## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>ANTWERP HERE WE COME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>UEFA PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>WELCOME TO BELGIUM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>WELCOME TO ANTWERP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>ROAD TO BELGIUM: THE CONTENDERS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>INTERVIEW: KARIM CHAIBAI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>ONES TO WATCH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>GROUP A: BELGIUM/UKRAINE/ROMANIA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>MATCH SCHEDULE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>RED DEVILS: THE LOWDOWN ON BELGIAN FUTSAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>MADE IN BRAZIL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>GROUP B: RUSSIA/PORTUGAL/NETHERLANDS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>INTERVIEW: TORRAS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>QUALIFYING STATISTICS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>GROUP C: ITALY/azerbaijan/SLOVENIA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>HISTORY: SPAIN’S GOLD STANDARD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>NUMBERS GAME: UEFA FUTSAL EURO RECORDS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>RIDING HIGH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>TRAVEL: ANTWERP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>BEGINNER’S GUIDE TO FUTSAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>RULES OF THE GAME</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Follow the action on UEFA.com and on the @UEFAcom Twitter account.

The tournament’s official website will have all the latest news as well as match reports, reaction and exclusive interviews.
Clockwise from top: the Netherlands celebrate ending their nine-year wait – the longest of any side at this tournament – to return to the finals; the Czech Republic huddle up; Ukraine’s Yevgen Valenko was on target against Hungary in the play-offs; Saad (No11) scored four goals for Italy during qualifying.
UEFA PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

On behalf of UEFA it is my pleasure to welcome you to Antwerp for the eighth UEFA European Futsal Championship final tournament.

Spain are again the team to beat, having won their fourth successive title in Croatia two years ago, though they were pushed to the limit in the final by 1999 champions Russia, who are back to mount another challenge. For the neutral, the tournament in Croatia served as the perfect showcase of just how exciting this sport is, with record crowds captivated by the speed, skill and agility of Europe's top sides.

We can expect more of the same in the 2013 European Capital of Sport, Antwerp, where the two venues will give the championship a unique centralised identity and, no doubt, put on a show to remember. Belgium has a proud tradition in futsal at club and international levels and I expect UEFA Futsal EURO 2014 will help the sport gain even more converts here.

My sincere thanks go to the Royal Belgian Football Association (URBSFA-KBVB) and its president, François De Keersmaecker, for their efforts in organising this event. I would also like to wish the 12 competing teams the best of luck as they enjoy a tournament played in the spirit of fair play and respect.

Michel Platini
UEFA President

MESSAGE DU PRÉSIDENT DE L'UEFA

Au nom de l'UEFA, j'ai le plaisir de vous souhaiter la bienvenue à Anvers à l'occasion du huitième EURO de futsal de l'UEFA.

Une fois encore, l'Espagne sera l'équipe à battre. Elle a en effet remporté son quatrième titre de l'UEFA en Croatie il y a deux ans, à l'issue d'une finale haletante disputée contre le champion de 1999, la Russie, aujourd'hui prête une nouvelle fois à relever le défi. Pour tout spectateur, la Croatie a constitué un cadre idéal pour ce tournoi passionnant, où la vitesse, l'habileté et l'agilité des meilleures équipes européennes ont attiré des foules record.

Anvers, Capitale européenne du sport 2013, nous promet elle aussi un événement riche en action. Les deux salles conféreront au tournoi une identité centralisée unique et offriront sans nul doute un spectacle mémorable. La Belgique dispose d'une longue tradition en matière de futsal interclubs et international, et je suis certain que l'UEFA de futsal de l'UEFA 2014 permettra à cette discipline d'attirer encore plus de supporters.

Je remercie sincèrement l'Union Royale Belge des Sociétés de Football Association (URBSFA) et son Président, François De Keersmaecker, pour les efforts consentis dans l'organisation de cet événement. J'aimerais également souhaiter bonne chance aux 12 équipes en lice, en espérant qu'elles profiteront au maximum de ce tournoi, dans l'esprit du fair-play et du respect mutuel.

Michel Platini
Président de l'UEFA
**WELCOME TO BELGIUM**

Welcome to Antwerp, Europe's 2013 capital of sport and host city for UEFA Futsal EURO 2014. As president of the Belgian FA, I am truly honoured that our association, in cooperation with the city of Antwerp and UEFA, is organising this event. I would like to congratulate all participants on qualifying for this tournament.

It feels like a long time since our country was appointed by UEFA to host the final tournament of a European championship. We all remember UEFA EURO 2000, but that seems decades ago. In 2007, we organised the UEFA European Under-17 Championship final tournament and now, seven years later, we are more than proud that the best of Europe's futsal talent is coming our way.

I truly hope that this big event will help the development of futsal in our country and that more and more people will find their way to league matches and the games of our national team. I'm pretty sure that the players, with their fabulous skills and technique, will do their utmost to set the atmosphere alight at the Lotto Arena and the Sportpaleis.

But I would still like to call upon all 12 nations taking part in this final tournament not only to aim for the title on 8 February but also to promote our sport in the best possible way. For our part, we will work with the city of Antwerp and UEFA, doing everything to make the teams and supporters feel comfortable.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the people involved in organising this major event, especially the hundreds of volunteers helping to make this tournament a great success. Good luck to you all, and may the best team win.

François De Keersmaecker
Royal Belgian Football Association President

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**BIENVENUE EN BELGIQUE**

Bienvenue à Anvers, Capitale européenne du sport 2013 et ville organisatrice de l’EURO de futsal de l’UEFA 2014. En tant que président de l’Union Royale Belge des Sociétés de Football Association, je considère le fait que notre association organise cet événement, en collaboration avec la ville d’Anvers et l’UEFA, comme un véritable honneur. Je tiens à féliciter ici tous les participants pour leur qualification à ce tournoi.


J’espère sincèrement que cet important événement contribuera à développer le futsal dans notre pays et qu’un nombre croissant de spectateurs ira assister aux matches de championnat et aux rencontres de notre équipe nationale. Je suis pratiquement certain que les joueurs, dont l’habileté et la technique sont fabuleuses, feront de leur mieux pour mettre une ambiance de feu dans la Lotto Arena et le Sportpaleis.

Néanmoins, j’aimerais appeler les 12 nations participant à ce tournoi à ne pas seulement viser le titre qui sera remis le 8 février prochain, mais aussi à promouvoir notre sport de leur mieux. De notre côté, nous coopérerons avec la ville d’Anvers et l’UEFA, et déploierons tous les efforts nécessaires pour permettre aux équipes et aux supporters de se sentir à l’aise.

Je sais que cette occasion pour remercier toutes les personnes engagées dans l’organisation de cet événement majeur, en particulier les centaines de bénévoles qui contribuent à faire en sorte que ce tournoi soit un grand succès.

Bonne chance à tous et que la meilleure équipe gagne !

François De Keersmaecker
Président de l’Union Royale Belge des Sociétés de Football Association
Proficiat.
Dankzij u is Antwerpen een echte sportstad.

www.sportingA.be
03 22 11 333
“PRIDE AND AMBITION”

Welcome to Antwerp. We are proud to welcome professional players from 12 countries and thousands of fans from all over Europe to our pocket-sized metropolis.

We firmly believe in the unifying and community-building power of sports. All over Antwerp, you see young – and somewhat less young – people exercising, having fun and making friends while taking part in urban sports in squares and community sports centres. Needless to say, football reigns supreme in squares and community sports centres.

The city board continues to support and facilitate urban sports like futsal because they give young people a sense of pride and ambition. And of course, we hope to see some of these youngsters star in future editions of the UEFA Futsal EURO. Antwerp’s successful bid to host this competition shows our lasting commitment to high-profile sports events, even in the coming years, as the legacy of our status as 2013 European Capital of Sport continues.

Because not everyone can eat, drink and breathe football, we also invite all fans and teams to sample some of the cultural, culinary and other delights our vibrant city has to offer. We are confident that this will not be your last visit to Antwerp. We wish all players a successful tournament, and all fans two weeks of thrilling and exciting games.

Bart De Wever
Mayor of Antwerp

Ludo Van Campenhout
Deputy mayor for sport

“TROTS EN AMBITION”

Welkom in Antwerpen. We zijn trots dat we in onze wereldstad in zakformaat professionele spelers uit 12 landen en duizenden fans uit heel Europa mogen verwelkomen. We geloven vast in de eenmakende en gemeenschapsopbouwende kracht van sport. Over heel Antwerpen zien we jonge – en iets minder jonge – mensen trainen, plezier maken en vrienden maken terwijl ze meedoen aan stadssporten op pleinen en in buurtsportcentra. Dat voetbal van alle buurtsporten de populariteit is en het Antwerpse competitiefutsal een vrij indrukwekkende staat van dienst heeft, hoeft geen betoog.

Het stadscollege blijft stadssporten zoals futsal steunen en bevorderen omdat ze jonge mensen een gevoel van trots en ambitie geven. En het spreekt vanzelf, we hopen enkele van deze jongeren te zien schitteren in toekomstige edities van de UEFA Futsal EURO. De succesvolle kandidatuur van Antwerpen voor het organiseren van dit toernooi toont onze blijvende inzet voor sportevenementen op hoog niveau, ook in de komende jaren, onder de blijvende aanwezigheid van onze historische positie van Europese Sport hoofdstad 2013.

En omdat niet iedereen futsal kan eten, drinken en ademen, nodigen we alle fans en teams ook uit om te proeven van de culturele, culinaire en andere verrukkingen die onze buurtsport selectie biedt. We zijn ervan overtuigd dat dit niet uw laatste bezoek aan Antwerpen wordt. We wensen alle spelers een succesvol toernooi toe, en alle fans twee weken van spannende en opwindende wedstrijden.

Bart De Wever
Burgemeester van Antwerpen

Ludo Van Campenhout
Plaatsvervangend burgemeester
Schepen van sport

«FIERTÉ ET AMBITION»

Bienvenue à Anvers ! Nous sommes fiers d’accueillir des footballeurs professionnels de douze pays et des milliers de supporters en provenance de l’Europe entière dans notre petite métropole.

Nous croyons fermement au pouvoir d’unification et de rassemblement communautaire du sport. Dans toute la ville d’Anvers, vous pouvez observer des personnes – jeunes et moins jeunes – s’entraîner, s’amuser et faire de nouvelles connaissances en pratiquant des sports urbains dans les parcs et les centres communautaires. Il est inutile de dire que le football régne en maître sur les autres disciplines, et le palmarès d’Anvers en matière de futsal est assez impressionnant.

Le conseil municipal continue à soutenir et à favoriser les sports urbains tels que le futsal, car ils contribuent à développer le sentiment de confiance en soi et l’ambition chez les jeunes. Bien entendu, nous espérons voir certains de ces jeunes talents dans de futures compétitions, telles que l’EURO de futsal de l’UEFA 2014. Le choix d’Anvers pour accueillir cette compétition montre l’engagement durable de notre ville dans le domaine des événements sportifs prestigieux, même dans les prochaines années, quand nous ne serons plus la Capitale européenne du Sport.

Et parce que le futsal n’est pas notre unique centre d’intérêt, nous invitons tous les supporters et toutes les équipes à profiter également des joies culturelles, culinaires et artistiques que notre riche ville propose. Nous sommes convaincus que ce ne sera pas votre dernière visite à Anvers. Mais pour le moment, nous souhaitons à tous les joueurs beaucoup de succès lors de ce tournoi, et à tous les supporters deux semaines de matches passionnants.

Bart De Wever
Bourgmestre d’Anvers

Ludo Van Campenhout
Bourgmestre suppléant
Echevin des sports
ROAD TO BELGIUM

THE CONTENDERS

As Spain set their sights on a fifth straight title, we take stock of the 12 sides vying for the UEFA European Futsal Championship trophy.

1. AZERBAIJAN
   Azerbaijan did not pick up a point at UEFA Futsal EURO 2012, but having contested the semi-finals two years prior to that, Alesio’s side know what it takes to reach the latter stages of this competition. They did not drop a point in qualifying, with the evergreen 41-year-old Biro Jade scoring three times in as many games.

2. BELGIUM
   The hosts return to the finals for the first time since 2010, qualifying automatically. Belgium have never passed beyond the group stage in their three previous final tournament appearances, but will be hoping home support provides the impetus to reach the knockout stage this time around.

3. CROATIA
   A 10-0 home loss to Spain in qualifying perhaps says more about the champions’ strengths than Croatia’s weaknesses. Spain were, for instance, the only side to keep seven-goal Dario Marinović off the scoresheet in five qualifiers. The 2012 semi-finalists’ misfortune is to have drawn Spain again in the final tournament.

4. UKRAINE
   Ukraine scraped through the play-offs on the away goals rule, but having survived that scare travel to Belgium battle-hardened. Yevgen Ryvkin takes charge of his first final tournament following the retirement of Gennadiy Lysenchuk, and though his side is in transition, the two-time finalists know what it takes to succeed.
**CZECH REPUBLIC**
The Czech Republic qualified as main round Group 6 winners with three straight victories, the celebrations starting after an emphatic 5-1 triumph against fellow finalists the Netherlands secured their place in a tenth straight major tournament. “I raise my hat, because [the players] managed in a really fabulous way,” coach Tomáš Neumann said.

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**SPAIN**
The reigning champions scored the most goals (28) and conceded the fewest (one) in qualifying, suggesting European futsal’s dominant force have taken the retirements of key figures Luis Amado and Kike in their stride. Newcomers such as Raúl Campos and José Ruiz have the quality to ensure Spain’s golden run continues.

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**ITALY**
One of only three nations to have won this competition, Italy were unfortunate to lose out to Spain by the narrowest of margins in the semi-finals in 2012. They sent out a warning in qualifying that they will be at their best again, winning their three games by an aggregate scoreline of 20-2.

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**NETHERLANDS**
The Netherlands return to European futsal’s biggest stage after a nine-year hiatus, the longest wait of any of these sides. Having narrowly edged past Bosnia and Herzegovina on the away goals rule in the play-offs, Marcel Loosveld’s side face an even greater challenge against heavyweights Russia and Portugal in Group B.

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**PORTUGAL**
Blessed with prodigious skill and a wealth of experience, Portugal reached the final in 2010 and will once again have their eyes on the trophy. A 3-1 loss to Italy in the quarter-finals stopped them in their tracks last time out, increasing the desire of a supremely talented generation to realise their potential in Belgium.

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**ROMANIA**
Romania only narrowly secured second place in main round Group 3, but they turned on the style in the play-offs. They defeated Serbia – quarter-finalists in 2012 – by an incredible 9-3 aggregate score, despite coach Sito Rivera stepping down ahead of the tie.

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**RUSSIA**
Russia won the inaugural UEFA European Futsal Championship in 1999 and have since twice reached the final, losing to Spain both times. They took the champions to extra time in 2012, and with the majority of that squad here in Antwerp, the drive to go one better this time will ensure Sergei Skorovich’s team challenge strongly again.

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**SLOVENIA**
Coach Andrej Dobovčnik has described his players as “the golden generation of Slovenian futsal,” emphasising that they are “at their peak now. We are ready for even bigger things.” Slovenia’s quality shone through in their 8-3 main round Group 7 victory against Ukraine that ensured they reached the final tournament without recourse to the play-offs for the first time.
“WE FEEL THE MOTIVATION AND THE NOISE BEHIND US WHEN WE PLAY IN FRONT OF OUR FANS”
Belgium captain Karim Chaibai knows “the spotlight will be on us” as he rallies his side to put on a show in Antwerp

It is nearly a decade since Karim Chaibai made his debut for Belgium and in that time he has established himself as the beating heart of the side. The 31-year-old surpassed Karim Bachar’s 101-match appearance record for Belgium in the build-up to the tournament, and has already amassed over 50 goals for his country. Most important of all for the Belgium captain, however, is ensuring his side deliver when it matters most – right here, right now, in front of home support. “We feel the motivation and the noise behind us when we play in front of our fans,” he said. “We need to play beyond our limits.”

What does it mean to host this tournament? It’s very important for us. I wouldn’t say it adds any pressure, but it’s important for us to show our best here in Belgium. We know how important it is to host the EURO. We want to give futsal a boost. We mustn’t miss that chance. We want it to be a big celebration and we want to add a personal touch with qualification [for the knockout stage]. We will try to attract as many spectators as we can. The spotlight will be on us.

How does the success the Belgian football team are enjoying at the moment impact on your side? It’s an advantage, because it conveys a good image for us. We’re part of the same national association, and we must take advantage of that. Let’s try and surf on that wave.

How have preparations gone? You have played against both the world and European champions, Brazil and Spain. We saw some very good things from our side in all our friendly games. We played against big nations, and our goal was to improve. That’s how you develop: by playing against big nations. Brazil are strong tactically, but you can see that Spain are a lot more organised on set pieces – kick-ins, corner kicks and so on.

Belgium last played in a UEFA Futsal EURO in 2010. What are your memories of that? Great memories, but unfortunately we didn’t make it through the first round. That is our objective now at home. We must have that kind of pressure on us. We must want to make it through the first round. We are better prepared compared to our last EURO. In terms of the tactics, we have taken more time to work on things.

How has the team changed since the arrival of Alain Dopchie as coach? He has brought some professionalism to the squad. We are a bit more serious, a bit more mature. That’s a real change. He has a good staff around him and everything is taken care of. We have been gaining the respect of other teams. We played in Spain and in the papers the Spanish coach said a lot of good things about us. Within the squad we are getting more and more organised. We now need to gain maturity and experience. We know internationals are often decided on the smallest details, so we must improve in that aspect. We have always been confident. The skills of the players have not changed, but things are set up better tactically. We are more dangerous now, and the other teams respect us more for that.

What are the main strengths of your team? Belgian players are very technical – they have a lot of skill and a very strong desire.

What are your thoughts on your Group A rivals Romania and Ukraine? Romania are a very physical team with a few good individual players, and are adept at using the flying goalkeeper. They are very well organised tactically. Ukraine are very fast and also very good technically.

Who are the favourites to win the title? Spain, and I think Italy. We know how good Spain are, how professional they are and how far ahead of all the other teams they are. Spain remain the favourites because they have a massive pool of players. We know Russia very well too and they will be competing for the top spots.

What does it mean to you be playing in this EURO in Belgium? It’s why we will give everything. As a player you know this will only happen once, so it is up to us now to enjoy it fully. Let’s enjoy the fact that it’s at home – that’s the most important thing.

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CHAIBAI IN NUMBERS

100 Chaibai won his 100th cap in the 3-3 draw against the Netherlands on 3 December 2013

50 Chaibai scored his 50th goal for Belgium in a 6-1 rout of Switzerland on 17 September 2012

2 This is Chaibai’s second UEFA Futsal EURO final tournament

1 Chaibai made his Belgium debut in a 7-0 victory against England on 24 May 2004

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UEFA.com 15
VITALIY BORISOV
AZERBAIJAN
The 31-year-old Araz Naxçıvan man is his country’s leader on court. Averaging over a goal every other game in this competition, his consistency, dependability and knack for scoring at crucial times have become the forward’s hallmark since making his UEFA Futsal EURO debut in 2007.

JONATHAN NEUKERMAN
BELGIUM
Having risen through his country’s ranks since swapping football for futsal as an 18-year-old, the FP Asse-Gooik defender has been a mainstay of the senior side for over a decade. Technically skilful and physically strong, he complements his defensive ability with a keen eye for goal.

DARIO MARINOVIC
CROATIA
At just 23, the forward already has five years of experience in the national side and provides a regular source of goals. Boasting a record of 12 strikes in just 13 games in this competition, he scored seven times in five matches during qualifying. His speed, skill on the ball and accuracy of shot make him a threat to any defence.

LUKÁŠ REŠETÁŘ
CZECH REPUBLIC
Three-time Czech futsal player of the year, the FK EP Chrudim forward provides the focal point of the Czech attack, possessing a powerful left foot and the skills to consistently beat his man. The 29-year-old also excels at football and plays for Czech second division side FK Pardubice.

STEFANO MAMMARELLA
ITALY
Mammarella is the prototype of the modern No1, with brilliant reflexes and excellent distribution. The 30-year-old was a key player for Italy at UEFA Futsal EURO 2012 and scored in the third-place play-off, before being awarded the adidas Golden Glove as the best goalkeeper at the subsequent FIFA Futsal World Cup. He has also won the UEFA Futsal Cup with ASD Città di Montesilvano C/5.

SAMIR MAKHOUKHI
NETHERLANDS
The FCK De Hommel defender provides the backbone of the Dutch team, using his vast experience to dictate his country’s style of play while providing the starting point for numerous attacks. The 31-year-old broke Antoine Merlino’s record 115 appearances for the Netherlands on 6 January and first experienced a final tournament at UEFA Futsal EURO 2005.

RICARDINHO
PORTUGAL
One of the most gifted players in the sport, the forward – remarkably – continues to improve, and in...
Antwerp will be aiming to add to the three goals he got in qualifying. As well as winning the 2010 UEFA Futsal Cup with SL Benfica, the 28-year-old inspired his country to the UEFA Futsal EURO 2010 final, and his sparkling feet could help Portugal go all the way.

FLORIN MATEI
ROMANIA
An enigmatic presence in Nelu Stancea’s side, the Autobergamo Deva forward invariably bursts into life when it matters most. Outstanding technically, he couples that with the ability to keep his nerves in check under any circumstances, and is able to deliver outstanding performances under the most intense pressure.

NIKOLAI PEREVERZEV
RUSSIA
Pereverzev has been Russia’s captain since last October, having established himself as his side’s key player in their run to the final of UEFA Futsal EURO 2012. Born in Tyumen, Siberia, he has played for his local side MFK Tyumen throughout his career, helping them to the Russian league’s runner-up spot in 2010.

KRISTJAN ČUJEC
SLOVENIA
At just 16 years of age, the forward (above) broke into the team at multiple national champions KMN Puntar, and immediately posted notice of his immense talent. Currently one of the leading scorers in the Italian second division, the 25-year-old struck five goals in one match against Ukraine in qualification, with his powerful and unerring shooting from distance a key weapon in the Slovenian armoury.

MIGUELÍN
SPAIN
Having developed into one of the main protagonists of José Venancio López’s formidable side, the Majorcan forward is key to Spain’s attacking options. Nimble, tough to mark and with ice-cool nerves under pressure, the 28-year-old’s lethal left foot could prove a telling factor in the destination of the 2014 trophy.

DENYS OVSYANNIKOV
UKRAINE
A quick and combative forward, the Energy Lviv man (left) is a frequent source of important goals, such as Ukraine’s crucial fourth and final goal against Hungary in the play-offs that ultimately sealed qualification on the away goals rule. A selfless player, the 29-year-old’s versatility ensures he can fill a role superbly anywhere on the court.
Belgium qualified automatically as hosts, but they have not had an easy ride in the build-up to the tournament. Trips to Brazil and Spain have pitted them against the best in the world, and though they lost all four of their games against the world and European champions, they have benefited from the experience. “We have the chance to put into practice what we learned abroad and show it in Belgium,” said coach Alan Dopchie, whose side can also take confidence from victory against Portugal in 2012. “If we can play against Brazil, Spain and Portugal and perform well, we will certainly be able to play well against the other teams.”

Captain Karim Chaibai is the standout figure in a side built around the nucleus of Ahmed Sababti, Omar Rahou, Lúcio and Jonathan Neukermans. One of Dopchie’s biggest challenges has been finding time with his players, some of whose schedules are governed by work commitments, but he is confident the hosts will deliver. “Our aim is to show, at least to Europe, that Belgian futsal is a reality,” he said. “This is a big opportunity. Ukraine and Romania are good sides so we’re going to need to play the best futsal we can to qualify.”

Belgium are hoping to make their mark on home soil.

### HOSTS HOPEFUL

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### FIXTURES

- **28 JANUARY** v ROMANIA
- **1 FEBRUARI** v UKRAINE

### FINAL TOURNAMENT APPEARANCES

- **GROUP STAGE 1999, 2003, 2010**

### BEST PERFORMANCE

- **GROUP STAGE 1999, 2003, 2010**

### Coach: ALAIN DOPCHIE

Date of birth: 26/03/1964

Dopchie began his coaching career at provincial club L. Vaudignies, who he had played for previously. In 2004, Belgium coach Benny Meurs invited Dopchie to join his staff and together they oversaw qualification for UEFA Futsal EURO 2010, after which Dopchie replaced Meurs in charge of the national side.
Twice runners-up, Ukraine have a fine futsal pedigree with which to enter their first final tournament since the end of Gennadiy Lysenchuk's long reign as coach. Ukraine set up an independent national team in 1994 under Lysenchuk, who remained the coach until last year. In their first tournament they got to the 1996 FIFA Futsal World Cup semi-finals and went on to reach the 2001 and 2003 European finals, losing to Spain and hosts Italy respectively. Before his departure, Lysenchuk introduced a new generation after the retirement of several key players, and new coach Yevgen Ryvkin has been overseeing the transition. Ryvkin is also in charge of national champions Lokomotiv Kharkiv, who supply the bulk of the squad, but it has taken time to find a winning formula.

Ukraine finished second behind Slovenia in qualifying and only beat Hungary in the play-offs on the away goals rule, but two positive recent friendly results against Italy in Asti – a 4-3 win and a 2-2 draw – as well as a pair of tight games (including a win) against Croatia have lifted spirits. "Players, coaches and fans should unite in their support of the team at the final tournament," said Ryvkin. "Our recent matches have shown that we are able to compete against the best."

Ukraine

Ryvkin joined the national team set-up in 2012, first as youth coach and then replacing Lysenchuk at the helm. He has combined the role with his club position at Lokomotiv, where he has worked since 1991, first setting up their youth side, then leading the senior side to the Ukrainian Cup in 2009 and their first league title in 2013.

Fixtures
30 January v Romania
1 February v Belgium

Final tournament appearances 7
Best performance
Runners-up 2001, 2003

Coach: YEVGEN RYVKIN
Date of birth: 07/09/1967

Mykola Bilotserkivets scored twice against Hungary

Main round Group 7

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*Hosts
Turkey 3-5 Slovenia, Ukraine 7-0 England, Turkey 4-3 England, Slovenia 8-3 Ukraine, England 2-5 Slovenia, Ukraine 4-2 Turkey
PLAY-OFF
Ukraine 2-1 Hungary, Hungary 5-4 Ukraine
Aggregate 6-6; Ukraine win on away goals

Qualifying
Mykola Bilotserkivets

See UEFA.com for official squad list
Apps = selections for matchday squad

Goalkeepers

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See UEFA.com for official squad list
Apps = selections for matchday squad

See the full squad list on UEFA.com.
FIRM FOUNDATIONS

Romania’s futsal team was only founded in 2003, but has already reached a third final tournament thanks to a cohesive group of players that have been together since the start. The squad still resembles the one that reached their first final tournament in Portugal in 2007, with the likes of Florin Matei, captain Robert Lupu, Cosmin Gherman, Gabriel Dobre, Ion Al-Ioani, Marian Şotărcă and Dumitru Stoica providing the backbone for their country, having also previously played together for club sides FC CIP Deva and City’US Târgu Mureş.

Not even coach Sito Rivera’s decision to step down ahead of the play-off against Serbia knocked them off their stride. Assistant coach and former goalkeeper Nelu Stancea took charge and steered Romania to a spectacular 9-3 aggregate triumph to book their place in Belgium, where they now come up against the hosts and former finalists Ukraine. Romania’s best performance at a UEFA Futsal EURO was reaching the quarter-finals in 2012 and Stancea wants to match that at least.

“It will be difficult against the host country, who will have the fans on their side, but we hope to be competitive at this high-level European tournament and make it out of the group,” he said.

QUALIFYING

MAIN ROUND GROUP 3

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*Hosts

Romania’s best performances in the competition

28 JANUARY v BELGIUM
30 JANUARY v UKRAINE

FIXTURES

FINAL TOURNAMENT APPEARANCES 3

BEST PERFORMANCE
QUARTER-FINALS 2012

Coach: NELU STANCEA
Date of birth: 20/10/1967

Stancea was Romania’s first goalkeeper when the team was founded in 2003, and was assistant under Sito Rivera before taking charge when Rivera stepped down last July. Appointed assistant goalkeeping coach of the national team in 2004, he has been involved with the squad throughout its first decade.
Technische perfectie
het kenmerk van een speler van wereldklasse.

www.continental.be
MATCH SCHEDULE

GROUP A
- Belgium
- Ukraine
- Romania

GROUP B
- Russia
- Portugal
- Netherlands

GROUP C
- Italy
- Azerbaijan
- Slovenia

GROUP D
- Spain
- Czech Republic
- Croatia

GROUP STAGE

LOTTO ARENA  CAPACITY 5,218

28 JANUARY
18.30 Group B
21.00 Group A

29 JANUARY
18.30 Group D
20.45 Group C

30 JANUARY
18.30 Group A
20.45 Group B

KNOCKOUT STAGE

SPORTPALEIS  CAPACITY 15,000

QUARTER-FINALS  3 FEBRUARY
18.00 QF1
Winner Group A v Runner-up Group B

20.30 QF2
Runner-up Group A v Winner Group B

4 FEBRUARY
18.00 QF3
Winner Group C v Runner-up Group D

20.30 QF4
Runner-up Group C v Winner Group D

SEMI-FINALS  6 FEBRUARY
18.00 SF1
Winner QF1 v Winner QF3

20.30 SF2
Winner QF2 v Winner QF4

THIRD-PLACE PLAY-OFF  8 FEBRUARY
18.00
Loser SF1 v Loser SF2

FINAL  8 FEBRUARY
20.30
Winner SF1 v Winner SF2
Toujours le foot en tête

www.footmagazine.be
www.voetbalmagazine.be
EARLY DAYS
Futsal – ‘Zaalvoetbal’ in Flemish – was first played in Belgium in Bruges in 1964. It was not until 22 April 1977, however, that Belgium played their first official match, beating the Netherlands 7-3 in a friendly in Genk.

TOURNAMENT RECORD
Belgium took part in the early FIFA unofficial tournaments, finishing runners-up in the second in 1987. Two years later they reached the semi-finals of the inaugural FIFA Futsal World Cup, before advancing to the second group stage in 1992 and 1996. Belgium won bronze in the initial UEFA European Futsal Tournament in 1996, and are appearing in their fourth UEFA European Futsal Championship final tournament. They are one of only five teams to have avoided defeat against Spain in a final tournament match – drawing 1-1 in the group stage in 2003 (top left).

RECORD BREAKERS
Charleroi players and Belgian internationals André (54) and Lúcio (48) have scored the most goals in the UEFA Futsal Cup while Lúcio (63) holds the record for most games played.

TITLE CHASERS
Action 21 Charleroi are the country’s most successful club side, having won the title ten times, including seven in a row from 2000 to 2006 and three more from 2008 to 2010. They are followed closely by Futsal Hasselt on eight. Châtelain Futsal are the current champions. The first Belgian championship was held in 1970/71, with Cools Brugge the inaugural winners.

STAR TURNS
Karim Bachar and Karim Chaibai are Belgium’s greatest futsal servants. Bachar’s international career spanned more than 13 years – he made his debut on 28 March 1998 against Spain and retired on 5 September 2011 after a 5-3 win against Finland having amassed a record 101 games and 61 goals. His appearance record was broken by Chaibai just prior to UEFA Futsal EURO 2014, the current Belgium captain having won his 102nd cap in a 2-2 draw with Croatia on 8 January.

EUROPEAN GLORY
Action 21 Charleroi were a powerful force in the early history of European futsal’s premier club competition, the UEFA Futsal Cup, reaching the first two finals in 2002 and 2003 before winning the trophy in 2005. A huge crowd of 6,500 watched their 4-3 first leg victory against MFK Dinamo at the Spiroudôme, before a thrilling 6-6 draw after extra time in Moscow ensured Charleroi won the trophy 10-9 on aggregate.

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Enjoy!

Bier met liefde gebrouwen, drink je met verstand.

That calls for a Carlsberg®
We have all heard the clichés about the Brazilians’ samba football. But what is it? Most answers would probably add up to a cocktail of technique, creativity, high-speed combination moves and dazzling dribbling skills – and all of those ingredients can be traced back to the futsal courts where most of the top Brazilian stars of the indoor and outdoor games hone their talents.

Born in Uruguay in the 1930s, futsal – or ‘futebol de salão’ – soon took off in a big way in neighbouring Brazil, where the lack of outdoor pitches pushed the passion for football into smaller arenas such as basketball courts. Generation after generation developed the ability to beat opponents in tight spaces and, after the outdoor ‘Canarinha’ had gone into the history books as serial FIFA World Cup winners, Brazil’s national futsal team has done likewise by winning five of the seven final tournaments since FIFA introduced a Futsal World Cup in 1989.

In Brazil, the time-hallowed tradition is for top players – Neymar, for example – to polish their technique in futsal and then decide whether to pursue their careers indoors or outdoors. “Futsal is one of my passions,” admits the FC Barcelona and Brazil star. “I always loved to play it and it was sad to have to stop in order to continue on the outdoor pitch.” Alcides Magri, his first futsal coach at his local club Gremetal, recalls: “Neymar used to play against older boys but still had them for dinner. As his coach, my job was to avoid standing in his way!”

Hulk, the Brazilian international currently playing his UEFA Champions League football for Russian club FC Zenit, endorses the important role of futsal in the development of skills. The physique that earned him his playing name might seem at odds with the smaller format, but Hulk maintains that “things you use in futsal as a child are able to help you on the football pitch. It’s about a lot of movement, for example. You might not think so, but you run a lot and it’s like the movement we have during a football match – though I think there’s more movement in futsal than on a grass pitch.”

“You learn how to control the ball – the way you dominate it. In futsal the ball comes at you faster and you have to develop more agility to be able to break out of a situation or lose your marker. That helps a lot on the football pitch.” Neymar has no doubts about the virtues of futsal either: “It teaches you how to play in tight spaces,” he says. “In Europe, there’s not much space so you need to think quicker – and futsal has helped me a lot with that.”

Neymar lifts the FIFA Confederations Cup following Brazil’s triumph last summer

Futsal originated in South America, and Neymar is one of many stars of the outdoor game to credit the indoor format for helping him develop the skills for which he is famous today

Neymar and Hulk (above) are two of the many big names in the outdoor game who have built football careers on futsal foundations. But the Brazilian connection has also left indelible marks on futsal in Europe. Brazilian-born Paulo Roberto was UEFA’s golden player when the first European tournament was played in 1996. Vinicius Bacaro followed in his footsteps when he scored the solitary goal that gave Italy the title in 2003. And a look at the squad lists for UEFA Futsal EURO 2014 will reveal that several players continue to bring the samba sensation across the ocean from Brazil to make waves as role-model stars in the European game.
McDonald’s
Proud provider of the Player Escorts
CONFIDENCE HIGH

Given Russia’s status as one of the heavyweights of the futsal world, it is no surprise that coach Sergei Skorovitch is aiming high. “We always play to win and set maximum goals for ourselves,” he said. One of only two sides to have won the UEFA European Futsal Championship other than Spain, Russia’s high-water mark came in 1999 when the late great Konstantin Eremenko led them to the title. They have also come close twice since then, losing in the final to Spain in both 2005 and 2012. Indeed, Russia were within a minute of winning the last showpiece against Spain, suggesting the gap is closing on the perennial champions.

Nikolai Pereverzev, Aleksandr Fukin and the Brazil-born Gustavo, Cirilo and Eder Lima are the bedrock of a team that plays an exciting brand of attacking futsal, and invariably takes the game to their opponents. They also come into the tournament with confidence high, having reached the final of the prestigious Grand Prix in Brazil in October, only losing out to the hosts on penalties. “We were not in any way worse than the best teams of the world,” new Russia captain Pereverzev declared after that tournament.

MAIN ROUND GROUP 3

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Russia 5-1 Kazakhstan, Latvia 2-0 Romania, Romania 1-2 Russia, Latvia 0-2 Kazakhstan, Kazakhstan 1-1 Romania, Russia 6-0 Latvia

Outfield players

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Goalkeepers

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Qualifying

See UEFA.com for official squad list
Apps = selections for matchday squad

Fixtures

28 JANUARY v NETHERLANDS
1 FEBRUARY v PORTUGAL

Best Performance

Winners 1999

Coach: SERGEI SKOROVITCH

Date of birth: 05/04/1973

Skorovitch won the UEFA Futsal Cup with MFK Sinara Ekaterinburg in 2008 and they reached the final again in 2009, by which time he had been appointed Russia coach in tandem with his club position. Skorovitch went full-time with Russia at the end of 2011, leading them to the UEFA Futsal EURO 2012 final.
MEASURED AMBITION

Portugal have qualified for every major tournament since 2002 and can draw on the vast experience of a talented side as they aim to go one better than 2010 when they lost to Spain in the final. Arnaldo Pereira, Gonçalo, João Benedito, Joel Queirós, Ricardinho and Pedro Costa have more than 800 caps between them, while in Ricardinho they boast one of the most skilful players and most prolific scorers in the game. A 1-1 draw followed by a close-run 3-1 loss to Spain in a pair of friendlies in October offered further cause for optimism.

"Mature" is the word coach Jorge Braz uses to describe his side, and that could prove decisive in a tough section. Having bowed out to Italy in the quarter-finals in 2012, Portugal have some unfinished business to attend to. "Our last EURO ended at the start of the second stage, this time we don’t want to end it there," Braz said. "We have a lot of ambition for this EURO, but are aware of the difficulties of the interesting group we have been drawn in. The Netherlands are once again emerging in European futsal with creativity and an abundance of individual quality. Russia are an international power."

FIXTURES
30 JANUARY v NETHERLANDS
1 FEBRUARY v RUSSIA

FINAL TOURNAMENT APPEARANCES 7
BEST PERFORMANCE RUNNERS-UP 2010

In July 2010, Canadian-born Braz had the tough job of replacing charismatic Orlando Duarte, who had been in charge of Portugal for the previous decade. Braz, previously a member of Duarte’s staff, has risen to the challenge, leading Portugal to the UEFA Futsal EURO 2012 and 2012 FIFA Futsal World Cup quarter-finals, losing to Italy both times.

Portugal impressed in two friendlies against Spain
The Netherlands have qualified for the first time since 2005 and did so in dramatic style, Mohamed Attaibi scoring with 88 seconds remaining of their play-off against Bosnia and Herzegovina to send them through on the away goals rule. Coach Marcel Loosveld is now eager to make up for lost time. “It was an explosion for us to be here after such a long time,” Loosveld said. “It would have been nicer for my heart if [the goal] had come earlier, but it was a great atmosphere. We worked hard for that. We’re confident, we’re here, and we’re going to enjoy the tournament.”

The Netherlands will be boosted by a large contingent of travelling fans, and their attack-minded approach could bring reason for cheer. Experience comes in the form of captain Samir Makhoukhi and Zaid El Morabiti, who both played in the 2005 finals, while goalkeeper Petrus Grimelius, Oualid Saadouni, Mohamed Darri, Jamal El Ghannouti and Attaibi form the basis of the squad. The Netherlands have a fine pedigree and reached the inaugural FIFA Futsal World Cup final in 1989. Now back at the top, the aim is to stay there. “It’s not the easiest group, but we’re very happy to be back on this stage again,” Loosveld said. “We’ll do our utmost to get some results.”

### MAIN ROUND GROUP 6

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*Hosts

Bosnia and Herzegovina 3-2 Netherlands, Neth. 2-1 Bos. and Herz.
Aggregate 4-4, Netherlands win on away goals

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### QUALIFYING

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See UEFA.com for official squad list

Apps = selections for matchday squad
At 33, Torras has won just about everything since his modest beginnings at FC Barcelona when futsal was only a semi-professional limb of the Catalan club. By the time he returned to a fully professionalised set-up at Barça in 2010, he had collected seven items of silverware with Interviú Madrid, had been a FIFA Futsal World Cup winner in 2004, and had won three UEFA European Futsal Championships. With Barça, he has since added 11 national titles and a fourth EURO – the dramatic victory over Russia in Croatia two years ago. The question is now whether Torras and Spain can make it five straight wins.

The team he captains has undergone continual transformations. Javi Rodríguez, Kike, Luis Amado, Julio and the Linares brothers have taken final bows – but the Spanish ship still sails ahead of the rest. “You don’t really notice any changes of generations in the team,” Torras insists. “The regularity of winning titles has continued and I think it will continue for even more years. The desire to achieve them will be there. You can win or lose, either can happen. But one thing is clear: Spain have always had a great group of players who work very well together. The strength of Spain is that one of the objectives is to focus on the group rather than the ambition of individuals. Of course there are players who leave and are hard to replace.”

But you have to solve that somehow. Despite all the titles, we won’t ease off.”

Coaches have also changed. José Venancio López smoothly taking the baton from Javier Lozano. “The team coach,” Torras explains, “has the philosophy of having the same approach to any match, any friendly, official match or tournament. And any player who comes to the national team needs to show ambition, desire and joy.” Torras had his first taste of a EURO eight years ago and recalls:

“When I was a young lad and saw those experienced players being so ambitious, I asked myself how they could be still so ambitious after having already won so much. So you pay attention to that, as it surprises you. You realise that you would never get anywhere without that ambition and hunger.”

“I am a veteran now, a leader,” he acknowledges. “It is mostly about helping and supporting on and off the pitch. You need to be the calmest one when it comes to facing decisions and it is about helping all your team-mates in things that you have been through – things you have learned from players like Kike, Luis Amado or Julio. You’re leading by helping your team-mates in difficult moments, even in training camps or friendly matches where you need to keep up that ambition and hunger to continue winning.”

Many of Spain’s UEFA European Futsal Championship victories have been built on the foundations of mental strength in extreme situations – not least coming back to win the 2012 final when trailing Russia until 34 seconds from the end. “When things are going badly I think that we do something extra to face the bad situation. We have the calm and patience to admit that things are going badly at that moment, but [we know] that we will create chances until the very end, and if we work and give everything then we know we can overcome it. That is what has made us win titles. Maybe without that mentality and calm Spain would not have won. But this comes also from the Spanish league, the daily training and matches where you face difficulties like that. The players come into the national team well prepared and we are capable of playing different systems and styles. It’s about strategy; it’s about free kicks, and then to pressure and attack, and about defence. So many years’ work pays off in difficult situations.”

“If I look at the four consecutive EUROS that I’ve won, I’d give pride of place to the one in Portugal, as we really suffered in the semi-final against Portugal, going 2-0 down. And the one in Croatia was also very important because of the difficulty. For a player, this is the best competition and, if you’re playing for Spain, there is extra pressure attached to it because we are the favourites. That’s what makes it fantastic.”
Torras has won the UEFA European Futsal Championship with Spain four times – in 2005, 2007, 2010 and 2012; only retired compatriots Luis Amado and Kike (both five) have won more.

Torras has made 129 appearances for Spain – the most of any current player – and scored 72 goals (as of 10 January 2014). Only Kike (180), Luis Amado (179) and Javi Rodríguez (170) have played more.

Torras has scored 11 times in 20 appearances at the UEFA European Futsal Championship finals. He also hit four on his competition debut against Finland – a 13-0 win – in January 2004.

“DESPITE ALL THE TITLES, WE WON’T EASE OFF”
ÉCOUTEZ "LE CACTUS"

JÉRÔME de WARZÉE

Trublion de la matinale radio au sein de l’équipe du "8-9h". Il y distille chaque matin son billet cinglant, dézinguant l’actualité belge et internationale.

Fréquences : www.vivacite.be
Qualifying took place between January and October 2013 over three rounds to determine which 11 sides would join hosts Belgium at UEFA Futsal EURO 2014. Twenty-two nations kicked off in the preliminary round, with the six group winners advancing to the main round. Here, they were joined by the 22 highest-ranked sides according to UEFA’s coefficient system. The seven main round group winners advanced to the final tournament, while the seven runners-up and the best third-placed team entered the play-offs. The four play-off winners qualified for Antwerp.

GOALS SCORED

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HIGHEST SCORERS

ALL TEAMS

- David Bobokhidze (Georgia) - 8 goals
- Zoltan Dróth (Hungary) - 8 goals
- Kristjan Čujec (Slovenia) - 7 goals
- Zoran Barović (Montenegro) - 7 goals
- Dario Marinović (Croatia) - 7 goals
- Sergio Lozano (Spain) - 6 goals
- Bojan Bajović (Montenegro) - 6 goals
- Antonios Manos (Greece) - 6 goals

QUALIFIED SIDES

- Dario Marinović (Croatia) - 7 goals
- Sergio Lozano (Spain) - 6 goals
- Miguelín (Spain) - 5 goals
- Pula (Russia) - 5 goals
- Mohamed At Taibi (Netherlands) - 5 goals
- Marian Şotârca (Romania) - 5 goals
- Florin Matei (Romania) - 4 goals
- Gabriel Lima (Italy) - 4 goals
- Ortiz (Spain) - 4 goals
- Alessandro Patias (Italy) - 4 goals
- Raúl Campos (Spain) - 4 goals
- Saad (Italy) - 4 goals
- Michal Seidler (Czech Republic) - 4 goals
- Dmitri Sorokin (Ukraine) - 4 goals
- Franko Jelovčić (Croatia) - 4 goals

MOST ASSISTS

ALL TEAMS

- Adri (Spain) - 8 assists
- Zoran Barović (Montenegro) - 6 assists
- Robinho (Russia) - 5 assists
- Slobodan Rađevič (Serbia) - 5 assists
- Jorge Díaz (Andorra) - 4 assists
- Rok Mordej (Slovenia) - 4 assists

QUALIFIED SIDES

- Adri (Spain) - 8 assists
- Robinho (Russia) - 5 assists
- Rok Mordej (Slovenia) - 4 assists
- Igor Osredkar (Montenegro) - 3 assists
- Pedro Cary (Portugal) - 3 assists
- Torras (Spain) - 3 assists
- Mohamed Darri (Netherlands) - 3 assists
- Emil Răducu (Romania) - 3 assists

QUALIFYING STATISTICS

From David Bobokhidze’s goals for Georgia to Spain’s near impenetrable defence, we highlight the standout numbers from qualifying.
Our philosophy is simple. The more you enjoy doing something, the more you do it. We help you choose the equipment that will give you maximum enjoyment. That is how INTERSPORT brings Sport to the People.
GREAT EXPECTATIONS

Italy have set the bar so high in recent seasons that their biggest test, according to coach Roberto Menichelli, is to meet their own exacting standards. Their victory in the 2003 UEFA European Futsal Championship shows the Azzurri’s pedigree, and they were unfortunate to bow out in the semi-finals in 2012, losing to eventual winners Spain – who also beat them in the 2007 final – by the narrowest of margins.

“At the last EURO we managed to win the bronze medal and at the World Cup we finished third, with only Spain and Brazil in front of us, so we have had a pretty positive run,” Menichelli said. “We have to keep up that level, which will probably be the most difficult task, but we are confident about this competition.”

Menichelli has rejuvenated a successful squad since taking charge in 2009 and in the outstanding Stefano Mammarella – winner of the adidas Golden Glove at the 2012 FIFA Futsal World Cup – between the posts, Italy boast one of the best goalkeepers at this tournament. With the skilful Gabriel Lima as captain, a blend of veterans including Saad and Fortino, and emerging talents such as Massimo De Luca and Luca Leggiiero, Italy will expect another tilt at the title.

ITALY

FIXTURES

29 JANUARY v SLOVENIA
2 FEBRUARY v AZERBAIJAN

FINAL TOURNAMENT APPEARANCES

WINNERS 2003

Coach: ROBERTO MENICHELLI
Date of birth: 14/01/1963

Menichelli had held a number of positions at the Italian Football Federation since 1996 before stepping up to lead the national team in 2009. Capped 28 times by Italy as a player, he is also a graduate in mechanical engineering and a teacher at both the Coverciano coaching school and the Foro Italico university in Rome.

QUALIFYING

MAIN ROUND GROUP 1

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*Hosts

See UEFA.com for official squad list

Apps = selections for matchday squad

Massimo De Luca in action for Italy
AZERBAIJAN

POINT TO PROVE
Azerbaijan qualified for their first major tournament at UEFA Futsal EURO 2010 and made their mark by getting to the semi-finals. They also featured last time around and a place in the knockout rounds is the least of their ambitions. “We finished fourth in 2010, so this time we need to go one step further,” defender Rizvan Farzaliyev said. “We want to win medals.”

The squad remains packed full of experience in what may be the last UEFA Futsal EURO for a number of Azerbaijani veterans. It is also a cohesive unit, with the majority of the players from club side Araz Naxçivan. Biro Jade, joint top scorer in the 2010 finals, turned 41 four days before this tournament started, having scored three times in qualifying, while Felipe, 35, and 31-year-old captain Vitaliy Borisov all bring valuable tournament know-how with them to Antwerp.

Azerbaijan were involved in one of the most incredible matches in the competition’s history when they lost 9-8 to Serbia in the 2012 group stage – the highest-scoring match in UEFA Futsal EURO history. Nonetheless, Azerbaijan bowed out without winning a point: they will be doing everything to prevent history from repeating itself this time.

FIXTURES
31 JANUARY v SLOVENIA
2 FEBRUARY v ITALY

FINAL TOURNAMENT APPEARANCES
THIRD PLACE

BEST PERFORMANCE
FOURTH PLACE 2010

Coach: ALESIO
Date of birth: 27/09/1968
After a successful playing career in his native Brazil, Spain and Russia, Alesio joined FK Airat Almaty as player-coach in 2007, leading them to the Kazakhstani title and the UEFA Futsal Cup finals. In 2008 he took charge of Azerbaijan and Araz Naxçivan, taking the former to UEFA Futsal EURO 2010 and Araz to UEFA Futsal Cup bronze.

MAIN ROUND GROUP 2

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*Ahosts

Azerbaijan 6-0 Norway, Slovakia 4-4 Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bosnia and Herzegovina 2-0 Azerbaijan, Slovakia 4-3 Norway, Norway 0-4 Bosnia and Herzegovina, Azerbaijan 2-1 Slovakia

AZERBAIJAN have reached their third straight Futsal EURO.
Having reached only one final tournament prior to UEFA Futsal EURO 2010, Slovenia have now qualified for the third time in succession. They did so in some style with Kristjan Čučec scoring five times in an 8-3 win against Ukraine in main round Group 7, and they will now be looking to advance beyond the group stage for the first time. Captain Igor Osredkar and fellow playmaker Benjamin Melink are the linchpins of Andrej Dobovičnik’s side, with Čučec, Alen Fetič, Rok Mordej and Gašper Vrhovec also providing goals and power.

With more than half the team playing their club futsal abroad, this side are no strangers to the international game, but even so, Dobovičnik believes the challenge ahead is a big one. “Italy are absolutely the favourites in our group,” Dobovičnik said. “I am convinced my boys and I will do the best we can, and we will try to take our chances. We have never won a point at a European championship [final tournament] so we will try to make our breakthrough. Our team is very young, but they’ve already played a lot of matches and I hope that in the next three to four years they will show excellent performances in Europe.”

**SLOVENIA**

**Main Round Group 7**

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* Hosts

Turkey 3-5 Slovenia, Ukraine 7-0 England, Turkey 4-3 England, Slovenia 8-3 Ukraine, England 2-5 Slovenia, Ukraine 4-2 Turkey

**Goalkeepers**

- Alen Mordej: 13/03/1990, 3/0/3/0/4/0, Toulon Tous Ensemble
- Damir Puškar: 03/09/1987, 3/0/7/0, FC Litija

**Outfield players**

- Dejan Bajak: 09/09/1990, 1/0/3/0, Toulon Tous Ensemble
- Kristjan Čučec: 20/01/1980, 3/7/13/10, New Team FVG
- Sebastian Drobe: 19/04/1987, 3/3/8/4, Melissa FC
- Alen Fetič: 14/10/1991, 3/1/8/2, Novo Vrijeme
- Uroš Kropič: 02/11/1985, 3/0/3/0, KMN Dobovec
- Benjamin Melink: 15/11/1982, 3/3/15/7, C/S Adriatica
- Rok Mordej: 03/03/1989, 3/1/11/5, New Team FVG
- Igor Osredkar: 28/06/1986, 3/2/9/3, Novo Vrijeme
- Gašper Vrhovec: 18/07/1988, 3/0/9/3, FC Litija

See UEFA.com for official squad list.

**GROWING FORCE**

**FIXTURES**

- 29 JANUARY v ITALY
- 31 JANUARY v AZERBAIJAN

**BEST PERFORMANCE**


**Coach:** ANDREJ DOBOVIČNIK

**Date of birth:** 14/10/1967

Dobovičnik is an economics graduate and works for a leading telecommunications firm, but his passion is futsal. Three times a Slovenian title winner as a player, he retired in 2004 and began his coaching career at EM Pelikan before taking the helm of the national team in November 2005.

**UEFA.com**
Is it a coincidence that Spain, world and European champions in the outdoor game, have been a dominant force in futsal? The players may be different, but the emphasis on possession, high-speed passing and exquisite control in tight spaces is absolutely familiar. Add to that an addiction to winning and an unwavering self-belief and it is little wonder Europe’s top sides have been unable to wrestle the title from them in over a decade. “Spain never give up: we always want a little more. We always believe we can give a little more,” said Kike, a five-time winner of this competition who helped Spain lift the title in 2012 before retiring later in the year. “Victory is so wonderful, you always want to repeat the feeling.”

Spain set a benchmark by beating Russia 5-3 in the final of UEFA’s pilot European tournament in Cordoba in 1996, and they have graced six of the seven finals since the UEFA European Futsal Championship was officially launched in 1999, winning five of them. Players such as goalkeeper Luis Amado, the Linares brothers – Joan and Andreu – and the captain of the 2010 and 2012 champions, Javi Rodríguez, have joined the likes of Russia’s late Konstantin Eremenko and Croatia’s Mićo Martić on the list of legends who have left indelible marks on the history of this competition. Under former coach Javier Lozano and now José Venancio López, Spain have stuck to a clearly defined playing philosophy, despite determined attempts by Russia, Ukraine and Italy to knock them off their perch. The presence of Iberian rivals Portugal in the 2010 showpiece posted a warning that other nations are ready to challenge the established powers and, at the eighth final tournament – the third to involve 12 teams – the big question is whether anyone can put an end to Spain’s run of four straight wins.
Hosts Spain came back from 2-1 and 3-2 down in Granada to force extra time, but after a 3-3 draw, Russia’s hero was goalkeeper Oleg Denissov, who saved two penalties to win his side the shoot-out 4-2.

Spain forced extra time against Ukraine in the final after falling behind. Four minutes in, Javi Sánchez’s golden goal won them their first title 2-1.

In the only final not to feature Spain, Italy broke the host nation jinx against Ukraine thanks to Vinicius Bacaro’s solitary goal in front of 6,000 in Caserta. Ukraine, the only finalists not to score, claimed silver again.

Despite losing 3-1 to Italy in the group stage – they haven’t lost a match in this competition since – world champions Spain stifled old rivals Russia expertly in the decider. The 2-1 scoreline, with goals from Andreu Linares and Alberto Cogrro, scarcely reflected a comfortable win for Javier Lozano’s men.

Spain looked down and out when trailing hosts Portugal 2-0 with 5:49 to play in the semi-final, only to fight back and win on penalties. José Venancio López’s team then posted a 3-1 win against Italy, whose consolation goal allowed Alexandre Fellier to become the first goalkeeper to score in a final.

After going 3-0 down in a tense final in Debrecen, Portugal hit back with two late goals in 39 seconds, only for Spain to clinch a hat-trick of titles, with a goal by Daniel in the final minute rounding off a 4-2 win.

Another Houdini act for Spain in Zagreb made it five titles. One-nil down to Russia until 34 seconds from the end, José Venancio López’s team conjured an equaliser by Sergio Lozano and hit the shell-shocked Russians twice in extra time to clinch a 3-1 victory.

José Venancio López’s team then posted a 3-1 win against Italy, whose consolation goal allowed Alexandre Fellier to become the first goalkeeper to score in a final.
UEFA FUTSAL EURO 2014
28 JANUARY - 8 FEBRUARY
LIVE ON EUROSPORT & EUROSPORT 2
NATIONAL SPONSOR OF THE UEFA EUROPEAN FUTSAL CHAMPIONSHIP
NUMBERS GAME
THE PLAYERS, TEAMS AND MATCHES THAT HAVE LEFT THEIR MARK ON THE UEFA EUROPEAN FUTSAL CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL TOURNAMENTS

LEADING SCORERS
DANIEL (Spain) 16  
SERHIY KORIDZE (Ukraine) 15  
JAVI RODRÍGUEZ (Spain) 13  
KONSTANTIN EREMENKO (Russia) 12  
ADRIANO FOGLIA (Italy) 11  
FERNANDO GRANA (Italy) 11  
TORRAS (Spain) 11  
GONÇALO (Portugal) 10

MOST APPEARANCES
LUIS AMADO (Spain) 33  
KIKE (Spain) 29  
DANIEL (Spain) 24  
JULIO (Spain) 22  
SERGEI ZUEV (Russia) 21  
JAVI RODRÍGUEZ (Spain) 20  
TORRAS (Spain) 20  
Appearance = selection for matchday squad

TOP SCORERS BY TOURNAMENT
2012  DARIO MARINOVIĆ (Croatia) 5  
TORRAS (Spain) 5  
2010  BIRO JADE (Azerbaijan) 5  
JOEL QUEIRÓS (Portugal) 5  
JAVI RODRÍGUEZ (Spain) 5  
SAAD (Italy) 5  
2007  CIROLO (Russia) 5  
DANIEL (Spain) 5  
PREDRAG RAJJIĆ (Serbia) 5  
2006  NANDO GRANA (Italy) 6  
2003  SERHIY KORIDZE (Ukraine) 7  
2001  SERHIY KORIDZE (Ukraine) 7  
1999  KONSTANTIN EREMENKO (Russia) 11

TEAM APPEARANCES
8  ITALY, RUSSIA, SPAIN  
7  CZECH REPUBLIC, PORTUGAL, UKRAINE  
4  BELGIUM, CROATIA, NETHERLANDS, SLOVENIA, YUGOSLAVIA/SERBIA  
3  AZERBAIJAN, ROMANIA  
2  HUNGARY  
1  BELARUS, POLAND, TURKEY

FINAL TOURNAMENT RECORDS
PLAYER  YOUNGEST  OLDEST
CRISTIAN RIZZO  18 years 355 days  
Italy v Ukraine, 23/01/2010  
ANDREY TVERYANKIN  44 years 334 days  
Azerbaijan v Serbia, 03/02/2012

GOALSCORER
YOUNGEST  OLDEST
ADRIANO FOGLIA  19 years 303 days  
Italy v Russia, 22/02/2001  
MIĆO MARTIĆ  36 years 364 days  
Croatia v Poland, 22/02/2001

THE FINALS
2012  SPAIN 3-1 RUSSIA  
(after extra time) Zagreb, Croatia  
2010  SPAIN 4-2 PORTUGAL  
Debrecen, Hungary  
2007  SPAIN 3-1 ITALY  
Porto, Portugal  
2005  SPAIN 2-1 RUSSIA  
Ostrava, Czech Republic  
2003  ITALY 1-0 UKRAINE  
Caserta, Italy  
2001  SPAIN 1-0 UKRAINE  
(golden goal) Moscow, Russia  
1999  RUSSIA 3-3 SPAIN  
(Russia win 4-2 on pens) Granada, Spain

9-1
The biggest victory in a final tournament by Spain against Belarus in Debrecen in 2010.

76.5
Spain’s winning percentage in final tournaments. The five-time champions have lost just twice (excluding penalty shoot-outs) – both times to Italy. They have failed to win just eight times in 34 matches and have not been beaten in normal time since losing to Italy 3-1 in the 2005 group stage.

47
Including qualifying Luis Amado holds the record for most appearances in the UEFA European Futsal Championship with 47.

14,300
A record crowd of 14,300 saw Russia beat Croatia 4-2 in the UEFA Futsal EURO 2012 semi-final in Zagreb.

Seconds it took Felipe to score the fastest goal in a UEFA Futsal EURO final tournament, for Azerbaijan in their 9-8 win against Serbia in 2012.

That match also produced the most goals of any game in a final tournament.

UEFA.com  43
GROUP D
SPAIN/CZECH REPUBLIC/CROATIA

TOP OF THEIR GAME
Spain are Europe's dominant futsal power and are aiming for their fifth straight UEFA European Futsal Championship title and sixth overall. They needed extra time to defeat Russia in the 2012 final, but José Venancio López's side remain the team to beat, even after the retirements of "living legends" – in the words of coach Venancio López – Kike and goalkeeper Luis Amado. The foundation of the 2012 team, which includes Jordi Torras, Ortiz, Aicardo and Miguelín, is bolstered by newcomers Raúl Campos and José Ruiz, and their coach predicts further success. "There comes a time for everyone when you have to make way for young players," he said. "We have young players with a lot of ambition and desire. In that sense we can be relaxed, because the future looks bright in terms of the competitive level of this team."

Spain have vied with Brazil for the title of world's best for more than a decade, and won the FIFAFutsal World Cup in 2000 and 2004, breaking Brazil's stranglehold on the trophy. They only lost the next two finals to the South American side on penalties (2008) and after extra time (2012) and have not been beaten over 40 minutes in a competitive game since losing 3-1 to Italy in the 2005 European group stage.

Spain also won the UEFA European Futsal Tournament in 1996, the forerunner to the UEFA European Futsal Championship.

Coach: JOSÉ VENANCIO LÓPEZ
Date of birth: 27/06/1964
Venancio López made his name as coach of Caja Segovia FS, winning the domestic treble of league, Spanish Cup and Super Cup in 1998/99. He was appointed Spain coach in September 2007 and has proved a worthy successor to Javier Lozano, winning three UEFA Futsal EUROs and reaching two FIFA Futsal World Cup finals.

SPAIN

MAIN ROUND GROUP 4

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</table>

*Hosts

Croatia 7-0 Sweden, Spain 5-3 FYROM, FYROM 2-3 Croatia, Spain 13-0 Sweden, Sweden 2-4 FYROM, Croatia 0-10 Spain

QUALIFYING

Goalkeepers
- Jesús Herrero 04/11/1986 0/0 0/0 Interviú Madrid
- Juanjo 19/08/1985 3/0 21/0 Lobelle de Santiago
- Rafa 13/06/1980 3/0 10/0 Murcia FS

Outfield players
- Aicardo 04/12/1988 0/0 5/4 FC Barcelona
- Fernandão 16/08/1980 3/1 12/9 FC Barcelona
- José Ruiz 06/06/1983 3/3 6/6 Murcia FS
- Lin 16/05/1986 3/1 18/7 FC Barcelona
- Miguelín 09/05/1985 1/5 8/7 Murcia FS
- Ortiz 03/10/1983 3/4 24/11 Interviú Madrid
- Pola 26/06/1988 3/1 5/2 Interviú Madrid
- Raúl Campos 22/05/1987 3/1 11/5 Navarra FS
- Sergio Lozano 09/11/1988 1/6 8/8 FC Barcelona
- Torras 24/09/1980 3/1 35/19 FC Barcelona

See UEFA.com for official squad list
Apps = selections for matchday squad

Miguelín (15) celebrates scoring in the FIXTURES
29 JANUARY v CROATIA
2 FEBRUARY v CZECH REPUBLIC
FINAL TOURNAMENT APPEARANCES 8

Spain also won the UEFA European Futsal Tournament in 1996, the forerunner to the UEFA European Futsal Championship.
CZECH REPUBLIC

RISING TO THE CHALLENGE

Czech Republic coach Tomáš Neumann is in no doubt about the challenge his side face in Antwerp. “The group is very, very tough,” he said. “Croatia are a very tough team, and I have no words to describe Spain, they are the favourites.”

As hosts, Croatia defeated the Czech Republic in a 5-4 thriller in 2012, and Neumann will be hoping the spine of that side can benefit from the experience and turn the tables this time around. Lukáš Rešetář and brothers Roman and Michal Mareš remain integral to the team, whose strength is based on a great spirit, discipline and the teamwork and understanding gained from the same group playing together for a considerable period of time. Neumann is also introducing a new generation, with the likes of Michal Seidler and Matěj Slováček giving the side fresh impetus.

The 2001 UEFA European Futsal Championship was the first major tournament the Czech Republic qualified for, but they have reached every European championship final tournament and FIFA Futsal World Cup since. “Our best success was in 2010 in Hungary when we won the bronze medal, and it would be nice to repeat that,” said Neumann, whose side breezed through qualifying without dropping a point.

Fixtures
31 January v Croatia
2 February v Spain

Final tournament appearances 7

Best performance
Third place 2010

Coach: TOMÁŠ NEUMANN
Date of birth: 22/09/1970

Named Czech futsal player of the century in 1999, Neumann struck 288 goals in 195 domestic games for FK Viktoria Žižkov, and 26 in 46 international appearances. He succeeded Michal Stříž as coach after the 2005 UEFA European Futsal Championship finals and has since established the Czech Republic at the forefront of international futsal.

Main Round Group 6

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*Hosts

Czech Republic: 4-1 Georgia, Netherlands 2-1 Belarus, Belarus 3-4 Czech Republic, Czech Republic 7-3 Georgia, Georgia 5-4 Belarus, Czech Republic 5-1 Netherlands

QUALIFYING

Goalkeepers
- Libor Gerčák (22/07/1975, 3/1, 14/1, 1. FC Nezvěb Vysoké Mýto)
- David Šimon (14/06/1975, 0/0, 0/0, Helas Brno)

Outfield players
- Michal Belej (16/11/1982, 3/1, 13/6, Tango Brno)
- Michal Holý (29/05/1990, 0/0, 0/0, Tepice)
- Jan Janovský (20/06/1985, 2/0, 19/1, Rekord Blansko-Biala)
- Michal Kvačas (17/04/1990, 0/0, 0/0, Tango Brno)
- Michal Mareš (03/02/1976, 3/1, 31/12, FK EP Chrudim)
- Roman Mareš (15/03/1975, 3/1, 26/22, FK EP Chrudim)
- Jiří Novotný (12/07/1988, 3/0, 13/1, FC Bohemians 1905 Prague)
- Lukáš Rešetář (28/04/1984, 3/2, 22/10, FK EP Chrudim)
- Marcel Rodek (07/11/1988, 0/0, 0/0, FC Benago)
- Michal Seidler (05/04/1990, 2/4, 5/5, Tango Brno)
- Zdeněk Sláma (28/12/1982, 1/0, 22/3, Tepice)
- Matěj Slováček (08/10/1990, 3/1, 3/1, FK EP Chrudim)

See UEFA.com for official squad list
Apps = selections for matchday squad

The Czech Republic have reached the last six Futsal EUROs.
CROATIA

“BACK WHERE WE BELONG”

After impressing on home soil in 2012, Croatia have carried that momentum through to this tournament, successfully negotiating qualification, via the play-offs, for the first time since 2001. There was, however, a reality check on the way to Antwerp in the form of a 1-0 loss to Spain, and coach Mato Stanković could be forgiven for cursing his luck after his side were drawn against the champions again here.

Much will depend on how Croatia fare against their other Group D opponents – the Czech Republic – who they beat in the group stage at UEFA Futsal EURO 2012. “That match will be crucial,” Stanković said. “Spain are the most difficult opponent we could get, but we will try to win a place in the next round against the Czech Republic. The most important thing is that we are at the EURO – where we belong.”

Croatia continue to grow as a team, led by experienced goalkeeper and captain Ivo Jukić and defenders Jakov Grcić and Tihomir Novak. In attack, the youthful Franko Jelovčić, 22, and Dario Marinović, 23, provide the goals. The latter scored five times at UEFA Futsal EURO 2012 and top-scored for Croatia with seven in qualifying. He and Jelovčić hit three goals apiece in the 7-1 aggregate play-off victory against Slovakia.

CROATIA FIXTURES
29 JANUARY v SPAIN
31 JANUARY v CZECH REPUBLIC

MAIN ROUND GROUP 4

Coach: MATO STANKOVIĆ
Date of birth: 28/09/1970
Highly successful as coach of MNK Split, Stanković moved into international futsal in 2006, winning the Arab Futsal Championship with Libya twice as well as the African Futsal Championship, and taking them to the 2008 FIFA Futsal World Cup. He took charge of Croatia in 2010, steering them to the UEFA Futsal EURO 2012 semi-finals.

See UEFA.com for official squad list
Apps = selections for matchday squad

Dario Marinović scored three times in the play-offs

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**QUALIFYING**

**MAIN ROUND GROUP 4**

Spain* 3 3 0 0 28 1 9
Croatia 3 2 0 1 10 12 6
FYROM 3 1 0 2 7 10 3
Sweden 3 0 0 3 2 4 9

Spain* 3 3 0 0 28 1 9
Croatia 3 2 0 1 10 12 6
FYROM 3 1 0 2 7 10 3
Sweden 3 0 0 3 2 4 9

Croatia 7-0 Sweden, Spain 3-1 FYROM, FYROM 2-3 Croatia, Spain 13-0 Sweden, Sweden 2-4 FYROM, Croatia 0-10 Spain

PLAY-OFF
Slovakia 1-3 Croatia, Croatia 4-0 Slovakia
Croatia win 7-1 on aggregate

Slovakia 1-3 Croatia, Croatia 4-0 Slovakia
Croatia win 7-1 on aggregate

Slovakia 1-3 Croatia, Croatia 4-0 Slovakia
Croatia win 7-1 on aggregate
Volg ons

www.topsportvlaanderen.be
Croatia’s players jump for joy as Valeriy Legchanov’s penalty shoot-out miss for Ukraine sends the hosts into the semi-final of UEFA Futsal EURO 2012. The tournament in Zagreb and Split was watched by record crowds, with a competition high of 14,300 seeing the home side fall at the next hurdle, losing 4-2 to Russia in Zagreb.
Sporten met een handicap? Het kan! Check de website www.gsport.be
C lose to the Dutch border, Antwerp is Belgium’s second largest city after the capital, Brussels, with a population of over 500,000. The 2013 European Capital of Sport, the port staged the 1920 Olympic Games, and its history as a major trading and cultural hub extends back to Gallo-Roman times, which means there is plenty for visitors to see at UEFA Futsal EURO 2014.

**BRABO STATUE**

The statue in the Grote Markt (above), in front of Antwerp’s city hall in the picturesque old town, depicts a scene from the legend of the city’s foundation, with Silvius Brabo throwing the hand of the giant Druon Antigoon into the river Scheldt. The Roman soldier had stood up to the giant, who had severed the hands of citizens who failed to pay his toll for crossing the bridge over the river, and some claim the city’s name comes from this legend – “hand werpen” means “thrown hand” in old Dutch.

**THE ‘GREAT OLD’**

R. Antwerp FC was founded by English students in 1880, making it the oldest football club in Belgium – hence their nickname, the ‘Great Old’. Antwerp won the most recent of their four national titles in 1957, but reached the final of the 1992/93 UEFA Cup Winners’ Cup, losing 3-1 to Parma FC at Wembley. Their Bosuil stadium – in the Deurne district – also staged a match at the 1972 UEFA European Championship and the second leg of the 1964 European Cup Winners’ Cup final.

**SPORTING HERITAGE**

The only Belgian city to stage the Olympic Games, Antwerp’s main venue for the 1920 event still stands, though the Olympisch Stadion – about 4.5km south of the city centre – is much changed since, having recently been home to Antwerp’s now defunct local rivals, Beerschot AC. Very much a going concern, Futsal Topsport Antwerpen are now one of Belgium’s top futsal sides, winning national titles in 2006/07 and 2011/12.

**FLEMISH MASTERS**

The stately Royal Museum of Fine Arts Antwerp contains works by many of Europe’s top artists, including a couple of locals. Anthony Van Dyck was born in Antwerp in 1599 but made his name as a painter in England, specialising in royal portraits. Peter Paul Rubens (born 1577) came to Antwerp from Germany, but made the city his home; his house is now a museum, while his works are in the Cathedral of Our Lady – and his tomb is in St James’ Church.

**DRESSED FOR SUCCESS**

The renowned Dries Van Noten, Ann Demeulemeester, Walter Van Beirendonck and Dirk Bikkembergs were among the ‘Antwerp 6’, who put the city on the international fashion map in the 1980s, with the likes of Raf Simons and Martin Margiela further cementing Antwerp’s status as a major style centre. Their work and more is on offer in the city’s impeccably turned out fashion district, with the MoMu style museum also home to the Royal Academy of Fine Arts’ celebrated fashion department.

**TRADING PLACE**

A local saying goes: “The Scheldt river owes its existence to God, Antwerp owes its existence to the Scheldt river”. The city was at various times the main hub of the international pepper, sugar, silver and most recently diamond trades, with Antwerp’s docks crucial to those commercial successes. A cruise up the river Scheldt will show the sheer size of the city’s maritime presence, while the MAS and Red Star Line museums celebrate its naval history.
THE PLAYER
“A futsal player has to think more quickly than an 11-a-side footballer. You have to know what to do with the ball even before you receive it, as there is great pressure and no space. In football you have more time because in general there is more space between you and your closest opponent. There is also a difference in terms of dynamism. In futsal you never stop, either with your brain or your legs. In many sports you can think and then execute, in futsal you do them at the same time. What makes a team a great team is the ability to know where and when your team-mate will give you the ball and what to do with it without even thinking. Everything is registered in your memory.”

SKILL
“Technique is the most important aspect of the game. The movements are completely different from those in football so you don’t really understand them unless you have worked on them since you were very young. It’s difficult to teach how to read the game and how to move correctly on the pitch when you are an adult. Every player loves showing off a piece of individual skill – a nutmeg or a sombrero. It pumps you up, it gives you more confidence and makes you want the ball again to try something even more difficult. The quick pass is crucial – the pass that splits the back line is the most dangerous thing for any defence in the world.”

BALL CONTROL
“The ball is almost always on the ground, you touch it more often (than in football) and your technique must be perfect. Physical power is not as important as in football, but technique is crucial. The sole of the foot is used a lot because you don’t have much space with the ball. In football you can control the ball with the side of your foot and even if you lose control for a while, you can get it back. In futsal your opposing team is upon you immediately if your control is not perfect. You use the sole to make sure the ball is always close to you. Regarding shooting, the ball travels straighter and more predictably than a football. The toe-poke is very important, especially when you want to surprise a goalkeeper.”

ON THE BREAK
“Most of the goals scored in futsal come from transitions. It’s a crucial aspect of the game both in defending and attacking and if you know how to do them properly, you can decide a game. When you attack it’s important to play the ball quickly to open up the opponents’ defence. If you keep the ball too long you give them the chance to come back and reorganise.”

FORMATIONS
“Being an extremely dynamic sport, modern futsal requires players who can play a variety of roles. Normally the playing system is 3-1, with three players moving around and one more stable in attack, or 4-0, though teams often change their system during a single game. When your opponents press high, everything is easier if you have a pivot (in attack) who can hold the ball and allow others to breathe. Many coaches still prefer to use a pivot because they feel more secure with that system: it’s not always easy to find four dynamic players who can play the ball well without losing possession in dangerous positions. In a match there can be moments when it’s difficult to make three or four passes in succession – everything becomes easier with a pivot and you just try to reach him.”

FLYING GOALKEEPER
“The flying goalkeeper is an extra weapon, which ensures futsal games are exciting and open until the final whistle. You have nobody in goal but if you keep the ball well, you have more options for passes and everything becomes more difficult for your opponents. It’s a common tactic when a team is behind, but not only then – when you reach five fouls and want to eat up some time with possession, or you want more possession because you don’t have many substitutes on the bench. The main qualities of a flying goalkeeper are good passing ability and calmness. You have a lot of responsibility on your shoulders, and you should only take risks when you are almost sure of doing the right thing. You cannot expose your team.”
FACT FILE

GABRIEL LIMA
Born: 19/08/1987
Club: Asti
Italy debut: 23/09/09 v Japan
Italy appearances: 67
Italy goals: 3

“It’s always very satisfying to measure ourselves against the best teams on the continent. We haven’t set ourselves a target – our first objective is to win the first game, which is always tough and can be decisive. Our main strength is the group and the variety of players we have in the squad: we have several different options and playing systems. Spain are always the favourites, and Russia cannot be underestimated either. We and Portugal may also have a say, but we must be prepared for tough battles against the other teams as well.”
RULES OF THE GAME

THE BASICS TO UNDERSTANDING FUTSAL

TEAMS
Futsal is a five-a-side game, but each squad at UEFA Futsal EURO 2014 consists of 14 players, with nine substitutes available per match.

SUBSTITUTIONS
Substitutions are unlimited and can take place at any time during play, provided a player does not go on before his team-mate has come off and enters from the zone marked in front of each bench. Players can be changed individually or as a group.

REAL TIME
A UEFA Futsal EURO match consists of two 20-minute halves, with a timekeeper stopping the clock each time the whistle is blown. If the quarter-finals, semi-finals or final are drawn, two five-minute periods of extra time are played, followed by a penalty shoot-out if the scores are still level. At set plays or when the keeper has the ball, referees raise their arms and count down with their fingers the four seconds the player has to get the ball into play.

REFEREES
Three officials enforce the rules in each game – one on each touchline and one to liaise with the timekeeper to control fouls and time-outs. Officials communicate their calls with a series of choreographed signals.

ACCUMULATED FOULS
As of the sixth foul committed by a team, their opponents get a free shot at goal from the second penalty mark, 10m out from the goal. If the foul is closer to the goal, it can be taken from where the infringement took place.

CARDS
Players are sent off for two yellow cards or a direct red and can play no further part. Following a dismissal, the penalised team plays one man short for two minutes, but if they concede during that time they return to five players.

THE FLYING GOALKEEPER
An outfield player can come on and off as a substitute for the goalkeeper, but the referee has to make sure that the flying goalkeeper is wearing a keeper’s jersey with his number – and that all the team’s keepers wear the same colours.

KICK-IN
Play is restarted with a kick-in if the ball crosses the touchline or hits the roof. Goals cannot be scored directly from a kick-in. Players have four seconds to restart play from a kick-in or free-kick.

TIME-OUT
Coaches can call a 60-second time-out during each half, but there are no time-outs in extra time.

WIN A MATCH BALL
The ball shapes the game. With a circumference of 62-64cm, the futsal ball is about 10% smaller than an outdoor ball but the weight (400–440g) is about the same and so is the pressure. When dropped from 2m, the bounce must be between only 50 and 65cm. It means that headers are rarities, that passes need to be fast and firmly struck to avoid interceptions, the first touch needs to be top-class, shots tend to fly straight rather than swerve or dip and that keepers – most of whom choose not to wear gloves – need strong hands and wrists.

For a chance to win an official adidas 2014 UEFA Futsal EURO tournament ball, keep your eyes on the @UEFAcom Twitter account on the day of the final (8 February). As well as details of how to enter the competition, @UEFACOM has all the latest news throughout the tournament.
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