paberis and Romualdas Grusas, who have been gathering together facts about Lithuanian football history all their lives. In the same museum there will be an area dedicated to Jewish football history in Lithuania.

The federation hopes that this museum will be useful to all Lithuanians – young football players at the academy, former players, students, visitors to the academy and other guests. It also hopes that it will continue to develop successfully for years to come.

*Vaiva Zizaitė*



The trophy room at the new museum of Lithuanian football.

## MALTA



### Looking ahead

The Malta FA's commitment to enhancing football infrastructure on the island, including plans for a project to upgrade its member clubs' facilities, has been gaining momentum.

More than 30 clubs have applied to benefit from this UEFA-funded project, intended to assist the clubs. The installation of artificial lighting at the Hibernians



The Victor Tedesco stadium.

Ground and Victor Tedesco Stadium, where top league matches are played, and the provision of other football amenities around the country are currently among the association's top priorities.

Meanwhile, clubs are being assisted by the government authorities in building or improving their own training grounds.

The project is worth millions of euros and the Malta FA is confident that any expenses over and above the UEFA allotment will be covered by local sources.

The state-of-the-art physiotherapy centre, which is equipped to the latest technological standards, is further evidence that the Maltese association is looking ahead and establishing the best-possible set-up, geared towards the physical well-being of the footballers.

The Malta FA also has plans for a modern centre where a wide range of medical tests for the players can be carried out. In fact, the association is already in discussions with the Malta Sports Council about setting up this medical centre.

All this attests to a general awareness that the county's football resources should be exploited for the benefit of the game.

*Alex Vella*



The mini-pitch installed at the technical university of Moldova.

## MOLDOVA



### A fruitful year for football

As per tradition, a round-up of the year's sporting achievements was made at the end of last year.

This time, football played a key role in the sports life of our country and this was reflected in the number of awards bestowed on the 'king of sports': the Moldovan sportswriters' association nominated the national football team as the sports team of 2007, thus outstripping the national rugby team. The national football team's head coach, Igor Dobrovolskiy, was designated as the best sports technician, and the best footballer, Alexandru Epureanu (FC Moscow, Russia), found a place in the top ten of the best Moldovan sportsmen.

The national Olympic committee acknowledged the remarkable results of the projects implemented by the FA of Moldova, which secured it top position, ahead of the other 65 sports associations in Moldova.

Another example illustrating the FA of Moldova's achievements is the 35th Sergiu Radatanu Cup, staged on the artificial mini-pitch belonging to the technical university of Moldova. The mini-pitch was inaugurated on 17 November, as a part of the "All Together" assistance programme being implemented under the aegis of the FA of Moldova.

*Victor Daghi*

## MONTENEGRO



### First course for the coaches

The Football Association of Montenegro is proud to announce that the first Montenegro FA coaching school course got underway on 15 February this year. The institution has been established with the aim of training coaches in accordance with the UEFA convention. The first course is for candidates working towards the B

coaching licence, which will be obligatory for all football coaches wishing to work in Montenegro after 2009.

The first half of the course lasted six days (from 15 to 21 February) during which time the candidates received 60 hours of teaching. The practical sessions took place at FK Arsenal Tivat's stadium. A panel discussion was organised after each of the evening lectures to give the candidates the chance to share their experiences and thoughts with the lecturers, go over the topics covered and ask the lecturers questions.

The second half of the course has been organised for 15 to 21 May 2008 at the same venues.

The examination date will be scheduled for a month later. An evaluation will be done by the UEFA Jira Panel.

*Football Coaching School*



Coaching course in Tivat.

## NETHERLANDS



### World Cup plans presented to UEFA president

Delegations from the football associations of Belgium and the Netherlands met with UEFA President Michel Platini on 19 March at UEFA headquarters in Nyon, in order to present their plans to co-host the FIFA World Cup in 2018. President Francois De Keersmaecker, General Secretary Jean-Marie Philips and Alain Courtois (director of the bid) attended the lunch meeting on behalf of the Belgian FA (KBVB). President Jeroen Sprengers and General Secretary Harry Been represented the Dutch FA (KNVB).

The Dutch cities of Alkmaar, Enschede and Heerenveen have expressed their willingness to adapt their infrastructure and stadiums such that they meet the requirements to host FIFA World Cup matches in 2018. In recent months, Amsterdam, Eindhoven and Rotterdam, along with the stadium owners and professional clubs in the respective cities, have already announced their readiness to host the world's largest football event in ten

years' time. Amsterdam and Rotterdam have serious plans to build new stadiums with a minimum capacity of 70,000 for the event. In the meantime, the city of Arnhem has announced that an extension of its stadium to a capacity of 40,000 is not feasible. The KNVB will further discuss the possible candidature of the cities of Breda, Groningen, Kerkrade and Utrecht.

At the end of last year, the football associations of Belgium and the Netherlands visited FIFA House in Zurich in order to meet with FIFA President Joseph S. Blatter and express their wish to be considered as co-hosts for the FIFA World Cup in 2018. China, England, Mexico and Russia are among the other candidates hoping to host the 2018 event.

*Rob de Leede*

## NORTHERN IRELAND



### Acknowledgement of social initiatives

The Irish Football Association (IFA) has been awarded a model of excellence by the Royal National Institute of Blind People (Northern Ireland). The award recognises the outstanding work that the IFA has undertaken in conjunction with RNIB NI to make football in Northern Ireland more accessible to blind and partially-sighted people. The IFA has set up visually impaired football teams in Belfast and Londonderry with regular training sessions and matches. The teams have been very successful competitively with some silverware already to their name.

Shane Logan, the director of RNIB NI, said: *"In awarding the model of excellence to the IFA, we set a level of good practice that should be a minimum standard in all aspects of recreational and social life. In particular we would encourage other sports governing bodies in the province to follow the IFA's lead and proactively engage with people with sight loss."*

The Soccer Sight initiative put in place at Windsor Park has also allowed many



The IFA receives its award from the Royal National Institute of Blind People.

→ blind and partially-sighted people to follow matches through audio description. This has enabled spectators with sight loss to enjoy the internationals and domestic matches in a whole new way. Mr Logan added: *"The IFA has set a precedent, which will ensure a bright future for blind and partially sighted people who want to take part in football either as a player or spectator. The IFA should be congratulated along with their dedicated coaches and staff on their huge efforts in breaking down some of the barriers faced by blind and partially sighted people in accessing sports."*

Furthermore, the IFA's chief executive, Howard Wells, has taken the lead tackling the issue of homophobia. All IFA staff have undertaken innovative anti-homophobia training delivered by a facilitator from the Rainbow Project at IFA headquarters. Mr Wells said: *"It's time that leaders in sport took seriously their responsibilities to young people with regards to managing diversity. It is unacceptable that the current culture within football does not allow gay, bisexual or lesbian people to come out for fear of abuse.*

*"This training for our staff is part of compulsory good relations training which we have twice a year and it has been designed to challenge the IFA to think about how we can create a safer and more inclusive culture for everyone."*

Sueann Harrison

## REPUBLIC OF IRELAND



### Over 30 mini-pitches rolled out across Ireland

The Football Association of Ireland, in conjunction with local government authorities and the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism, has launched over 30 mini-pitches throughout Ireland.



Technical director of the FAI, Packie Bonner, with members of Sligo Borough Council at the inauguration of a mini-pitch.

Sport in the Republic of Ireland will benefit from the provision of a total of 64 mini-pitches at various local-authority-owned locations throughout the country.

Under the UEFA HatTrick mini-pitch initiative, these artificial pitches are being installed in strategic locations identified by the local authorities to ensure optimum access and usage by their communities.

The facilities provided can also accommodate up to ten other sports, including badminton, basketball and volleyball, which will add further opportunities and variety in sports participation, particularly for children and young people in the neighbourhoods concerned.

These mini-pitches will help the local community use sport, and football in particular, to address real issues such as active citizenship, obesity and social inclusion. So far, mini-pitches have been rolled out at various locations nationwide, including Dublin City, Sligo, Cork, and Westmeath.

Fran Whearty

## SLOVENIA



### Brazil friendlies spark futsal interest

The Slovenian futsal committee has achieved one of its goals. Following the national futsal team's participation in a friendly tournament in Brazil last year, the committee managed to get Brazil, one of the best futsal teams in the world, to play three friendly matches in Slovenia – two against Slovenia's A side and one against its futsal Under-21s. The A-side matches got a massive response from the media as well as the public. The coverage on Slovenian national TV was a first, and a huge step towards the promotion and marketing of futsal.

With the exception of the Under-21 game, the matches were genuinely competitive, which alone made an impression on the Slovenian public. The first two matches were played in arenas that hold 3,000 and 2,000 spectators. Both were packed out and, more importantly, people left with a positive impression about the atmosphere, the team and the event as a whole. Granted, Brazil won all three matches, but the Slovenia A side managed to put the ball past the Brazilian keeper on four occasions in two matches, which is an achievement in itself. Brazil play numerous friendlies, but they very rarely concede goals.

The Slovenian team used these matches as preparation for the Futsal World Cup qualifiers, which took place at



Drago Wernig - TAKA  
The arrival of the Brazilian team gave a fresh boost to Slovenian futsal.

the end of February. Slovenia faced Albania, Greece and Malta.

It is fair to say that the Brazilian visit was a big hit in Slovenia and the matches have raised futsal awareness, which was the number one goal.

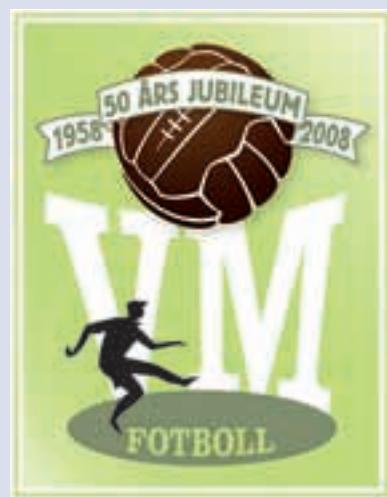
Matjaz Krajnik

## SWEDEN



### 50 years since Sweden's World Cup

2008 marks the golden anniversary of the 1958 FIFA World Cup hosted by Sweden. The tournament was a huge success at the time, and is fondly remembered still. It was also a breakthrough in terms of television as a whole nine games were broadcasted live – in exchange for the hefty sum of almost EUR 1 million (today's value).



In terms of the football, France claimed third place with the help of Just Fontaine's incredible 13 goals. Sweden were runners-up after losing a spectacular final at Råsunda, where a 17 year old called Pelé scored twice to secure Brazil their first-ever



FAW

World Cup title. The champions received a standing ovation from the home crowd who were really too impressed to feel any disappointment about their loss.

To mark this special year, Sweden was delighted to accept an invitation from Brazil to play a friendly at the Emirates Stadium in London on 26 March.

The Swedish FA itself will celebrate the anniversary by co-staging a special exhibition at the Museum of Sport in Stockholm, as well as organising a commemorative game against France, to be played in Gothenburg on 20 August.

*Andreas Nilsson*

## WALES



### Investment in coach education

The Football Association of Wales (FAW) is to invest GBP 400,000 into the coach education system in Wales over the next four years. Enhanced club licensing criteria mean that Welsh premier league managers will require a pro licence in future, a qualification that none currently hold. With financial assistance from the national association, there will be seven

## UKRAINE



### Focus on women's football

Ukraine has set itself the goal of making rapid progress in women's football so that within the next few years they will be in a position to compete with leading countries such as Germany, Sweden, France, Denmark and Italy.

At present, Ukraine does not have enough experience in the development of women's football. This heavy burden rests mainly on the Football Federation of Ukraine (FFU), which never gets much support from the government. It is a pity, but women's football still lacks the attention of fans, the media and sponsors.

Nevertheless, more and more women get involved in the game in Ukraine every year. The FFU's Women's Football Committee goes to great lengths to promote the national championship and cup and many regional senior and youth tournaments are held. The number of

women's football units in special sports schools for children and young people is constantly increasing and their presence expanding.

Ukraine's first national Olympic reserve football school is based in Chernigiv and is attended by more than 300 girls. Four regional women's football development centres – in Kiev, Donetsk, Ivano-Frankivsk and Crimea – will be up and running this year. Women's football in Ukraine also benefits from one of the FA's most important, far-reaching social initiatives – football lessons at secondary school.

Something of a boom in women's football in Ukraine seems to have had a positive effect on the national teams' results. Having won four games in a row, the A side made the perfect start to its 2009 European Women's Championship qualifying campaign and Ukraine's Under-19 selection has made it into the second qualifying round of the European Women's Under-19 Championship. Here in Ukraine people believe that this is just the start of great success to come.

*Igor Linnyk*



The development of women's football is one of the aims of the Ukrainian federation.

Gwennan Harries, one of the stars of women's football in Wales.

league managers starting the course in March and without fear of the financial burden the managers' enthusiasm has been evident. Former Wales international and current Manchester United star Ryan Giggs will attend the A licence course in the summer.

The Wales Under-21s are proving to be one of the most successful sides in association history. After an outstanding 4-2 win over France earlier in the European Under-21 Championship group stages, and a double triumph over Malta, they are currently preparing to visit Bosnia-Herzegovina. Brian Flynn's side have their sights set on becoming the first Wales side to qualify for a finals tournament since Mark Hughes played for the Wales youth side in Germany in 1981. There are currently eight Under-21s in the senior A side, including Tottenham Hotspur stars Gareth Bale and Chris Gunter.

The women's international team are preparing for two more European championship matches, away to Switzerland and Germany, with a training camp in north Wales in May. The squad will assemble at Park Hall, home of the Welsh champions, The New Saints, which boasts a FIFA-approved artificial pitch in a new stadium complex. This will provide the perfect base camp for stars of the women's game such as Gwennan Harries of Bristol Academy.

In the FAW Premier Cup final, Llanelli AFC will play Newport County after the Principality Welsh Premier League side beat Carmarthen Town 1-0 in the semi-final at Stebonheath. Former Wales Under-21 striker Mark Pritchard scored the only goal of the game for the Reds. The other semi-final, played at Ninian Park, saw championship side Cardiff City knocked out by fellow exiles Newport County, who play in the English non-league. Former Cardiff City favourite, Lee Jarman, scored the decisive penalty for Newport after a 1-1 draw after 120 minutes. The winners of the final will receive GBP 100,000 in prize money.

*Andrew Howard*



# Committee week in Nyon



Photos: UEFA piwoods.ch

# Communications Birthdays – Calendar

## Birthdays

Carlo De Gaudio (Italy), of the Circle of former UEFA committee members, celebrates his 80th birthday on 1 April. Another member of the Circle of former UEFA committee members, Jean Appietto (France), turns 75 on the 20 April. Referee observer, William Attley (Republic of Ireland), blows out 70 candles on 5 April. Rodger Gifford (Wales), referee observer, celebrates his 60th birthday on 12 April, as does Jacques Lambert (France), member of the National Team Competitions Committee, on 24 April. Technical instructor, Pavol Peracek (Slovakia), turns 50 on 7 April. He will be joined at the same milestone on 12 April by François De Keersmaecker (Belgium), vice-president of the Legal Committee, on 19 April by Michael Kuchenbecker (Germany), security officer, and on 20 April by Jean-Luc Veuthey (Switzerland), member of the Anti-Doping Panel.

UEFA also wishes many happy returns to:

- Lale Orta (Turkey, 1.4)
- Jan Peeters (Belgium, 2.4)
- Kaj Østergaard (Denmark, 3.4)
- Dennis Cruise (Republic of Ireland, 3.4)
- Yoav Strauss (Israel, 3.4)
- Christian Kofoed (Denmark, 4.4)
- Jan Ekstrand (Sweden, 5.4)
- Lennart Wangel (Finland, 5.4)
- Momir Djurdjevac (Montenegro, 5.4)
- Aleksandra Nikolovska (F.Y.R. Macedonia, 5.4)
- Isak Mikladal (Faroe Islands, 7.4)
- Jacques Devismes (France, 8.4)
- James Fleetting (Scotland, 8.4)
- Ladislav Svoboda (Czech Republic, 9.4)
- Zoran Petrovic (Serbia, 10.4)
- Panagiotis Tsarouchas (Greece, 10.4)
- Vlastibor Minarovjech jr (Slovakia, 10.4)
- Umberto Gandini (Italy, 11.4)
- Eduard Dervishaj (Spain, 11.4)
- Paolo Piani (Italy, 13.4)
- Anja van Ginhoven (Netherlands, 14.4)
- Olí Holm (Faroe Islands, 15.4)
- Georgios Bikas (Greece, 15.4)
- Manuel Enrique Mejuto Gonzalez (Spain, 16.4)
- Charles Schaack (Luxemburg, 17.4)
- Ernst Ravnaas (Norway, 18.4)
- Jean-Louis Valentin (France, 19.4)
- George Frank (Israel, 20.4)
- Ronnie Lundqvist (Sweden, 20.4)
- Alexandru Burlac (Moldova, 21.4)
- Vitor Manuel Melo Pereira (Portugal, 21.4)
- Patrick Fenech (Malta, 22.4)
- Jan Damgaard (Denmark, 22.4)
- Morgan Norman (Sweden, 22.4)
- Martin Bodenham (England, 23.4)
- Roland Tis (Belgium, 23.4)
- Gheorghe Constantin (Romania, 23.4)
- Mehmet S. Binnet (Turkey, 23.4)
- Nebojsa Ivkovic (Serbia, 24.4)

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européennes de football**

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- Sandor Piller (Hungary, 24.4)
- Roy Millar (Northern Ireland, 25.4)
- Ole Myhrvold (Norway, 25.4)
- Daniel Ryser (Switzerland, 25.4)
- Philippe Verbiest (Belgium, 25.4)
- Philip Gartside (England, 27.4)
- Jan Carlsen (Denmark, 27.4)
- Henk van de Wetering (Netherlands, 27.4)
- Zdzislaw Krecina (Poland, 28.4)
- Guðmundur Ingi Jonsson (Iceland, 29.4)
- Emanuel Macedo de Medeiros (Portugal, 30.4)

## Upcoming events

### Meetings

#### 3.4.2008, Antalya

Draw for the European Under-17 Championship final round

#### 7.4.2008, Cascais

Jira Panel

#### 7-11.4.2008, Cascais

UEFA coach educator course

#### 15.4.2008, Nyon

Anti-Doping Panel

#### 21.4.2008, Nyon

Draw for the UEFA Intertoto Cup Medical Committee

#### 22.4.2008, Nyon

Stadium and Security Committee

#### 23.4.2008, Nyon

Referees Committee

Legal Committee

#### 24.4.2008, Nyon

National Team Competitions Committee

HatTrick Committee

#### 25.4.2008, Nyon

National Associations Committee

Development and Technical Assistance Committee

### Competitions

#### 1-2.4.2008

UEFA Champions League: quarter-finals (first legs)

#### 3.4.2008

UEFA Cup: quarter-finals (first legs)

#### 8-9.4.2008

UEFA Champions League: quarter-finals (return legs)

#### 10.4.2008

UEFA Cup: quarter-finals (return legs)

#### 22/23.4.2008

UEFA Champions League: semi-finals (first legs)

#### 24.4.2008

UEFA Cup: semi-finals (first legs)

#### 25-27.4.2008, Moscow

Final stage of the UEFA Futsal Cup

#### 29/30.4.2008

UEFA Champions League: semi-finals (return legs)

## Notices

■ On 14 February, the Turkish Football Association elected a new president, Hasan Dogan.

■ Andras Ökrös has been appointed general secretary of the Hungarian Football Federation

## Match agents

UEFA has granted match agent licences to:

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## Obituary

**Torleif Sigurdsson**, who joined the Circle of former UEFA committee members after serving on the Fair Play Committee, the Youth Committee and the Youth and Amateur Football Panel, passed away on 12 February this year at the age of 61. For over 20 years he had presided over the Faroe Islands Football Association and led them into UEFA in 1990.

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