

# Tournament review



UEFA

**UNDER21™**  
CHAMPIONSHIP  
ISRAEL 2013





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ISRAEL 2013

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# In safe hands

**“The excellent young players who took part in Israel are certain to become the stars of tomorrow, and judging by what I saw, the future of European football is in very safe hands”**

Michel Platini, UEFA President

The 2013 UEFA European Under-21 Championship final tournament was a memorable event that left us with many reasons for satisfaction – from the fantastic organisation of the event by the host country, Israel, to the spectacular, attacking football produced by the competing teams. The excellent young players who took part in Israel are certain to become the stars of tomorrow, and judging by what I saw, the future of European football is in very safe hands.

Our congratulations go to Spain, whose roll call of titles at both youth and U21 levels in recent years is unsurpassed. By winning in Israel, they become only the fourth nation to successfully defend the U21 trophy, and clearly look well placed to continue to challenge for the highest honours at senior level in the seasons ahead.

Behind the scenes, meanwhile, the cooperation between UEFA and the Israel Football Association (IFA) was superb. All visitors to Israel enjoyed a warm welcome and the tournament ran like clockwork, thanks in large part to the 450 volunteers who gave their time and help. The family atmosphere in the stadiums is also something that I will remember from this U21 final tournament, and I have no doubt that we will encounter more of the same in the Czech Republic in 2015.

**Michel Platini**  
UEFA President

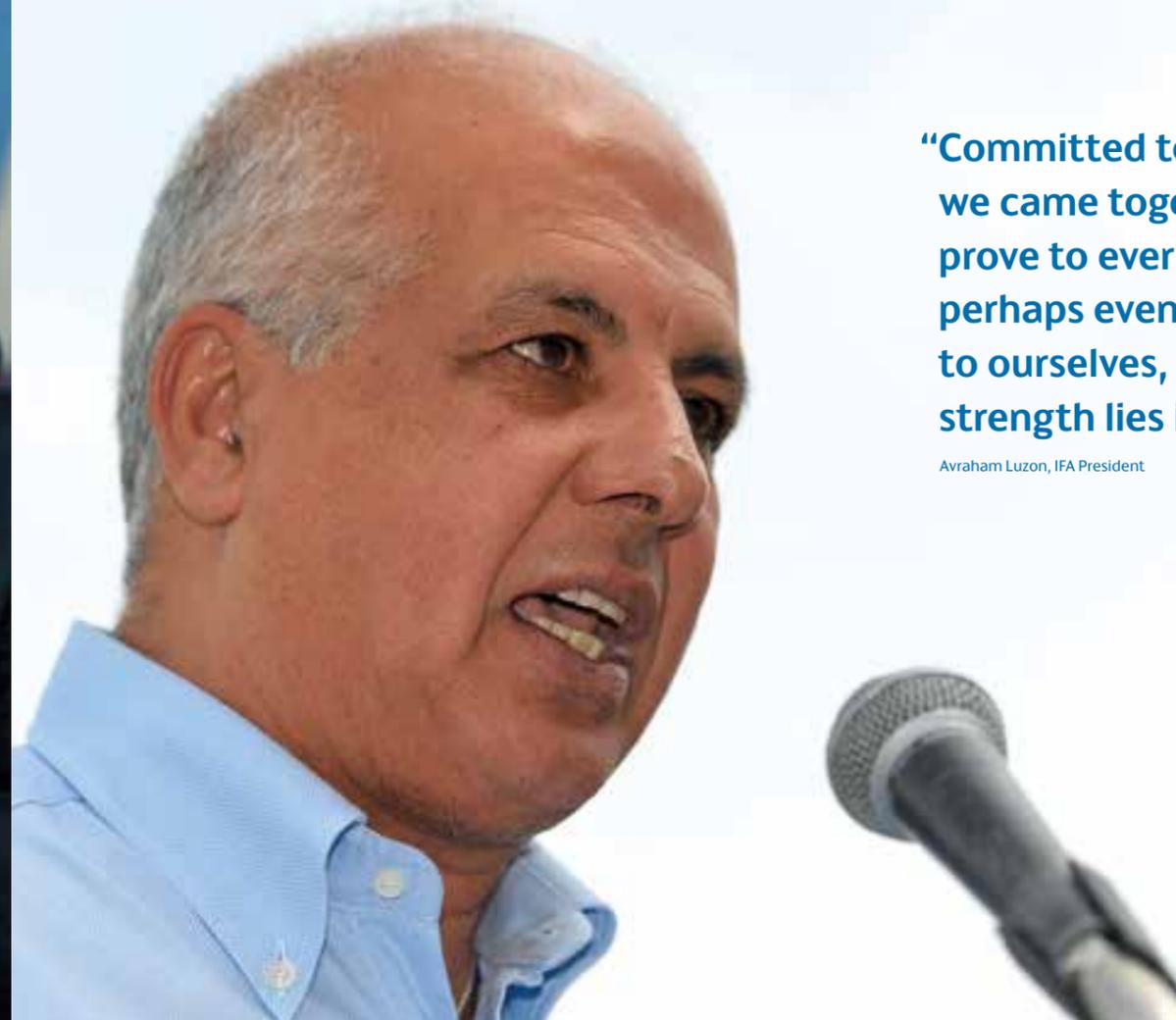


The tournament was notable for the high standards set both on and off the pitch

# Two magical weeks

**“Committed to the task, we came together to prove to everyone, and perhaps even more to ourselves, that our strength lies in our unity”**

Avraham Luzon, IFA President



I would like to thank UEFA for the trust placed in us when setting us the challenge of staging this UEFA European Under-21 Championship final tournament. We had two magical weeks of football, unity and friendship, yet beforehand, this was no foregone conclusion.

We have proved it is possible for us to meet the high standards required by UEFA and I am happy to say that over a fortnight in June we replaced the doubts with a sense of pride – pride for the football played, for the packed stands, for the tolerance shown, and for having given people a reason to smile.

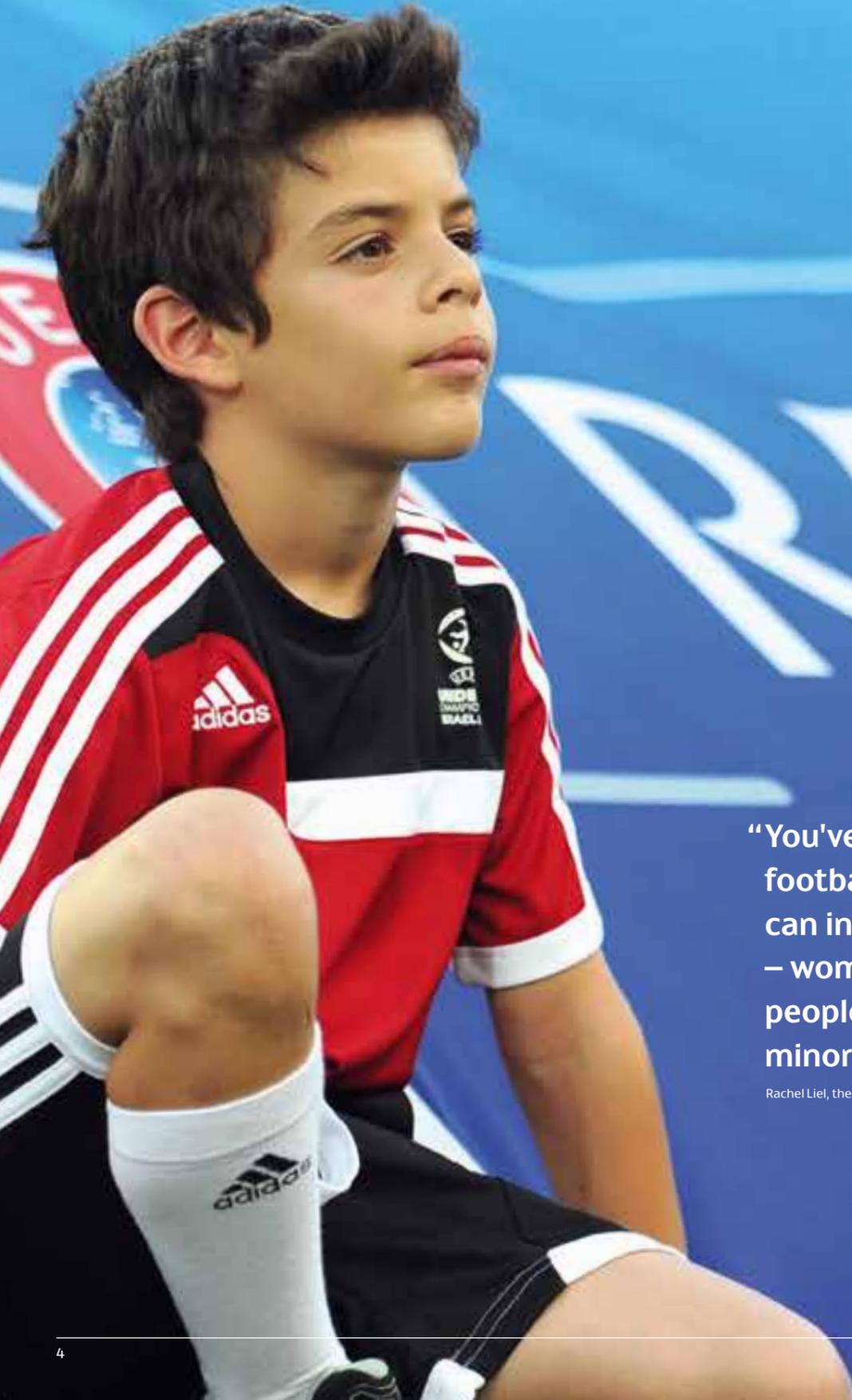
New stadiums were built and new infrastructure laid down; hundreds of volunteers offered their help and fans in Israel went out of their way to paint this U21 EURO in the happiest colours there are. Committed to the task, we came together to prove to everyone, and perhaps even more to ourselves, that our strength lies in our unity.

**Avraham Luzon**  
Israel Football Association President



Coach Guy Luzon is thrown into the air as Israel celebrate a memorable victory against England

# Setting the right example



England's Jason Steele and Israel's Marwan Kabha at the 'Football For All' event



Respect for match officials is a key UEFA principle

**“You've seen here what football can do, how it can include everybody – women, families, people of disabilities, minorities, migrants”**

Rachel Liel, the NIF chief executive

The aim of UEFA's Respect campaign is to support the process of achieving a sustainable development of football, and its influence is felt year-round at every UEFA tournament. The 2013 UEFA European Under-21 Championship was no exception, with encouraging evidence of fair play on the field and a prevailing mood of celebration in the stands. Away from the stadiums, there was even more to celebrate as the Israel Football Association (IFA) marked ten years since the Kick Racism Out (KRO) campaign in Israeli football was established with the support of the English Football Association (FA).

The event in Netanya on 9 June served to showcase a series of community initiatives bringing together female and male youth players from minority communities across Israel under the 'Football For All' banner – a joint initiative of the IFA, the FA and the New Israel Fund (NIF), which had received an annual €30,000 donation from UEFA for the two years leading up to the tournament.

“You've seen here what football can do, how it can include everybody – women, families, people of disabilities, minorities, migrants,” declared Rachel Liel, the NIF chief executive.

There were Israel and England U21 players in attendance and they spent time on the Maccabi Netanya FC training pitch with representatives of the following groups: boys from the Neighbourhood League, in which Jews and Arabs play together; Hapoel Ra'anana FC girls' teams; Bedouin children from Tel Sheva; Ethiopian-Israeli children from the Hapoel Beer Sheva FC football projects; and youth teams from Bnei Sakhnin FC led by the Arab ex-Israeli international Abbas Suan.

# Technical report



# Road to Jerusalem

Spain travelled to Israel to defend the title they had won two years earlier, but there weren't many familiar faces among their opponents. Only one other finalist had been in Denmark: Stuart Pearce's England, who had qualified for the fourth successive time. The fact that nobody else had successfully qualified for two consecutive final tournaments spoke volumes for the intensely competitive nature of the championship which, these days, occupies borderline territory with the senior national teams.



England's Jordan Henderson gives chase as Marcus Pedersen drives forward for Norway



Yann-Erik de Lanlay cracks a shot at goal during Norway's 2-2 draw with hosts Israel in the tournament opener

This was illustrated by the Norwegian and Russian squads, depleted on the opening matchday by the absences of four and two players respectively who were on duty elsewhere with their nation's senior teams and then travelled to Israel to rejoin the Under-21 squads hours before the second round of fixtures. Spain and Italy were both short of players who, though eligible for the U21s, had been registered on senior squad lists for the FIFA Confederations Cup, which kicked off in Brazil while the ball was still rolling in Israel. Players from England and Germany, although eligible, had acquired status in their senior sides and were therefore not selected.

The form book suggested that England and Italy would progress from Group A, while the hosts and Norway had no qualms about wearing underdog labels. Israel looked

**England had almost 70% of the ball but were torn apart by Norway's fast collective counterattacks**

uncomfortable against the Norwegians who, in the opening game, served notice of intent by defending in compact fashion and attacking with a nice blend of direct forward passing and neat combination moves, exploiting spaces between the lines of Israel's 4-4-2 formation. Marcus Pedersen swiftly equalised after Guy Luzon's men had gone ahead with a penalty but the turning point came just before the break when Norway's left-back, Vegar Hedenstad, was red-carded. Norway went into deep-defending mode – and their back line dropped so deep that spaces began to appear at the edge of the box. Israel exploited this area to strike a second goal yet Norway pushed relentlessly forward and equalised in the first minute of added time. It proved to be a pivotal moment in the group.

Italy made a winning start, a direct free-kick by Lorenzo Insigne earning a 1-0 victory over England. Against Israel, they exploited numerical superiority after the hosts' Eyal Golasa was dismissed in the 37th minute and scored three more to run out 4-0 winners. The other match produced a major surprise. England had almost 70% of the ball but were torn apart by Norway's fast collective counterattacks, being beaten 3-1. Although there were mathematical alternatives, the top two places were decided after two matchdays.



Lorenzo Insigne's free-kick earned Italy all three points against England



Germany captain Lewis Holtby



Ofir Krieff enjoys the moment after scoring Israel's winner against England



Substitute Álvaro Morata climbs highest to head in Spain's late winner against Russia

It was a similar story in Group B. Russia, with key performers Fedor Smolov and Alan Dzagoev away on senior-team duty, opted for a safety-first approach to their curtain-raiser against Spain, with one of the screening midfielders, Ibragim Tsallagov, spending long periods man-marking the dangerous Isco. Spain dominated but had one of those days when the ball refused to go in – until substitute striker Álvaro Morata found a winner eight minutes from time.

The other Group B fixture offered maximum entertainment value, with the Dutch going in at half-time 2-0 up against an off-colour Germany. However, roles were reversed after the interval, with Rainer Adrion's side upping the tempo, pressing higher and coming back to 2-2 – only to concede from a corner in the 90th minute. Cor Pot's Netherlands team ran riot against Russia who played a considerable slice of the match with ten; conceded four goals while one man short; and succumbed 5-1. On the same day, the Germans were pushed onto the back foot by a Spanish side who showed the fans delightful combination moves and moments of individual brilliance – yet failed to translate that impressive football into goals. Once again, Morata came on to deliver a knockout blow – this time in the 86th minute. Spain and the Netherlands were through. Germany and Russia were out.

The third matchday was therefore a welcome opportunity for the coaches to give some football to previously unused squad members, and to give the key performers a breather. Norway, making nine changes, went ahead thanks to a 90th-minute penalty against an Italian outfit that registered seven changes. Devis Mangia's charges, however, clinched top spot by equalising in the fourth minute

of added time. The draw made Israel's 1-0 success against England irrelevant in terms of group placings though Ofir Krieff's 80th-minute goal had historical relevance and sent the crowd – and the players – home happy. Had it not been for the late Norwegian equaliser in the first game, the hosts would have been in the semi-finals.

Germany salvaged a degree of satisfaction by recovering from a goal down to win 2-1 against the Russians who, for the second straight fixture, played a considerable period with ten. For the match which decided pole position in Group B, Julen Lopetegui made seven changes to the Spanish lineup, Cor Pot swapped all 11 in the Dutch side. Spain underlined the strength of their squad with a 3-0 triumph – to the extent that some of the 'substitutes', such as midfielder Pablo Sarabia or striker Álvaro Vázquez, were pencilled onto the list of candidates for UEFA's team of the tournament.

As the final curtain had come down on Group A one day before Group B was concluded, Norway and Italy went into their semi-finals with a 24-hour advantage in terms of rest and recovery – which, had the coaches not been able to ring so many changes on matchday three, might have been a significant factor.

**“We did it the German way. It was interesting to see the Dutch players fighting until the last minute”**

Cor Pot, Netherlands coach



Adam Maher keeps a step ahead of Sebastian Rudy in the Netherlands' thrilling defeat of Germany

# Skill and spirit shine through



Jo Inge Berget sticks out a leg to block Iker Muniain's pass



Mangia's men displayed resilience, team spirit and tactical discipline against opponents who had enjoyed territorial control for much of the match

A joyous Fabio Borini turns away after scoring Italy's late winner

## SPAIN 3-0 NORWAY

The two semi-finals generated enormous expectation. The first was the Spain v Norway confrontation in Netanya. Tor Ole Skullerud's game plan was based on Norwegian strengths in ball-winning and fast counterattacking. He hoped that his team, technically well-equipped, would be able to disrupt the Spaniards' possession play. A 3-0 scoreline might suggest that the plan failed, but this was not the case. Spain certainly dominated, especially during a rampant first half when Norway spent time chasing the ball and trying to find antidotes for the technical excellence of Thiago Alcántara in midfield and Isco, one of the three-pronged attack.

Julen Lopetegui's decision to retain faith in Rodrigo as main striker in spite of Álvaro Morata's scoring record was vindicated when the SL Benfica player hooked the ball into the

net during added time at the end of the first half. But, as the heat and end-of-season fatigue started to take their toll, the Norwegians – still in the early phase of their domestic campaign – began to test David de Gea in the Spain goal and to oblige Lopetegui to admit that, at certain moments, he was preparing mentally for extra time. However, the technical resources of the Spanish players were not to be denied. In the 87th minute, Isco conjured a magical change of direction and a superb finish with the outside of his right foot. Then Morata, on again as sub, brought his haul to four by latching onto a rebound from his own shot and sending the ball in off the far post from an impossible angle. The final score did scant justice to Norwegian endeavours but was a tribute to the sheer quality and fluency of Spain's passing game.



Spain celebrate Rodrigo's opener shortly before half-time

## ITALY 1-0 NETHERLANDS

The other semi in Petah Tikva also had an outcome which was not totally in tune with the 90 minutes of intensely competitive, tactically mature football. The Netherlands set about the task of reaching the final that they had won in 2006 and 2007 with a hearty appetite. They put together some attractive combination play, blending short passing with middle-distance deliveries and direct supply to the attacking trio of Georginio Wijnaldum on the right, Ola John wide on the left and Luuk de Jong playing the target role through the middle. Their domination and their success rate with the second ball made the Italians look nervous and out of sorts in comparison with previous games. Italy gained impetus by injecting Manolo Gabbiadini into the attack yet

neither side could find an end product – until injury forced Dutch central defender Stefan de Vrij to withdraw. His replacement, Mike van der Hoorn, was still settling into his boots when Fabio Borini, receiving from Lorenzo Insigne, turned past him and fired into the net.

Devis Mangia's men had displayed resilience, team spirit and tactical discipline against opponents who had enjoyed territorial control for much of the match. It now remained to be seen whether the Azzurrini could find similar resources against an irrepressible Spain in the Jerusalem final.



Marco van Ginkel (right) keeps Fausto Rossi at arm's length

# Thiago's toreros triumph again



Thiago Alcántara (middle) had already scored three times by the 38th minute

It's a torrid Tuesday evening at the Teddy Stadium in Jerusalem. Mercifully, the sunshine which still packed a heavyweight punch when the team buses arrived has slid quickly along the north stand and left the immaculate playing surface in welcome shadow. There is a growing buzz of excitement. The official attendance figure later reveals that it's emanating from a crowd of almost 30,000 who have gone to the Teddy hoping to be witnesses to an epic encounter between the siblings of the two teams who, 352 days previously, had competed for the senior European crown in Kyiv. Spaniards and Italians are about to live up to expectations.

Expectations, however, are not to be fulfilled in terms of the script. With Spain going into the final without having conceded a goal and the Italian net having been ruffled only by a penalty, logic suggested a low-scoring game. Logic was to be quickly refuted. The tactical lineups displayed on the electronic scoreboards at the Teddy confirmed that Spain's classic 4-3-3 formation would be confronted by Italy's classic 4-4-2. The only change to semi-final team sheets was made by Julen Lopetegui, who opted to replace striker Rodrigo with Álvaro Morata, the natural predator who, despite starting just once, had scored four goals in 165 minutes on the park. Against Italian defending, the sharpest of cutting edges would be required. "The Spaniards play as though they are in the bull ring," one of the UEFA technical team had commented before kick-off. "They mesmerise and wear their opponents down. Then they deliver the decisive blow." Few would have predicted that the toreros would reach for the sword so soon after Slovenian referee Matej Jug had signalled the start.



Asier Illarramendi powers past Marco Verratti



Fans of the two finalists enjoy the show

Morata made his presence felt by drifting to the left and producing an improbable twist and turn to win a corner. Within moments, he repeated the movement, receiving the ball from Isco to get to the byline and loft a cross to the far post where midfielder Thiago Alcántara, creeping in unnoticed, headed home from close range. With the ball almost exclusive property of the red-shirted Spaniards, the question was whether the Italian team could find a response. But, within four minutes, they did – and in a fashion which threatened to change the complexion of the game. Central defender Matteo Bianchetti hit a long pass over the top of the Spain rearguard and, with keeper David de Gea caught in no-man's-land, fleet-footed striker Ciro Immobile outpaced the defence and coolly lobbed into the Spanish net. One-all after barely ten minutes.

Although the action was hectic, a clear pattern had emerged. Spain's football was based on extraordinary technical skills in every department and a nice balance in midfield where Koke

and Thiago had industrious support from the ubiquitous Asier Illarramendi, outstanding in the screening role. In the wide areas, magic was provided by the interchanging Cristian Tello and Isco, who engaged in a programme of destruction-testing on the Italian full-backs. Devis Mangia, thriving on the presence of Italy's youth-team coordinator Arrigo Sacchi throughout the tournament, based his game plan on a 4-4-2 reminiscent of Sacchi's AC Milan in terms of compactness, enthusiastic pressing in midfield, quick defence-to-attack transitions and an ability to mix direct supply to front runners with more elaborate approach play. It added up to a heady footballing cocktail.

**Spain mesmerise and wear their opponents down. Then they deliver the decisive blow**

## The final

With the equaliser having convinced the Italians that they had found a direct route to the Spanish goal, De Gea had to react more swiftly to another long ball over the top to Immobile and then made a reflex save with his right arm when the same formula sent midfielder Alessandro Florenzi clear. The Spaniards were dominant, but Italy, with forwards Immobile and Fabio Borini ready to sprint out of the blocks, had the stiletto ready.

Lopetegui's team remained unfazed by the Italian menace. The tempo of their ball circulation and short-passing interchanges obliged Italy's screening midfielders Marco Verratti and Fausto Rossi to invest more time in chasing and harrying than in playmaking. In the wide areas, Florenzi and Lorenzo Insigne found it difficult to outwit opponents who consistently regained possession in advanced areas through their readiness to press high and their sharp sense of anticipation. On the wings, Spain's full-backs – Martín Montoya on the right and Alberto Moreno on the left – pushed forward with panache to help Isco and Tello to wreak havoc.

Spain's ability to create chaos down the flanks was to prove crucial. Firstly, Koke found space on the left to deliver a cross which crept over the Italian captain Luca Caldirola for Thiago, appearing again in the zone where he had scored the first goal, to chest the ball down and shoot left-footed into the net from close range. Six minutes later Tello broke deep into the Italy box and, when he attempted to turn after a back-heel, he had his feet taken away.

Thiago, Spain's No10, converted the spot kick to complete a 32-minute hat-trick which may have given Michel Platini, watching attentively from the main stand, cause to reminisce on his own goalscoring exploits in France's No10 shirt at EURO '84. Midway through the second half, an identical move on the other wing ended with the buccaneering right-back Montoya being upended by Vasco Regini and, this time, it was Isco who dispatched the penalty with aplomb. Game over. Or was it?

Even with 1-4 on the scoreboard, Mangia energetically urged his side not to raise the white flag, while Lopetegui was equally vigorous in requesting final physical and mental efforts. Italy's resilience paid dividends when Borini's low shot found the Spanish net with ten minutes remaining, but further pressure, ambition and endeavour went unrewarded. After six minutes of added time, the Spaniards launched themselves into a jubilant heap in the penalty area before performing a dance around the centre circle and finding the strength to throw Lopetegui into the Jerusalem air. While the announcer informed the crowd that Thiago, as he had been in 2011, had been named UEFA's man of the match, the Spanish captain pulled on the shirt of Sergio Canales, a team-mate who had been obliged to leave Israel through injury. Wearing the No7 shirt back-to-front, he lifted the trophy which represented the ultimate accolade for the football played by Thiago and his fellow toreros on a memorable evening in Jerusalem.



Ciro Immobile (top) scored Italy's tenth-minute equaliser, while Devis Mangia (bottom) urged his side on to the end



Thiago Alcántara lifts the trophy as Spain retain their title



Thiago Alcántara was named UEFA's man of the match for the second Under-21 final in succession

# Julen's Jerusalem jackpot



Julen Lopetegui led Spain to the U19 title in 2012 then the U21 crown in Israel less than a year later

Julen Lopetegui became a member of the Royal Spanish Football Federation (RFEF) coaching family as recently as 2010 after a brief spell in club coaching at Rayo Vallecano de Madrid. Just eleven months before landing the Under-21 title in Jerusalem, he had been in Estonia, leading Spain to a successful defence of the UEFA European U19 Championship title that had been won in 2011 under the guidance of Spanish youth coaching guru Ginés Meléndez. In Israel, his challenge was to defend the crown secured under Luis Milla in Denmark in 2011. In both cases, expectations were high. In both cases, he had another relatively inexperienced coach, Santi Denia,

as his assistant. But neither was short of experience in the game of football. Lopetegui made 317 Liga appearances between the posts of seven clubs, among them Real Madrid CF and FC Barcelona, and had been one of the goalkeepers in Spain's 1994 FIFA World Cup squad. Denia had played 136 matches for Albacete Balompié and 226 for Club Atlético de Madrid.

They had a clear understanding of the unwritten terms and conditions which are part and parcel of a coaching post at the RFEF. The brief was to respect the well-established playing philosophy which had brought glory at senior and youth levels. Success breeds pressure – and part of Lopetegui's job was

**“We went into each match knowing that we could win, lose or draw, but one thing was non-negotiable: we were going to stick to our playing philosophy”**

Julen Lopetegui, Spain coach

to focus on mental strength, on humility and on the creation of a strong group ethic. “We had only three days of preparation,” he commented in Israel, “so the strength of the playing philosophy was important and, even though it might seem strange when we’re talking about this age group, we relied on the maturity of the players when it came to implementing it. We went into each match knowing that we could win, lose or draw, but one thing was non-negotiable: we were going to stick to our playing philosophy. I was happy with the players’ mentality and their commitment to that philosophy.”

The 45-year-old set about the task in a refreshingly natural way without seeking a spotlight on his own contribution. “The game is about players,” he insisted, “and how they treat the ball. When we have possession, we want them to have freedom to play. But it’s a freedom with responsibility – a responsibility to help the team as a whole. We want to attack when we have the ball and defend efficiently by regaining it quickly. To be successful, you have to be good at both.”

Six points from the first two games gave Lopetegui a chance to make sure all his outfield players got some football and, man-management benefits apart, helped him make sure the players had the right blend

of training and rest-and-recovery time during a demanding match schedule. “You could see that some of them were running short of fuel towards the end of games,” he admitted, “but we maintained our attitude and concentration right through to the end, knowing what we had to do with the ball and without the ball.”

For Lopetegui, the reward was another winners’ medal, another European title and another taste of being thrown into the air by jubilant players. “The satisfaction in these tournaments,” he said, “is getting the players to improve and to make the most of the experience.” From Israel, he travelled directly to Turkey, keen to help another group of footballers improve by coaching them through the final tournament of the FIFA U-20 World Cup.





Isco's direct running was a threat either through the middle or in a wider role for Spain

# Impressions from Israel

## FORMATIONS AND SYSTEMS

It is risky to overemphasise 'trends' in a 15-match tournament. But the event in Israel offered observers a rich and fascinating weave of playing patterns and philosophies. The Spanish team were there to defend the Under-21 crown they had won in Denmark and, with the senior side having stacked up European and world titles, served as an obvious benchmark for the other contestants, most of whom sought either to replicate some aspects of the Spanish game or to find ways of coping with it and replying to it.

Although there had been a change in Spain's technical area, where Julen Lopetegui had taken over from Luis Milla, there was no change in the Spanish playing philosophy. The playing formation was their classic 4-3-3 with the outstanding Asier Illarramendi acting as screening midfielder. Lopetegui's only significant alteration during the tournament focused on the balance immediately in front of him. In the opening match against Russia, Isco was fielded as accomplice for the team captain Thiago Alcántara, with Cristian Tello and Iker Muniain operating on the wings. In subsequent games, Isco started in a wide role with the skill and industry of Koke providing support for Thiago.

In Spain's group, the Netherlands adopted a similar structure but with the midfield triangle inverted. The use of Marco van Ginkel and Kevin Strootman as twin screening midfielders meant that the template could be described as 4-3-3 or its younger brother, the 4-2-3-1. There were also shades of meaning underlying England's 4-3-3 in the other group. Stuart Pearce's preference for a single midfield screening player meant that, in practice, the structure was more akin to 4-1-4-1. Germany opened the championship in 4-2-3-1 formation with Sebastian Rudy and Sebastian Rode harmonising as sweetly as their names in the holding midfield berths. Rainer Adrion then switched to 4-1-4-1 for the final fixture against Russia with a defender, Matthias Ginter, deployed as the single screen.

The Russians also adopted a 4-2-3-1 system, with the variation that one of the screening midfielders was often assigned man-to-man marking duties, with Ibragim Tsallagov, for example, shadowing Isco when Nikolai Pisarev's men kicked off against Spain. Norway's approach to the finals was based on a well-organised 4-1-4-1 with Stefan Johansen the usual tenant of the screening midfield



Netherlands midfielder Kevin Strootman



Nir Biton (left) keeps a close eye on England's Wilfried Zaha

position. Israel and Italy completed the jigsaw with 4-4-2 structures, although they fleshed out the bones in different ways. Guy Luzon's team began with two ball-winning players in the screening posts, but gained cohesion between the lines and attacking potential when the pairing of Nir Biton and Ofir Krieff was introduced. In the Italian lineup, the two screening midfielders (Marco Verratti and, after Luca Marrone's injury, Fausto Rossi) were all-rounders in terms of ball-winning and playmaking.

Israel's attacking duo consisted of a main target with a second striker operating in support; Italy deployed more of a partnership. Although combinations between the two were not a salient feature of the Italians' attacking, Ciro Immobile and Fabio Borini worked in parallel in terms of off-the-ball movement and the exploitation of pace to give depth to Italy's attacking play. The tournament offered no conclusive evidence to support theories that one formation is superior to the alternatives. Of the semi-finalists, the Spaniards and the Dutch preferred 4-3-3; Norway remained faithful to their 4-1-4-1 and Italy to their 4-4-2. There was a drift away from the 4-4-2 which (with variations) had been used by half of the contestants in 2011.



Norway's successful side had been together since U15 level, emphasising the value of continuity

### THE DIRECT ROUTE

The tournament in Israel highlighted the importance of variety in methods of attacking. Although the Spanish game was based on extensive passing interchanges, they also, as stressed by Dany Ryser (a member of UEFA's technical team), "played with an important variation between short and long passes and could switch the focal point of their attacks with excellent long diagonal passing". The other three semi-finalists were also diligent in seeking attacking variety. The Dutch, especially when subjected to high pressure by Spain, had no qualms about delivering the ball directly to a fast striker. The same applied to Tor Ole Skullerud's Norwegian side, which effectively combined neat combination moves with direct supply to the target forward. Italy's defenders were quick to lift their heads and spot opportunities for direct delivery to the front men, while their midfielders, Verratti particularly, excelled in marrying direct forward passing with deliveries into other attacking channels. Of the four teams who went home after the group phase, Israel and Russia had a clear preference for direct attacking; Germany looked to build through midfield; and England implemented a possession-based philosophy with elaborate moves constructed patiently from the back.

### A PLAYING PHILOSOPHY

The fact that coaches of senior national sides, such as Fabio Capello, Roy Hodgson or Louis van Gaal, took time to travel to Israel (the coaches of Spain and Italy would also have been there but for FIFA Confederations Cup commitments) gave a clear indication that U21 players must be prepared to make the jump into the 'A' team or, as discussed in one of the talking points, need to jump from one to the other. Norway's technical director, Nils Johan Semb, was alongside Skullerud throughout the finals, as was Arrigo Sacchi, coordinator of Italy's age-limit teams, who established a good working relationship with Devis Mangia. "I started to look at and analyse football in a different way when he was in charge of AC Milan and then the national team," the Italian trainer commented. "I think his way of playing football is important. We are now in a different era, but there are some very important principles which are valid regardless of what year or football season it may be. Perhaps we forgot that a little over the last few years. But I believe they're important aspects for playing quality football. During the tournament, we spoke every day – and that's the way it should be."

Mangia explained that Italy, like Spain, currently "apply the same game philosophy in all the age categories with, depending on the qualities of the players available, a 4-4-2 or 4-5-1 structure. In the Under-21s, we opted for 4-4-2 with the same key principles of playing and pressing high; to adopt a vertical style of attacking; and variety in our play when we are in possession. There is also an emphasis on tactical maturity in the sense of adapting to game situations and exploiting any weaknesses the opponents might have."

UEFA's technical team in Israel discussed the relationships between U21 and senior sides and took note of the fact that the successful teams were the ones with a clearly defined playing philosophy applied at all levels.

**The successful teams were the ones with a clearly defined playing philosophy applied at all levels**

### A QUESTION OF COACHES



England coach Stuart Pearce was contesting a record fourth successive final tournament

Within days of the final in Jerusalem, half of the eight coaches had left their post: England's Pearce had been in charge of the U21s since 2007; Germany's Adrion from 2009; Israel's Luzon since 2010; and the Netherlands' Cor Pot was handing over to the two-time European U17 champion Albert Stuivenburg after four years at the helm. Of the rest, Skullerud had joined the Norwegian set-up in 2010 as assistant before becoming No1 shortly before the tournament in Israel; Pisarev had taken over this Russian team in 2010; Mangia was appointed by Italy in mid-qualifying campaign in 2012; and Lopetegui had been holding the Spanish reins only since Milla stood down after the 2012 Olympic Games. Skullerud emphasised that his squad had been together since U15 level. Is continuity in terms of philosophy and players more important than the continuity of coaches?



Tor Ole Skullerud took charge of Norway in the run-up to the event

### ROLE REVERSAL

Building from the back and defending from the front. The complexity of playing roles at the two ends of the pitch was a topic which gave UEFA's observers food for thought during a tournament which raised issues about the attacking qualities of defenders and the defensive qualities of attackers.

Starting at the back, the standards of goalkeeping were judged to be high – to the extent that selecting three for the team of the tournament became a thorny task. Israel's Boris Kleyman, for instance, made some outstanding contributions despite conceding six goals – half of them, it has to be said, when his side were reduced to ten. The Dutch No1, Jeroen Zoet, provided a prime example of how the modern goalkeeper can be practically an 11th outfielder. He made an impact on play by reacting quickly to control the area behind his back four and make it difficult for opponents to play through passes or go over the top. Spain's David de Gea, although more reluctant to advance off his line, was frequently involved in his team's building-from-the-back activities. Norwegian keeper Ørjan Nyland was equally involved in his side's defensive and counterattacking play and, in terms of shot-stopping, produced an outstanding performance in the semi-final against Spain, when he kept his country in the game with a series of outstanding saves.



Jeroen Zoet defended the area behind the Dutch defence almost like an outfield player

Peter Rudbæk, a member of UEFA's technical team, emphasised that "in the successful teams, there was at least one ball-playing central defender and one screening midfielder capable of building from the back and contributing to playmaking. The traditional playmaking No10 is pretty well extinct". Most of the teams in Israel laid foundations for their attacking with a manoeuvre which has almost become a default setting in UEFA's age-limit competitions. When the goalkeeper had the ball, the two central defenders spread wide; the two full-backs advanced on the wings; and at least one of the controlling midfielders dropped back to receive. The Italian centre-backs, Matteo Bianchetti and Luca Caldirola, excelled in their long and short distribution. Ditto the Spanish pairing of Marc Bartra and Iñigo Martínez. Norway's Stefan Strandberg launched attacks with accurate diagonal passes to the wide areas.

The difficulties experienced by the Italian full-backs in the final against Spain illustrated that establishing attacking foundations from the flanks was more problematical, in that opponents were more inclined to invest in high pressing in the areas where one escape route is closed down by the touchline. Germany's full-backs, when receiving deep, ran into identical problems in a tournament which underlined how foundations are more easily laid in the central part of defence where the opposition

gain lesser dividends from pressing. As Jean-François Domergue, from UEFA's technical team, said: "Central defenders need to be comfortable on the ball, well-equipped technically, and able to play their way out into midfield. The full-backs generally did well in attack and this raised the question for the coaches about how far the right and left-wingers should be obliged to cover back to mark them. In some cases, they were drawn back level with the back four – and sometimes even deeper."

Use of the wings reflected the diversity of playing systems. In Spain's 4-3-3 with interchanging wingers, the two full-backs – Martín Montoya on the right and Alberto Moreno on the left – combined well with the two wingers and, upon arrival in the final third, either the winger or the full-back would be prepared to cut inside. Of the two similar penalties won in the final, the first involved a winger, the second a full-back – both of them close to the byline. On the other hand, the teams operating variations on 4-4-2 relied on wide midfielders who were more likely to operate through the 'inside-forward' channels than to run the touchlines. England's attacking was based on reaching crossing positions on the flanks, but the number of crosses was not always matched by the number of team-mates in the box.



Luca Caldirola's distribution was key in helping Italy build from the back



Spain coach Julen Lopetegui employed Rodrigo as his central striker as much for his work-rate as for his goals

### THE KILLER INSTINCT

'Numbers in the box' emerged as one of the main discussion points at the championship. Devis Mangia's Italy were the only side to operate with a genuine striking partnership and, as remarked by Dusan Savić, the Serbian member of UEFA's technical team in Israel, "we are looking more and more towards the second line for our goalscorers". The team discussed the lack of natural goalscorers – those attackers with genuine predatory instincts – and focused on just three names: the Italian strike pair of Fabio Borini and Ciro Immobile, plus Spain's Álvaro Morata, and possibly, another Italian: Manolo Gabbiadini. Only the first two were regular starters. Morata picked up the tournament's Golden Boot award despite making just two starts – one of them the final against Italy in which, exceptionally, he failed to score. His tally was four goals in 245 minutes on the field of play.

His coach, Julen Lopetegui, said that, although he was not scoring freely, Rodrigo was being preferred for the central striker role because "we are happy with his contribution to the team effort". Many of the main forwards in

Israel invested a significant percentage of their energies in working as the first line of defence or in making tactical runs aimed at opening up spaces for deeper-lying team-mates. Dany Ryser remarked: "It may be oversimplifying the issue, but we could look at how many strikers operated with their backs to goal and how many, like the Italian pair, played facing the opponents' goal. The question we have to ask ourselves as coaches is whether we're overemphasising the defensive qualities." Jean-François Domergue added: "The striker is usually just one individual and maybe coaches focus on collective virtues. Maybe the time has come to do more specific work in front of goal. The best young players are sometimes rushed through the age-limit teams and we have to be careful to make sure this doesn't mean that they skip certain aspects of their education." The technical report on the 2007 final tournament in the Netherlands noted a "trend towards all-round midfielders who do not possess the striker's predatory instincts". Has this trend been allowed to continue during the subsequent six years?

**Many of the main forwards in Israel invested a significant percentage of their energies in working as the first line of defence**

### COUNTERPRODUCTIVE?

Most of the teams in Israel regarded counterattacking as a valuable weapon in their armoury. After the opening 1-0 defeat by Spain, Russia coach Nikolai Pisarev admitted "playing open football against Spain would not have been wise so we planned to rely on tactical discipline and defensive play. We just hoped to grab a goal on the counterattack." Against England, Norway had just 31% of possession and made 278 passes compared with 610 by their opponents. But Tor Ole Skullerud's men won 3-1. "We were good and efficient with our counterattacking," he said afterwards. "England played well in possession but didn't create that many chances. So I was happy with that and I was pleased that we managed to have many players in our transitions. At the same time, I didn't want to over-rely on counters. We spoke at half-time about keeping the ball more and staying calm in possession." Germany, especially when on the back foot in their second game against Spain, tried to inflict damage on the break but failed to do so. "We didn't have the dominance and control of the ball that we wanted," Rainer Adrion said, "but a goal can change a game – and the players need to have the conviction that one counterattack can do that."



England enjoyed the lion's share of possession against Norway but still lost 3-1 to a side skilled in the art of the counterattack

Yet the tournament witnessed only five goals as a result of counterattacking – 16% of those scored in open play. It represented an increase on Denmark 2011, where just 10% of the open-play goals were from counters, although it is still a sharp drop in comparison with Sweden 2009 where 11 of the 21 open-play goals (52%) stemmed from counters.

At the same time, the definition of counterattacking (at all levels of the game) is evolving and is no longer associated with breaks from deep-defending positions. In Israel, two of the successful counterattacks were launched by Spain after ball-winning in more advanced areas.

The Spaniards once again led the way in terms of regaining possession in such advanced areas – which is where they had enough numbers to engage in high pressing. Most of the other teams pressed high for certain periods of the game – such as Israel, who focused on trying to disturb their opponents' build-up during the opening ten minutes of matches and, with the heat an obvious conditioning factor, then launched their pressing from midfield. Most sides, however, placed the emphasis on quick transitions into a defensive block with aggressive pressure on the ball-carrier within their own half of the field.

### ONE MORE, ONE LESS



Russia coach Nikolai Pisarev had adjustments to make after twice seeing his side reduced to ten men

One of the talking points to emerge from the 2009 tournament in Sweden was that, for almost three hours, there were 11 v 10 or 11 v 9 situations on the pitch and, during that time, the team enjoying numerical supremacy had failed to score. The topic was revived during the 2013 finals, where four of the group fixtures were affected by dismissals. To be precise, Russia played with ten for 40 minutes against the Dutch and for 51 minutes against the Germans; Israel for 53 minutes against Italy; and Norway for 46 minutes against the hosts. "We'd had to play ten against 11 during a friendly against the Netherlands earlier in the year," Tor Ole Skullerud observed. "We learned a lot. It's necessary to have clear ideas about what to do and it is important that all the players know it. Against Israel we went over to play 4-4-1 and, at the end when we had to score, we switched to 3-3-3. We had practised both formations." The Russian coach, Nikolai Pisarev, had to cope with a situation where, having lost to Spain, his side were reduced to ten in the two subsequent matches which they had to win. He was therefore reluctant to drop into a defensively compact 4-4-1 and opted to look for goals in 4-3-2 formation. Russia scored while playing with ten against the Dutch but, in contrast to Sweden, in Israel nine goals were scored by the teams playing 11 v 10. The question, however, remains unchanged: how much training-ground time should be dedicated to the nuances of playing 11 v 10 or 10 v 11?

# On target



Leroy Fer found a gap in Germany's zonal marking system to head home the Netherlands' late winner

## THE ULTIMATE GOAL

The 45 goals scored in Israel represented a significant increase on the 36 goals in 16 matches at the 2011 final tournament – a 33% rise from 2.25 to 3 goals per match. It was the second-highest average since eight-team final tournaments were introduced in 1998, behind the 3.25 goals a game in Germany in 2004. The fact that the 45 goals were shared by 33 different players underlines the drift away from reliance on a target striker for the lion's share of the goals. The championship in Israel produced no goalless draws and only one match was won by the side conceding the opening goal: Germany coming back to beat Russia 2-1 in their final game of the group phase. Two teams came back to draw (Norway against Israel and Italy v Norway) but the other 12 fixtures were won by the side scoring first. This is not to decry the mental strength of the contestants, which was one of the notable features of the tournament, exemplified by the start and finish of the event: by Norway's determined fight to equalise against Israel while playing with ten; and by Italy's refusal to throw in the towel, even when 4-1 down to Spain in the final.

Set plays accounted for 31% of the goals' total compared with 19.4% in Denmark in 2011. However, the figure is a halfway house, taking into account that in Sweden in 2009, 45% of the goals stemmed from set plays – the percentage having peaked at 50% in Portugal in 2006. In Israel, though, seven of the 14 set-play goals were penalties.

Corners led to four goals. The tournament produced a total of 141 corner kicks and a success rate of 1 in 35. As a point of reference, this compared with 1 per 40.5 in the 2012/13 UEFA Champions League. The Netherlands' winner against Germany, headed in by unmarked substitute Leroy Fer while a line of German defenders (opting for zonal defence in that match before changing their system afterwards) looked on, generated debate on how best to defend corners. Indeed, the finals witnessed great diversity in terms of zonal/ individual marking and men stationed on the posts. Spain, though not consummate specialists in converting corners (mainly through evident questions of stature against,

usually, more corpulent opponents) were, however, adept at latching onto clearances and converting them into scoring opportunities.

The Italians were the only ones to register successes from direct free-kicks, with Lorenzo Insigne securing the 1-0 win against England in this way and Manolo Gabbiadini striking his side's third in the same fashion during the 4-0 victory over Israel.

**45 goals were shared by 33 players, underlining the drift away from reliance on a target striker**

## How the goals were scored

Category	Action	Guidelines	Number of goals
Set Plays	Corners	Direct from / following a corner	4
	Free-kicks (direct)	Direct from a free-kick	2
	Free-kicks (indirect)	Following a free-kick	1
	Penalties	Spot kick (or a follow up from a penalty)	7
	Throw-ins	Following a throw-in	-
Open Play	Combinations	Wall pass / three-man combination play	15
	Crosses	Cross from the wing	3
	Cut-backs	Pass back from the bye-line	2
	Diagonals	Diagonal pass into the penalty box	-
	Running with the ball	Dribble and close-range shot / dribble and pass	5
	Long-range shots	Direct shot / shot and rebound	2
	Forward passes	Through pass or pass over the defence	4
	Defensive errors	Bad pass back / mistake by the goalkeeper	-
	Own goals	Goal by the opponent	-
	<b>Total</b>		

There was a radical change in the way open-play goals were scored. In Denmark in 2011, the most fertile source of goals was a forward pass (a pass through or over the defence). These accounted for 43% of the open-play goals, with crosses yielding a further 32%. In Israel, through passes resulted in a mere 13% of the open-play goals and crosses just under 10%. By far the most common source of goals was the combination move which supplied 48%.

The identity of the finalists could legitimately be cited as a conditioning factor underlying such a striking change, with 2011 finalists such as Denmark, Switzerland, Iceland, the Czech Republic, Ukraine and Belarus replaced in 2013 by Germany, Israel, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway and Russia – nations with different approaches to their attacking play. The declining success rate from the through ball could also arguably be linked to the compact defensive blocks comprising a back four and, often, two screening midfielders – which add up to solid cover in the central areas. However, Italy's equaliser in the final against Spain demonstrated that a long pass over the defence can reap dividends.

The success ratio from crosses dipped steeply – but not necessarily the number of crosses. England, for example, delivered 31 crosses during their second match against Norway but failed to convert any of them. The English team, whose solitary goal was a penalty, was the only one not to score from a combination move.

The Spanish and Dutch sides registered the five goals which could be attributed to solo runs, with Georginio Wijnaldum reaping rewards from his willingness to run at opponents in the games against Germany and Russia. Spain's Isco also executed a stunning solo run and finish to put Spain 2-0 ahead at a stage of the semi-final when the Norwegians were threatening to equalise. Peter Rudbæk from UEFA's technical team commented: "Teams had good playing styles, good structures and good defences but, at the end of the day, it was the individuals who made the difference. I think that nearly all the players were very good in their technical skills and all the teams tried to play the ball instead of just kicking it. But you then have Isco and Thiago and it's unbelievable what they can do with the ball. Those individual skills can certainly make a difference."

**By far the most common source of goals was the combination move which supplied 48%**



Georginio Wijnaldum profited from his willingness to run at opponents



Marco Verratti impressed with the variety of his attacking passes



Sebastian Rudy celebrates his winning spot kick against Russia, one of seven scored from penalties in Israel

THE END PRODUCT

The championship in Israel was attractive to spectators in that it produced 304 goal attempts at an average of just over 20 per match. Spain's claim to the title can be supported by a total of 70 efforts at goal at an average of 14 per game – which exceeded their mean of 12.6 when they took the crown in 2011. On the other hand, the technical team noted that one of Spain's main strengths was to use their outstanding technical qualities to defend possession of the ball, even in the tightest situations; to take a breather while the team was in possession; to make the opposition work hard if they wanted the ball; and, evidently, to deny opponents chances to score by the apparently simple method of hiding the ball from them. Statistics reveal that Spain's opponents had 26 goal attempts at an average of only 5.2 per match – which helps to explain how David de Gea went into the final

against Italy unbeaten in the previous 360 minutes of play. Onlookers frequently focus on Spain's approach play in the opposing team's territory but, as illustrated by the Spanish senior side's successes at UEFA EURO 2008 (three goals conceded), the 2010 FIFA World Cup (two) and UEFA EURO 2012 (one), their playing style helps them build results on impressive defensive stats. Neither Russia, in the opening game, nor Norway in the semi-final, managed to hit an on-target attempt at the Spanish keeper.

The table shows how teams converted their play into attempts at goal – and how many of their efforts were on target. Overall, 42% of the finishing in Israel was directed accurately at goal, with only the Dutch achieving an average of marginally over 50%.

Team	Attempts	Avg	On target	Avg
England	31	10.33	11	3.67
Germany	29	9.67	13	4.33
Israel	20	6.67	6	2.00
Italy	56	11.20	24	4.80
Netherlands	39	9.75	20	5.00
Norway	33	8.25	12	3.00
Russia	26	8.67	9	3.00
Spain	70	14.00	32	6.40



Álvaro Morata finished as the tournament's top scorer with four goals despite playing just 245 minutes



Spain occupied the top three spots in the scoring chart. From left to right: Thiago Alcántara, Álvaro Morata, Isco

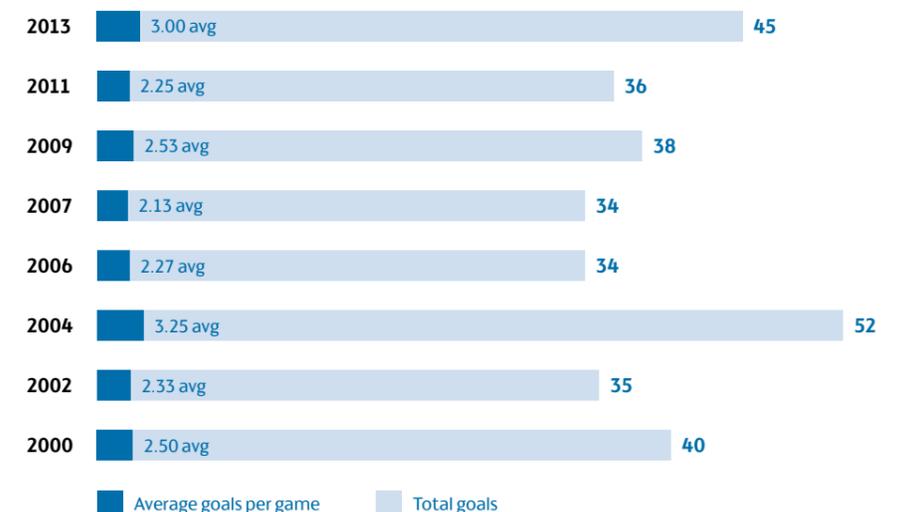
Leading scorers	Goals	Minutes played
Álvaro Morata (Spain)	4	245
Isco (Spain)	3	420
Thiago Alcántara (Spain)	3	439
Leroy Fer (Netherlands)	2	121
Manolo Gabbiadini (Italy)	2	164
Sebastian Rudy (Germany)	2	216
Georginio Wijnaldum (Netherlands)	2	248
Fabio Borini (Italy)	2	258



Russia's Alan Dzagoev (centre) had ten attempts on goal in just two games, scoring once

In individual terms, Spain's Álvaro Morata demonstrated his willingness to pull the trigger by registering 16 strikes during his 245 minutes on the pitch, half of them on target – and half of those into the net. Numerically, his fellow forward Rodrigo and Spain captain Thiago Alcántara both had ten goal attempts – a haul equalled by Italy's Manolo Gabbiadini (like Morata, usually a substitute) and Russia's Alan Dzagoev, who played just two games. Apart from the three countries mentioned, the top player in terms of attempts on goal was, for Norway, Marcus Pedersen (4 on target/4 off target); for the Netherlands, Adam Maher (3/4); for Germany, Patrick Herrmann (3/5); for England, Jordan Henderson (3/2) and Connor Wickham (2/3); and, for Israel, Ofir Krieff (1/5).

To put 2013 into context, the graph below shows goal tallies at previous tournaments:



# Squads, staff and leaders

## HOW MANY AND WHO?

The tournament in Israel was exceptional in that both groups were effectively decided with a match to spare – a fact which the coaches translated into playing opportunities for the squad members who might otherwise have gone home without playing a game. “I think it was important for the unity of the group,” Italy coach Devis Mangia commented. His Netherlands counterpart Cor Pot had to withstand adverse media comment for changing his entire team for the final group match against Spain. “We don’t really believe that two days’ recovery time between games is enough,” he said. “We calculated that, in the fourth game in ten days, our regular starters would have been 20% lower in terms of physical condition. So I decided to give my ‘A’ team five days of rest and recovery. On the other hand, I can partly understand the media reaction, because the spectators always want to see the best team”. Mangia felt strongly “it would be important to have three days of recovery instead of two”.



Despite being a senior Dutch international, Luuk de Jong requested to play for the Under-21s

Apart from the final matchday of the group stage, the Dutch, Norwegian, Spanish and Italian coaches made minimal changes to their starting lineups – mainly in response to fitness problems. The talking point that UEFA’s technical team relayed to them in Israel was therefore whether they felt that a squad of 23 players was excessive for a tournament entailing a maximum of five matches.



With matches coming thick and fast, coaches made full use of their 23-man squads

They were all in favour of the current squad size. Norway’s coach Tor Ole Skullerud noted: “This squad had been together since Under-15 level and, after losing several matches, they became stronger and stronger as a group. Everyone knew their role within the squad and everyone knew that there were 16 or 17 who were going to play the most. It was important for the others to know the terms and accept them. It may well be that players are not selected for a tournament because they might have a hard time accepting they are probably not going to play.” Spanish boss Julen Lopetegui offered a similar response: “In all our youth categories, we set out certain rules and commitments. And we only select players who fully accept the norms within our squads.” Lopetegui called – and he was by no means alone in doing so – for additional substitutions, which would offer greater playing opportunities. “I think it would be positive to allow four changes at this level,” he suggested, “with the proviso that there are only three interruptions to play. In other words, one of the substitutions would have to be a double change.”

Pot added another ingredient to the debate on squad size. “For the coach,” he explained, “there is one big advantage. When we want, we can play 11 v 11 in training, with the ‘A’ team against the ‘B’ team. It’s a good way for them

to get to know each other and to play together. You can see that it’s a positive process – the cohesion of the team noticeably improved as the players got to know each other better in match situations on the training ground.”

The Netherlands squad raised another topic for discussion. Pot’s lineup for the semi-final against Italy contained players who had jointly accumulated 56 caps at senior level. For the opening game against Israel, Norway handed in a team sheet with four blank spaces – corresponding to the players who were not in Israel but with the senior side in Albania for a FIFA World Cup qualifier. Three of them started that match in Tirana yet, on their return to Israel, only one was fielded for the full 90 minutes of the U21 semi-final against Spain in Netanya. Similarly, Russian coach Nikolai Pisarev began the tournament against Spain without Alan Dzagoev and Fedor Smolov, both substitutes (the former unused) during the senior team’s game in Portugal.

Levels of motivation among players who ‘step down’ after representing the senior squad have provided a perennial debating point in U21 circles and some national associations have an unwritten policy of not bringing players back to lower levels once they have moved higher up the international ladder. On the other hand,

Dutchman Pot remarked: “We had players such as Stefan de Vrij, Bruno Martins, Kevin Strootman or Luuk de Jong who explicitly asked to join the Under-21 team.” Lopetegui added: “The tournament is important for the development of players and all of them, even those who have already made a debut in the senior team, were proud to be part of the squad and give their best.”

Five talking points therefore emerge. Firstly, is a 23-man squad ideal in terms of equating numbers and playing opportunities? Secondly, is it viable (bearing in mind all the logistical aspects implied by an extension of the tournament) to increase recovery periods between matches from two to three days? Thirdly, should additional substitution opportunities be considered? Fourthly, is it productive or counter-productive to switch players between senior and U21 sides? What is the best-practice solution? And fifthly, to what extent should personality and attitude influence the selection of players?

## ENLARGING THE BACK ROOM?



The size of teams’ back-room staffs was up for discussion in Israel

## “The tournament is important for the development of players”

Julen Lopetegui, Spain coach

UEFA’s technical teams at age-limit tournaments have noted that, from top to bottom, standards of support are being upgraded to thoroughly professional levels. This is evidently regarded as a positive trend – up to a point. One of the coaches in Israel opined that a back-room staff of 23 – one member per player – was, from his technical point of view, excessive. This has been a matter discussed at senior level, with Spain’s Vicente

del Bosque, for instance, emphasising the importance of keeping support staff to manageable levels. It is a long-standing question mark, traceable to a comment by France’s FIFA World Cup-winning coach Aimé Jacquet that, when back-room numbers reach a certain level, there is a risk of staff members raising ‘issues’ or ‘problems’ purely to justify their presence. Should there be a limit on the numbers of back-room staff?

## LEADERS OF THE PACK



Stefan Strandberg’s leadership qualities played their part in Norway’s success

Cor Pot said that he had four leaders in his squad. Norway’s Stefan Strandberg was notable for his leadership qualities, as was Italy’s Matteo Bianchetti – each of them central defenders, by the way. Thiago Alcántara captained the Spanish side with obvious leadership capabilities. On the other hand, in the debit columns of analysis of why teams went home after the group phase, UEFA’s technical team observed “a lack of leaders on the pitch and players ready to take responsibility when things aren’t going well”. How important is ‘leadership quality’ as an ingredient in the recipe for team success? And, in terms of education, how best can leadership be developed and encouraged?

# Cards, subs and flags

## THE CARD GAME



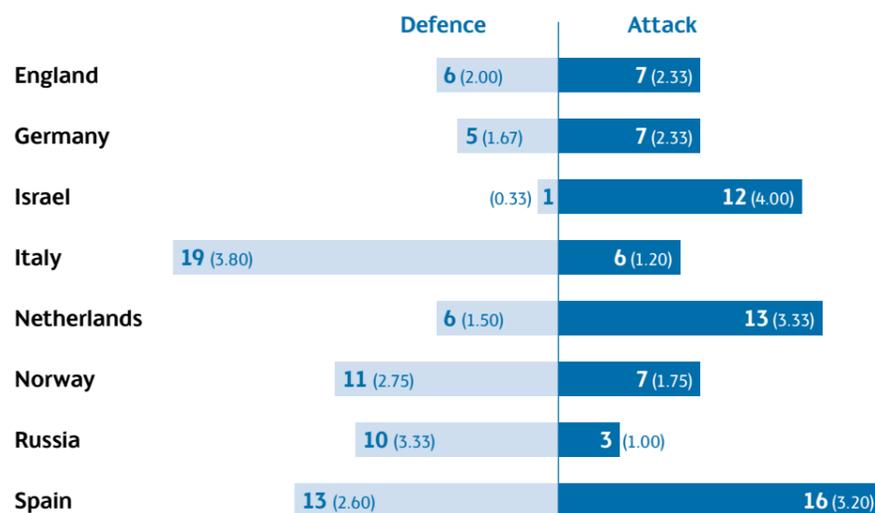
One of the long-standing talking points at Under-21 tournaments is the teams' disciplinary record at this level. It emerged as an issue as long ago as the final tournament played in Slovakia in 2000, when six games in Group A produced 37 yellow cards and an average of 49 fouls per match. Four years later in Germany, the topic resurfaced with 98 cautions at 6.125 a game plus seven dismissals. The 2013 tournament in Israel produced a comparatively favourable total of 59 yellow cards at a much more acceptable average of 3.93 per match – a figure which is inferior to the average of 4.38 during the 2012/13 UEFA Champions League, for example. Overall, the 15 fixtures in Israel were punctuated by 389

fouls at just under 26 per match. The figures reveal that 1 of every 6.17 fouls was deemed worthy of a card.

In numerical terms, Italian right-back Giulio Donati was the most penalised (14 times) followed by Dutch midfielder Marco van Ginkel (13) and Italy's controlling midfielder Marco Verratti (11).

Spain's Thiago Alcántara (13), his teammate Isco and Italian screening midfielder Fausto Rossi (both with 11) were the players who suffered the most fouls. As mentioned elsewhere in this report, the group phase registered four dismissals which changed the course of the game.

## THE OFFSIDE FLAG



Numbers in brackets represent average offsides per match

## CHANGING TIMES

Man-managing a 23-player squad was one of the challenges facing the coaches in Israel. In some cases – such as Spain and the Netherlands – the workforce was slightly reduced by injuries. But, otherwise, full use was made of the substitution possibilities in order to share the football with a little more equanimity around the squad. Only two of the 90 possible substitution opportunities went unused – by Dutch coach Cor Pot when he was testing his 'non-regular starters' during the final group match against Spain. The substitutions were made during the following time brackets. The changes before the break were in response to an injury or a sending-off.

Time	Substitutions
31-45 mins	4
Half-time	9
46-60 mins	14
61-75 mins	29
76-90 mins	31
90+	1

The 15 games in Israel produced 71 offside decisions at 4.73 per match. The figure is almost identical to the tally in Denmark in 2011, where 72 offsides were flagged at 4.5 per match. This compares with an average of 5.34 in the 2012/13 UEFA Champions League.

Two predators (Spain's Álvaro Morata and Italy's Ciro Immobile) were the most frequently-flagged players with five and four offside decisions against them respectively – not striking figures in their teams' five-match campaigns.

# Reading the game



From left to right: Ioan Lupescu, Jean-François Domergue, Mordechai Shpigler, Dušan Savić, Peter Rudbæk, Dany Ryser, Frank Ludolph, Graham Turner, Matthieu Bulliard

UEFA's chief technical officer, Ioan Lupescu, captained a team of five technical observers at the final tournament in Israel. In alphabetical order, they were:

**Jean-François Domergue (France)**  
Born in Bordeaux, he began his playing career at FC Girondins de Bordeaux, accumulating 516 Ligue 1 games including spells in Lille, Toulouse, Marseille and Caen. A European champion in 1984, he scored twice in the semi-final against Portugal. Managerial roles followed at SM Caen and Paris Saint-Germain FC, where he was general director. He returned to coaching with Le Havre AC in 2000 and four years later at Montpellier Hérault SC where, since 2008, he has been in charge of the youth academy.

**Peter Rudbæk (Denmark)**  
Born in Aalborg, he became coach of Aalborg BK at 27, leading the team from 1983 to 1990 and from 2000 to 2002. He then coached Viborg FF from 1990 to 1993 and AGF Aarhus from 1993 to 2000. Denmark's coach of the year in 1987 and 1996, Rudbæk has been technical director of the Danish Football Association (DBU) since 2005. Currently a member of UEFA's Jira Panel, as an expert in coach education he regularly acts as instructor at UEFA coaching events.

**Dany Ryser (Switzerland)**  
The Neuchâtel native played at FC Grenchen from 1969–84, starting his coaching career as player-coach at FC Post Solothurn and FC Deitingen. Having earned his UEFA Pro licence at 29, he coached FC Biel-Bienne from 1990 to 1996 before taking responsibility for coach education at the Swiss Football Association (SFV-ASF). From 2002 he has led national teams from Under-15 to U20 levels; was world champion with the U17s in 2009 and named coach of the year in 2010. Ryser is a member of UEFA's Jira Panel.

**Dušan Savić (Serbia)**  
Capped 16 times by Yugoslavia and twice the league's top scorer during 412 games for FK Crvena zvezda, Savić also had a stint in Spain with Real Sporting de Gijón and six years in France with LOSC Lille and AS Cannes. Returned to Belgrade to oversee the Crvena zvezda youth academy and then assisted with Yugoslavia's U21 and senior teams. Since 2009, he has been coach education director at the Football Association of Serbia (FSS) and is currently a member of UEFA's Development and Technical Assistance Committee.

**Mordechai Shpigler (Israel)**  
The Russia-born Shpigler put down roots in Netanya, where he scored 168 goals in 255 games for Maccabi Netanya FC before moving to France and playing for two Paris clubs. He later starred alongside Pelé at the New York Cosmos. The Israeli national side's all-time top scorer hit his country's only goal at the 1970 FIFA World Cup in Mexico and was player of the year four times. He then embarked on a coaching career in Israel and is now a member of UEFA's Development and Technical Assistance Committee.

# Man of the match

UEFA named a man of the match after each of the 15 games played in Israel. The player was selected by the UEFA technical observers at the match and announced to the public over the PA system. The outstanding player was usually – but not always – a member of the winning team, as the list reveals. Significantly, in the light of some of the technical topics which emerged from the tournament, no target strikers were chosen. Goalkeepers, although the overall standard was impressive, were not named either. Most of the decisive performers were midfield catalysers, blended with defenders such as Norway's influential Stefan Strandberg or the Italian captain Luca Caldirola – one of three players to be picked more than once.

Special mention has to be made of the Spain captain Thiago Alcántara – not only because he was selected twice but also because he laid claim to the unique distinction of having been named man of the match in two successive finals, after taking the honour in Aalborg in 2011. Thiago was subsequently declared player of the tournament by UEFA's technical team. The citation which accompanied news of the decision on UEFA.com read: "The UEFA technical team

felt that, as captain of the title winners, Thiago had displayed leadership qualities on and off the pitch and, throughout the tournament, had been an influential figure in his team's performance with impressive box-to-box work; exceptional ball control, even in the tightest of situations; ability to dictate the tempo of play; intelligent ball-winning based on anticipation rather than tackling; and outstanding playmaking skills founded on a wide variety of short and long passing. His three goals in the final represented a unique individual achievement and a reward for his contributions to his team's success."

UEFA's technical team also voted on a team of the tournament to recognise the players whose overall displays augured well for a bright future in the game. Once again, choices were difficult to make and a number of very good players had to be left out. Spain's David de Gea and Thiago were in the team of the tournament nominated in 2011, along with players who have subsequently won the UEFA Champions League such as Juan Mata and Javi Martínez. Time will tell how many of the class of 2013 will also climb to the peak of the game.

Match	Player
Israel v Norway	Stefan Johansen
England v Italy	Lorenzo Insigne
Spain v Russia	Isco
Netherlands v Germany	Lewis Holtby
England v Norway	Stefan Strandberg
Italy v Israel	Marco Verratti
Netherlands v Russia	Marco van Ginkel
Germany v Spain	Martín Montoya
Israel v England	Ofir Krieff
Norway v Italy	Luca Caldirola
Spain v Netherlands	Thiago Alcántara
Russia v Germany	Alan Dzagoev
Spain v Norway	Isco
Italy v Netherlands	Luca Caldirola
Italy v Spain	Thiago Alcántara

## PLAYER OF THE TOURNAMENT



### THIAGO ALCÁNTARA (SPAIN)

Thiago laid claim to the unique distinction of having been named man of the match in two successive finals, after taking the honour in Aalborg in 2011. Thiago was subsequently declared 2013 player of the tournament by UEFA's technical team

# Team of the tournament

## GOALKEEPERS



**Francesco Bardi**  
Italy



**David de Gea**  
Spain



**Ørjan Nyland**  
Norway

## DEFENDERS



**Marc Bartra**  
Spain



**Inigo Martínez**  
Spain



**Martín Montoya**  
Spain



**Stefan Strandberg**  
Norway



**Luca Caldirola**  
Italy



**Bruno Martins Indi**  
Netherlands



**Alberto Moreno**  
Spain

## MIDFIELDERS



**Alan Dzagoev**  
Russia



**Asier Illarramendi**  
Spain



**Koke**  
Spain



**Thiago Alcántara**  
Spain



**Lewis Holtby**  
Germany



**Isco**  
Spain



**Adam Maher**  
Netherlands



**Marco Verratti**  
Italy

## FORWARDS



**Fabio Borini**  
Italy



**Álvaro Morata**  
Spain



**Georginio Wijnaldum**  
Netherlands



**Luuk De Jong**  
Netherlands



**Rodrigo**  
Spain

# Results and standings

## GROUP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Italy	3	2	1	0	6	1	7
Norway	3	1	2	0	6	4	5
Israel	3	1	1	1	3	6	4
England	3	0	0	3	1	5	0

### ISRAEL 2-2 NORWAY 5 JUNE 2013

**Attendance:** 10,850, Netanya Municipal Stadium, Netanya  
**Goals:** 1-0 Biton 16 (p), 1-1 Pedersen 24, 2-1 Turgeman 71, 2-2 Singh 90+1  
**Cards:** Yellow: Kalibat 44, Barouch 45+2, Golasa 46 (ISR); Konradssen 38 (NOR)  
 Red: Hedenstad 44 (NOR)  
**Referee:** Gil **ARs:** Tóth, Kolev **AARs:** Zelinka, Kružliak **FO:** Gudmundsson

### ENGLAND 0-1 ITALY 5 JUNE 2013

**Attendance:** 10,675, Bloomfield Stadium, Tel Aviv  
**Goal:** 0-1 Insigne 79  
**Cards:** Yellow: Lowe 66, Clyne 77 (ENG); Bianchetti 88, Insigne 90+4 (ITA)  
**Referee:** Gautier **ARs:** Brandner, Pozzi **AARs:** Delferiere, Munukka **FO:** Zhuk

### ENGLAND 1-3 NORWAY 8 JUNE 2013

**Attendance:** 6,150, Ha Moshava Stadium, Petah Tikva  
**Goals:** 0-1 Semb Berge 15, 0-2 Berget 34, 0-3 Eikrem 52, 1-3 Dawson 57 (p)  
**Cards:** Yellow: Henderson 82, Chalobah 90+1 (ENG); Semb Berge 57 (NOR)  
**Referee:** Boiko **ARs:** Gudermanis, Zhuk **AARs:** Kružliak, Özkahya **FO:** Pozzi

### ITALY 4-0 ISRAEL 8 JUNE 2013

**Attendance:** 13,750, Bloomfield Stadium, Tel Aviv  
**Goals:** 1-0 Saponara 18, 2-0 Gabbiadini 42, 3-0 Gabbiadini 53, 4-0 Florenzi 71  
**Cards:** Yellow: Verratti 60 (ITA) Red: Golasa 37 (ISR)  
**Referee:** Hațegan **ARs:** Gudmundsson, Mulvanny **AARs:** Tohver, Spathas **FO:** Tóth

### ISRAEL 1-0 ENGLAND 11 JUNE 2013

**Attendance:** 22,183, Teddy Stadium, Jerusalem  
**Goal:** 1-0 Krieff 80  
**Cards:** None  
**Referee:** Boiko **ARs:** Zhuk, Gudermanis **AARs:** Delferiere, Tohver **FO:** Brandner

### NORWAY 1-1 ITALY 11 JUNE 2013

**Attendance:** 7,130, Bloomfield Stadium, Tel Aviv  
**Goals:** 1-0 Strandberg 90 (p), 1-1 Bertolacci 90+4  
**Cards:** Yellow: Rogne 45+1, Ibrahim 79 (NOR); Caldirola 87, Donati 90+1 (ITA)  
**Referee:** Bebek **ARs:** Pozzi, Gudmundsson **AARs:** Kružliak, Spathas **FO:** Kolev

## GROUP B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Spain	3	3	0	0	5	0	9
Netherlands	3	2	0	1	8	6	6
Germany	3	1	0	2	4	5	3
Russia	3	0	0	3	2	8	0

### SPAIN 1-0 RUSSIA 6 JUNE 2013

**Attendance:** 8,127, Teddy Stadium, Jerusalem  
**Goal:** 1-0 Morata 82  
**Cards:** Yellow: Schennikov 23, Grigoryev 73, Shatov 86 (RUS)  
**Referee:** Jug **ARs:** Mulvanny, Gudmundsson **AARs:** Spathas, Özkahya **FO:** Davidy

### NETHERLANDS 3-2 GERMANY 6 JUNE 2013

**Attendance:** 7,664, Ha Moshava Stadium, Petah Tikva  
**Goals:** 1-0 Maher 24, 2-0 Wijnaldum 38, 2-1 Rudy 47 (p), 2-2 Holtby 81, 3-2 Fer 90+2  
**Cards:** Yellow: Zoet 46 (NED); Thesker 42, Lasogga 52 (GER)  
**Referee:** Bebek **ARs:** Zhuk, Gudermanis **AARs:** Tohver, Hansen **FO:** Krasikow

### NETHERLANDS 5-1 RUSSIA 9 JUNE 2013

**Attendance:** 4,589, Teddy Stadium, Jerusalem  
**Goals:** 1-0 Wijnaldum 39, 2-0 De Jong 61, 2-1 Cheryshev 65, 3-1 John 69, 4-1 Hoesen 83, 5-1 Fer 90+2  
**Cards:** Yellow: Burlak 51, Dzagoev 88, Tsallagov 90+1, Cheryshev 90+4 (RUS)  
 Red: Chicherin 50 (RUS)  
**Referee:** Gautier **ARs:** Pozzi, Brandner **AARs:** Munukka, Delferiere **FO:** Davidy

### GERMANY 0-1 SPAIN 9 JUNE 2013

**Attendance:** 11,750, Netanya Municipal Stadium, Netanya  
**Goal:** 0-1 Morata 86  
**Cards:** Yellow: Rode 45, Herrmann 60, Lasogga 75, Can 88 (GER); Moreno 77, Koke 83 (ESP)  
**Referee:** Gil **ARs:** Kolev, Tóth **AARs:** Hansen, Zelinka **FO:** Krasikow

### SPAIN 3-0 NETHERLANDS 12 JUNE 2013

**Attendance:** 10,024, Ha Moshava Stadium, Petah Tikva  
**Goals:** 1-0 Morata 26, 2-0 Isco 32, 3-0 Álvaro Vázquez 90+4  
**Cards:** Yellow: Illarramendi 56, Morata 90+2 (ESP); Hoesen 85, Fer 90 (NED)  
**Referee:** Hațegan **ARs:** Brandner, Mulvanny **AARs:** Hansen, Zelinka **FO:** Krasikow

### RUSSIA 1-2 GERMANY 12 JUNE 2013

**Attendance:** 8,134, Netanya Municipal Stadium, Netanya  
**Goals:** 1-0 Dzagoev 22, 1-1 Herrmann 34, 1-2 Rudy 69 (p)  
**Cards:** Yellow: Cheryshev 10, Emelyanov 17, Dzagoev 39, Bibilov 68, Belyaev 87 (RUS); Herrmann 32 (GER) Red: Schennikov 39 (RUS)  
**Referee:** Jug **ARs:** Kolev, Tóth **AARs:** Özkahya, Kružliak **FO:** Davidy

## SEMI-FINALS

### SPAIN 3-0 NORWAY 15 JUNE 2013

**Attendance:** 12,074, Netanya Municipal Stadium, Netanya  
**Goals:** 1-0 Rodrigo 45+1, 2-0 Isco 87, 3-0 Morata 90+3  
**Cards:** Yellow: Bartra 25, Illarramendi 83 (ESP); Eikrem 49 (NOR)  
**Referee:** Boiko **ARs:** Kolev, Mulvanny **AARs:** Delferiere, Spathas **FO:** Tóth

### ITALY 1-0 NETHERLANDS 15 JUNE 2013

**Attendance:** 10,123, Ha Moshava Stadium, Petah Tikva  
**Goal:** 1-0 Borini 79  
**Cards:** Yellow: Borini 5, Verratti 16, Gabbiadini 83, Donati 90, Sansone 90+5 (ITA); Blind 83, Martins Indi 90 (NED)  
**Referee:** Hațegan **ARs:** Pozzi, Gudermanis **AARs:** Hansen, Zelinka **FO:** Brandner

## FINAL



### ITALY 2-4 SPAIN 18 JUNE 2013

**Attendance:** 29,320, Teddy Stadium, Jerusalem  
**Goals:** 0-1 Thiago 6, 1-1 Immobile 10, 1-2 Thiago 31, 1-3 Thiago 38 (p), 1-4 Isco 66 (p), 2-4 Borini 80  
**Cards:** Yellow: Verratti 18, Regini 65, Caldirola 71, Crimi 78 (ITA); Koke 12, Tello 27, Martínez 47 (ESP)  
**Referee:** Jug **ARs:** Brandner, Tóth **AARs:** Özkahya, Kružliak **FO:** Bebek

## MATCH OFFICIALS

### REFEREES

**Ivan Bebek**  
30/05/1977 (Croatia)

**Serhiy Boyko**  
30/06/1977 (Ukraine)

**Antony Gautier**  
19/11/1977 (France)

**Paweł Gil**  
28/06/1976 (Poland)

**Ovidiu Hațegan**  
14/07/1980 (Romania)

**Matej Jug**  
25/09/1980 (Slovenia)

### ADDITIONAL ASSISTANT REFEREES

**Sébastien Delferiere**  
02/07/1981 (Belgium)

**Kenn Hansen**  
29/05/1980 (Denmark)

**Ivan Kružliak**  
24/03/1984 (Slovakia)

**Antti Munukka**  
03/03/1982 (Finland)

**Halis Özkahya**  
30/05/1980 (Turkey)

**Ilias Spathas**  
18/02/1980 (Greece)

**Kristo Tohver**  
11/06/1981 (Estonia)

**Miroslav Zelinka**  
23/02/1981 (Czech Republic)

### ASSISTANT REFEREES

**Roland Brandner**  
24/01/1978 (Austria)

**Haralds Gudermanis**  
14/10/1979 (Latvia)

**Johann Gunnar Gudmundsson**  
08/09/1978 (Iceland)

**Ivo Kolev**  
25/06/1979 (Bulgaria)

**Alan Mulvanny**  
13/03/1980 (Scotland)

**Sandro Pozzi**  
03/11/1980 (Switzerland)

**Vencel Tóth**  
24/03/1978 (Hungary)

**Dmitri Zhuk**  
22/04/1986 (Belarus)

### FOURTH OFFICIALS

**Nissan Davidy**  
01/01/1972 (Israel)

**Danny Krasikow**  
05/02/1973 (Israel)

## RESPECT FAIR PLAY RANKING

Respect Fair Play assessments are made by the official UEFA delegates, based on criteria such as positive play, respect for the opponent, respect for the referee, behaviour of the crowd and team officials, as well as cautions and dismissals.

	Team	Score	Matches
1	Netherlands	8.214	4
2	Spain	8.057	5
3	Norway	7.928	4
4	Israel	7.916	3
5	England	7.904	3
6	Germany	7.797	3
7	Italy	7.314	5
8	Russia	6.285	3

# England



Group A: England/Israel/Italy/Norway



### TEAM SHAPE VITALY



### KEY FEATURES

- Variations on 4-3-3 with switches to 4-4-2
- Controlled possession play with elaborate build-ups
- Henderson the playmaker in central midfield triangle
- Emphasis on supply to two wingers – good supply of crosses
- Diagonal switches of play with full-backs supporting wingers
- Spells of high pressure, advanced ball-winning
- Reliance on supply to lone striker rather than combinations in final third

	BORN	GOALS	ITA	NOR	ISR	CLUB
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#### GOALKEEPERS

1	Jack Butland	10/03/93	90	90		Stoke City FC
13	Jason Steele	18/08/90			90	Middlesbrough FC
23	Declan Rudd	16/01/91				Norwich City FC

#### DEFENDERS

2	Nathaniel Clyne	05/04/91	90		90	Southampton FC
3	Adam Smith	29/04/91		90		Tottenham Hotspur FC
4	Steven Caulker	29/12/91	90	90		Tottenham Hotspur FC
5	Andre Wisdom	09/05/93		5†	90	Liverpool FC
6	Craig Dawson	06/05/90	1	90	85↓	West Bromwich Albion FC
7	Tom Lees	18/11/90			90	Leeds United AFC
9	Jack Robinson	01/09/93	90			Liverpool FC
11	Danny Rose	02/07/90	5	90	90	Tottenham Hotspur FC

#### MIDFIELDERS

8	Jordan Henderson	17/06/90	90	90	45†	Liverpool FC
10	Jason Lowe	02/09/91	90	45↓		Blackburn Rovers FC
12	Nathaniel Chalobah	12/12/94	25†	90	78↓	Chelsea FC
14	Josh McEachran	01/03/93	15†		71↓	Chelsea FC
16	Thomas Ince	30/01/92	5	90	45↓	Blackpool FC
17	Henri Lansbury	12/10/90				Nottingham Forest FC
18	Jonjo Shelvey	27/02/92	75↓	23†	90	Liverpool FC

#### FORWARDS

15	Wilfried Zaha	10/11/92		90	90	Manchester United FC
19	Nathan Redmond	06/03/94	90	67↓	19†	Birmingham City FC
20	Nathan Delfouneso	02/02/91	8†			Aston Villa FC
21	Marvin Sordell	17/02/91	65↓		12†	Bolton Wanderers FC
22	Connor Wickham	31/03/93	82↓	45†	90	Sunderland AFC

**Bold** = Started on the bench; **S** = Suspended; **↓** = Taken off; **†** = Brought on; **I** = Injured/ill; **so** = Sent off



### COACH: STUART PEARCE

"We got out of the tournament what we deserved. Not enough of the players produced a performance befitting of them. They had more quality than that – and they didn't deliver the performance. The basics – holding possession, passing, movement ... we were really poor. Hopefully, the players will reflect on their performances. If you don't turn up and work hard enough, you won't get any success. I have to take it on the chin and, obviously, the players do as well. It's a real disappointment for me and everybody connected with England."

# Israel



Group A: England/Israel/Italy/Norway



### TEAM SHAPE VITALY



### KEY FEATURES

- 4-4-2 with depth between lines and twin screening midfielders
- Competent goalkeeper; extensive use of direct passing to frontrunners
- Occasional high pressing but not sustained throughout game
- Biton, Krieff influential as controlling midfielders
- Good individual technique; prepared to run at opponents
- Penetrating off-the-ball movements in final third
- Centre-back Ben Harush good in 1 v 1, building from back

	BORN	GOALS	NOR	ITA	ENG	CLUB
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#### GOALKEEPERS

1	Boris Kleyman	26/10/90	90	90	90	Hapoel Tel-Aviv FC
18	Barak Levi	07/01/93				Maccabi Tel-Aviv FC
23	Arik Yanko	21/12/91				Hapoel Tel-Aviv FC

#### DEFENDERS

2	Eliazer Dasa	03/12/92	90	45↓		Beitar Jerusalem FC
3	Ofir Davidzada	05/05/91			90	Hapoel Beer Sheva FC
4	Ido Levi	31/07/90				Maccabi Netanya FC
5	Ben Vahaba	27/03/92		90	90	Hapoel Beer Sheva FC
12	Edi Gotlib	16/08/92	90			Hapoel Akko FC
13	Taleb Twatha	21/06/92	90	90		Maccabi Haifa FC
16	Ofer Verta	23/05/90		45†	90	FC Ashdod
20	Omri Ben Harush	07/03/90	90	90	90	Maccabi Netanya FC

#### MIDFIELDERS

6	Marwan Kabha	23/02/91	38↓			Maccabi Petach-Tikva FC	
7	Israel Zaguri	29/01/90	15†	90	90	Hapoel Ramat Gan FC	
8	Nir Biton	30/10/91	1	75↓	90	90	FC Ashdod
10	Eyal Golasa	07/10/91	90	37↓so	S	Maccabi Haifa FC	
17	Sintayehu Sallalich	20/06/91			87↓	Hapoel Kiryat Shmona FC	
19	Ahed Azam	14/01/92		7†	3†	Hapoel Haifa FC	
21	Omri Altman	23/03/94			35†	Maccabi Tel-Aviv FC	
22	Ofir Krieff	17/03/91	1	52†	90	90	Beitar Jerusalem FC

#### FORWARDS

9	Mohammad Kalibat	15/06/90	90	83↓		Bnei Sakhnin FC	
11	Munas Dabbur	14/05/92	90		55↓	Maccabi Tel-Aviv FC	
14	Orr Barouch	29/11/91	57↓	23†	27†	Bnei Yehuda Tel-Aviv FC	
15	Alon Turgeman	09/06/91	1	33†	67↓	63↓	Maccabi Haifa FC

**Bold** = Started on the bench; **S** = Suspended; **↓** = Taken off; **†** = Brought on; **I** = Injured/ill; **so** = Sent off



### COACH: GUY LUZON

"It was a great honour to host the tournament. I was very satisfied with our quality and very proud of the players. If Norway hadn't equalised in the 91st minute we would have been in the semi-finals, but I can't feel unlucky about that. We all knew our level. Against England, Israel were united and organised and it was a great honour for us to beat them. It was fantastic for the atmosphere in our country. We have built good foundations and I believe that we have a very good future."

# Italy



Group A: England/Israel/Italy/Norway



TEAM SHAPE V SPAIN



KEY FEATURES

- 4-4-2 with two screening midfielders and nimble, skilful wide players
- Well-organised defensive play; quick defence-to-attack transitions
- Verratti the pivot and playmaker, delivering short and long passes
- Good off-the-ball movement by two fast, skilful forwards
- High pressure in wide areas; otherwise rapid retreat into defensive block
- Caldirola leader of well-organised defence; Insigne the free-kick expert
- Dynamic atmosphere within squad; winning mentality



COACH: DEVIS MANGIA

"This was the result of two years' work and I told my players to take the tournament step by step. We had a winning mentality, which I believe is the right attitude, and we played good football throughout the tournament. I was really proud to be the coach of such a team – and in the final they kept trying to win, right to the final second. Their only shortcoming – and that was no fault of theirs – was a lack of experience. I could feel the tension building before the final against Spain and I tried to play things down. Experience was a factor and they had more of it than we did."

	BORN	GOALS	ENG	ISR	NOR	NED	ESP	CLUB
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GOALKEEPERS

1	Francesco <b>Bardi</b>	18/01/92		90	90	90	90	90	FC Internazionale Milano
12	Simone <b>Colombi</b>	01/07/91							Atalanta BC
22	Nicola <b>Leali</b>	17/02/93							Juventus

DEFENDERS

2	Giulio <b>Donati</b>	05/02/90		90	90	90	90	90	FC Internazionale Milano
3	Cristiano <b>Biraghi</b>	01/09/92		90	90				FC Internazionale Milano
5	Marco <b>Capuano</b>	14/10/91			90				Pescara
6	Luca <b>Caldirolo</b>	01/02/91		90	90	90	90	90	Brescia Calcio
13	Matteo <b>Bianchetti</b>	17/03/93		90	90		90	90	FC Internazionale Milano
19	Vasco <b>Regini</b>	09/09/90			90	90	90		Empoli FC

MIDFIELDERS

4	Marco <b>Verratti</b>	05/11/92		90	70↓		90	76↓	Paris Saint-Germain FC
7	Alessandro <b>Florenzi</b>	11/03/91	1	90	90	29↑	90	58↓	AS Roma
8	Luca <b>Marrone</b>	28/03/90		87↓					Juventus
10	Lorenzo <b>Insigne</b>	04/06/91	1	90	40↓		85↓	90	SSC Napoli
15	Nicola <b>Sansone</b>	10/09/91			20↑	90	5↓		Parma FC
16	Andrea <b>Bertolacci</b>	11/01/91	1			45↑			Genoa CFC
18	Riccardo <b>Saponara</b>	21/12/91	1		90	45↓		32↑	AC Milan
21	Fausto <b>Rossi</b>	03/12/90		3↑	50↑	61↓	90	90	Juventus
23	Marco <b>Crimi</b>	17/03/90				90	1↑	14↑	Grosseto

FORWARDS

9	Ciro <b>Immobile</b>	20/02/90	1	60↓	90		63↓	58↓	Genoa CFC
11	Manolo <b>Gabbiadini</b>	26/11/91	2	30↑	57↓	18↑	27↑	32↑	Juventus
14	Mattia <b>Destro</b>	20/03/91		12↑	33↑	72↓			AS Roma
17	Alberto <b>Paloschi</b>	04/01/90				90			AC Chievo Verona
20	Fabio <b>Borini</b>	29/03/91	2	78↓			90	90	Liverpool FC

Bold = Started on the bench; S = Suspended; ↓ = Taken off; ↑ = Brought on; I = Injured/ill; so = Sent off

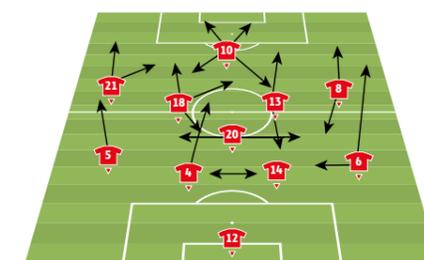
# Norway



Group A: England/Israel/Italy/Norway



TEAM SHAPE V SPAIN



KEY FEATURES

- 4-1-4-1 with total commitment to effective defending and attacking
- Quick reorganisation when ball won; forward pass if possible
- Well-constructed build-ups based on fluent combinations
- Excellent keeper; strong central defenders; adventurous full-backs
- Good interceptions, flexible pressing in advanced areas or midfield
- Fast, well-supported collective counters; dangerous set plays
- Outstanding team and work ethics; self-belief and mental strength

	BORN	GOALS	ISR	ENG	ITA	ESP	CLUB
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GOALKEEPERS

1	Arlid <b>Østbø</b>	19/04/91			90		Viking FK
12	Orjan <b>Nyland Haskjold</b>	10/09/90	90	90		90	Molde FK
23	Gudmund <b>Kongshavn</b>	23/01/91					Vålerenga Fotball

DEFENDERS

2	Martin <b>Linnes</b>	20/09/91		45↑	33↑	90		Molde FK
3	Thomas <b>Rogne</b>	29/06/90		83↓	54↓			Celtic FC
4	Stefan <b>Strandberg</b>	25/07/90	1	90	90	36↑	90	Rosenborg BK
5	Vegar <b>Hedenstad</b>	26/06/91		44↓so	S	90	90	SC Freiburg
6	Omar <b>Elabdellaoui</b>	05/12/91	90	90		90		TSV Eintracht Braunschweig
14	Fredrik <b>Semb Berge</b>	06/02/90	1	90	57↓		90	Odd Grenland
15	Håvard <b>Nordtveit</b>	21/06/90			7↑	90	15↑	VfL Borussia Mönchengladbach

MIDFIELDERS

7	Harmeet <b>Singh</b>	12/11/90	1	14↑	90			Feyenoord
9	Valon <b>Berisha</b>	07/02/93			90	10↑		FC Salzburg
13	Markus <b>Henriksen</b>	25/07/92			90	90		AZ Alkmaar
17	Anders <b>Konradssen</b>	18/07/90		76↓		90		Stade Rennais FC
18	Magnus <b>Eikrem</b>	08/08/90	1	90	68↓		75↓	Molde FK
20	Stefan <b>Johansen</b>	08/01/91	90	90		80↓		Strømsgodset IF
22	Abdissalam <b>Ibrahim</b>	01/05/91		22↑	16↑			Strømsgodset IF

FORWARDS

8	Jo Inge <b>Berget</b>	11/09/90	1	76↓	90		90	Molde FK
10	Marcus <b>Pedersen</b>	08/06/90	1	90	90		90	Vitesse
11	Håvard <b>Nielsen</b>	15/07/93		14↑	90	60↓	45↑	FC Salzburg
16	Yann-Erik <b>de Lanlay</b>	14/05/92		45↓		90		Viking FK
19	Flamur <b>Kastrati</b>	14/11/91				30↑		FC Erzgebirge Aue
21	Joshua <b>King</b>	15/01/92				74↓	45↓	Blackburn Rovers FC

Bold = Started on the bench; S = Suspended; ↓ = Taken off; ↑ = Brought on; I = Injured/ill; so = Sent off



COACH: TOR OLE SKULLERUD

"There was great interest in the team back in Norway and we can be proud of what we achieved. We built on the team's identity and it was an honour for Norwegian football to produce such talented players. We tried to be brave; to go out and play; and to take the opportunity to show our skills. It was an adventure for us and I will remember the team spirit. I was proud of my team and all the people around me. Everybody gave their all and it was an adventure with outstanding companionship and spirit in the squad."

# Germany



Group B: Germany/Netherlands/Russia/Spain



BORN GOALS NED ESP RUS CLUB

## GOALKEEPERS

1	Bernd Leno	04/03/92	90	90		Bayer 04 Leverkusen
12	Oliver Baumann	02/06/90			90	SC Freiburg
23	Timo Horn	12/05/93				1. FC Köln

## DEFENDERS

2	Tony Jantschke	07/04/90	90	90	90	VfL Borussia Mönchengladbach
3	Stefan Thesker	11/04/91	90	90	90	TSG 1899 Hoffenheim
4	Lasse Sobiech	18/01/91			90	FC St Pauli
5	Shkodran Mustafi	17/04/92			90	UC Sampdoria
13	Matthias Ginter	19/01/94	90	90	90	SC Freiburg
15	Sead Kolasinac	20/06/93				FC Schalke 04
16	Oliver Sorg	29/05/90	90	90		SC Freiburg
17	Antonio Rüdiger	03/03/93			8↑	VfB Stuttgart

## MIDFIELDERS

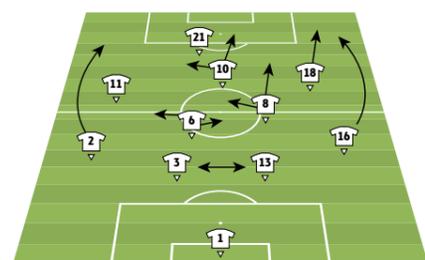
6	Sebastian Rudy	28/02/90	2	90	82↓	45↑	TSG 1899 Hoffenheim
7	Patrick Funk	11/02/90				20↑	FC St Pauli
8	Sebastian Rode	11/10/90	80↓	70↓	70↓		Eintracht Frankfurt
10	Lewis Holtby	18/09/90	1	90	90	45↓	Tottenham Hotspur FC
18	Patrick Herrmann	12/02/91	1	90	64↓	90	VfL Borussia Mönchengladbach
20	Christoph Moritz	27/01/90					FC Schalke 04
22	Emre Can	12/01/94				20↑	FC Bayern München

## FORWARDS

9	Kevin Volland	30/07/92	51↑	90	90		TSV 1860 München
11	Deniz Ünder	20/02/91	39↓				VfL Borussia Mönchengladbach
14	Sebastian Polter	01/04/91	10↑		45↑		1. FC Nürnberg
19	Christian Clemens	04/08/91	29↑	90	45↓		1. FC Köln
21	Pierre-Michel Lasogga	15/12/91	61↓	26↑	S		Hertha BSC Berlin

Bold = Started on the bench; S = Suspended; ↓ = Taken off; ↑ = Brought on; I = Injured/ill; so = Sent off

## TEAM SHAPE v NETHERLANDS



## KEY FEATURES

- 4-2-3-1 with Rudy, Rode industrious screening midfielders
- Emphasis on attractive attacking play; good level of technique
- Game based on quick passing combinations, off-ball movement
- Holtby the hardworking catalyst, linking midfield with attack
- Good use of width with two attack-minded full-backs
- Sustained pressure on ball-carrier (difficulties v Spain)
- Good work ethic; strength and power play in final third



## COACH: RAINER ADRION

"The team had great mentality and spirit. They were always willing but at some stages we needed a bit more quality to go further. We've taken good experience out of the tournament but sometimes we were a bit short in attack – and short on luck, too. We might have improved in terms of dominance and control of the ball at some stages but I am hoping some players can go on to the World Cup. Lewis Holtby is a clear contender. He was outstanding and the whole team looked up to him."

# Netherlands



Group B: Germany/Netherlands/Russia/Spain



BORN GOALS GER RUS ESP ITA CLUB

## GOALKEEPERS

1	Jeroen Zoet	06/01/91	90	90	90	PSV Eindhoven
16	Marco Bizot	10/03/91			90	FC Groningen
23	Nick Marsman	01/10/90				FC Twente

## DEFENDERS

2	Ricardo van Rhijn	13/06/91	90	90	90	AFC Ajax	
3	Stefan de Vrij	05/02/92	90	90	75↓	Feyenoord	
4	Bruno Martins Indi	08/02/92	90	90	90	Feyenoord	
5	Daley Blind	09/03/90	90	90	84↓	AFC Ajax	
12	Kelvin Leerdam	24/06/90			90	Feyenoord	
13	Mike van der Hoorn	15/10/92			90	15↑	FC Utrecht
14	Bram Nuytinck	04/05/90			90		RSC Anderlecht
20	Patrick van Aanholt	29/08/90			90		Vitesse

## MIDFIELDERS

6	Jordy Clasie	27/06/91			13↑	90	Feyenoord	
8	Kevin Strootman	13/02/90	90	77↓	90		PSV Eindhoven	
10	Adam Maher	20/07/93	1	82↓	73↓	19↑	AZ Alkmaar	
17	Leroy Fer	05/01/90	2	8↑	17↑	90	6↑	FC Twente
18	Marco van Ginkel	01/12/92	90	90		90		Vitesse
19	Tonny Trindade de Vilhena	03/01/95				71↓		Feyenoord

## FORWARDS

7	Florian Jozefzoon	09/02/91			22↑	90		RKC Waalwijk
9	Luuk de Jong	27/08/90	1	90	81↓	90		VfL Borussia Mönchengladbach
11	Ola John	19/05/92	1	82↓	90	69↓		SL Benfica
15	Georginio Wijnaldum	11/11/90	2	68↓	90			PSV Eindhoven
21	Danny Hoesen	15/01/91	1		9↑	90		AFC Ajax
22	Memphis Depay	13/02/94	8↑		90	21↑		PSV Eindhoven

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## TEAM SHAPE v ITALY



## KEY FEATURES

- 4-3-3 structure; game based on technique and combination play
- Effective use of flanks by wingers and adventurous full-backs
- Emphasis on building from back with goalkeeper as 11th outfielder
- Blend of diagonal passing to wingers and direct supply to target striker
- Aimed to control tempo of game; regain possession with high pressing
- Wingers looked for 1 v 1 against defenders; dangerous at set plays
- Team high on self-confidence and mental strength



## COACH: COR POT

"It was sad for the boys to lose the semi-final because we were much the better team. They fought hard and they played some fantastic football in parts of the game. We made a very positive impression football-wise, especially against Germany and Russia. I congratulated the players on their quality and their mentality. Hopefully they can go on to the senior team and the ones who don't reach that level can still make good progress. They learned a lot in this tournament for their future careers. It was a good experience and lesson to spend three weeks together."

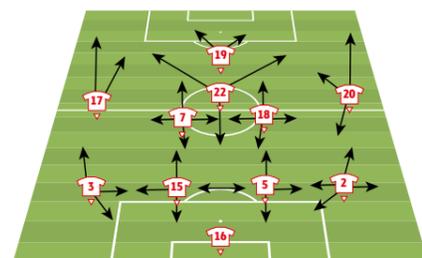
# Russia



Group B: Germany/Netherlands/Russia/Spain



TEAM SHAPE V GERMANY



KEY FEATURES

- 4-2-3-1 with the emphasis on 4-5-1 defensive formation
- Preference for direct supply from defence to lone striker
- Dzagoev the playmaker, good combinations with Petrov
- Quick transition; emphasis on retreating into deep defensive block
- Individual marking on opposition's key midfielders
- Organised attacking on the flanks when able to build from back
- Disciplined, hardworking approach; strong team ethic



COACH: NIKOLAI PISAREV

"Looking at the overall story of the competition, we played against extremely strong teams and, quite a lot of the time, we had to do it with fewer players. We maybe deserved better as, at times, we played some good attacking football. It was an excellent experience for the players. The finals are not at the same level as the senior national team tournaments but the standard is very close – and that will help us and the players in years to come. At this age, defeats are sometimes more useful than victories."

	BORN	GOALS	ESP	NED	GER	CLUB
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GOALKEEPERS

1	Nikolai Zabolotni	16/04/90	90	90		FC Spartak Moskva
12	Stanislav Kritsuk	01/12/90				SC Braga
16	Aleksandr Filtsov	02/01/90			90	FC Krasnodar

DEFENDERS

3	Georgi Schennikov	27/04/91	90	90	39↓ so	PFC CSKA Moskva
4	Nikita Chicherin	18/08/90	90	50↓ so	5	FC Dinamo Moskva
5	Taras Burlak	22/02/90	90	90	90	FC Lokomotiv Moskva
15	Maksim Belyaev	30/09/91	90	90	90	FC Lokomotiv Moskva
23	Aleksei Nikitin	27/01/92				FC Yenisey Krasnoyarsk

MIDFIELDERS

2	Ibragim Tsallagov	12/12/90	80↓	90	90	PFC Krylya Sovetov Samara	
6	Yuri Kirillov	19/01/90	10↑			FC Dinamo Moskva	
7	Sergei Petrov	02/01/91	90	90	90	FC Krasnodar	
8	Oleg Shatov	29/07/90	90	77↓	47↑	FC Anji Makhachkala	
13	Sergei Bryzgalov	15/11/92				FC Spartak Moskva	
14	Pavel Yakovlev	07/04/91	90	54↓	41↑	FC Spartak Moskva	
17	Denis Cheryshev	26/12/90	1	58↓	36↑	77↓	Real Madrid CF
18	Roman Emelyanov	08/05/92				43↓	FC Shakhtar Donetsk
19	Maksim Grigoryev	06/07/90	45↑			49↓	FC Lokomotiv Moskva
20	Shota Bibilov	06/08/90	45↓	13↑	90		FC Volga Nizhny Novgorod
21	Aleksandr Zotov	27/08/90					FC Spartak Moskva
22	Alan Dzagoev	17/06/90	1		90	90	PFC CSKA Moskva

FORWARDS

9	Andrei Panyukov	25/09/94			17↑		FC Dinamo Moskva
10	Fedor Smolov	09/02/90			73↓	13↑	FC Dinamo Moskva
11	Maksim Kanunnikov	14/07/91	32↑				FC Amkar Perm

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# Spain



Group B: Germany/Netherlands/Russia/Spain



TEAM SHAPE V ITALY



KEY FEATURES

- 4-3-3 with screening midfielder; two wingers, clear playing philosophy
- Possession game based on fluent combinations, off-ball movement
- Excellent touch and skill by midfielders Thiago, Koke
- Isco the free spirit; solo skills and runs into scoring areas
- Excellent keeper; strong central defenders; fast, adventurous full-backs
- Good interceptions, high pressing in numbers to win ball in attacking third
- Frequent switches of play; attacking variations on flanks and central areas

	BORN	GOALS	RUS	GER	NED	NOR	ITA	CLUB
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GOALKEEPERS

1	David de Gea	07/11/90	90	90	90	90	90	Manchester United FC
13	Diego Mariño	09/05/90						Villarreal CF
23	Joel	17/06/90						Wigan Athletic FC

DEFENDERS

2	Martín Montoya	14/04/91	90	90		90	90	FC Barcelona
4	Nacho	18/01/90			90			Real Madrid CF
5	Marc Bartra	15/01/91	90	90		90	90	FC Barcelona
6	Iñigo Martínez	17/05/91	90	90	90	90	90	Real Sociedad de Fútbol
15	Marc Muniesa	27/03/92				11↑		FC Barcelona
16	Álvaro	08/01/90					90	Real Zaragoza
18	Alberto Moreno	05/07/92	90	90		90	90	Sevilla FC
20	Daniel Carvajal	11/01/92					90	Bayer 04 Leverkusen

MIDFIELDERS

3	Asier Illarramendi	08/03/90	90	90	38↑	90	90	Real Sociedad de Fútbol	
7	Sergio Canales	16/02/91	12↑					Valencia CF	
8	Koke	08/01/92	5↑	90		90	86↓	Club Atlético de Madrid	
10	Thiago Alcántara	11/04/91	3	90	90	79↓	90	90	FC Barcelona
14	Ignacio Camacho	04/05/90			1↑	52↓	4↑		Málaga CF
17	Pablo Sarabia	11/05/92				90	1↑		Getafe CF
22	Isco	21/04/92	3	90	89↓	62↓	89↓	90	Málaga CF

FORWARDS

9	Rodrigo	06/03/91	1	78↓	73↓		59↓	10↑	SL Benfica
11	Cristian Tello	11/08/91		85↓	85↓		74↓	71↓	FC Barcelona
12	Álvaro Morata	23/10/92	4	27↑	17↑	90	31↑	80↓	Real Madrid CF
19	Iker Muniain	19/12/92		63↓	5↑	90	16↑	19↑	Athletic Club
21	Álvaro Vázquez	27/04/91	1				28↑		Getafe CF

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COACH: JULEN LOPETEGUI

"It's always very hard to win. We were very happy, not only with the win but also with the performance and the personality we showed. We think the fundamental thing is the players' belief in the team ethic. They can have quality but it's more important to work hard, stay strong and have belief in the team. Each player had his own personality but they were all united as one team in order to win the title. We have a style which we believe in and work on. It was a very hard tournament and each match was different. So I was delighted with the win and the effort, character and attitude of our whole group."

# Event report



# A fortnight to remember

Even before a ball had been kicked at the 2013 UEFA European Under-21 Championship, Guy Luzon, coach of hosts Israel, had no doubt about what it meant for his country to be staging its first major international football tournament. "A great honour," he described it as he contemplated the fortnight of football about to unfold. "This is fantastic for Israel, not only for the football but for the country as a whole." On the evidence of the 15 matches played out across four different venues – Jerusalem, Netanya, Petah Tikva and Tel Aviv – that would prove a fair assessment of the U21 final tournament from the hosts' perspective.

"The biggest experience of my life" was the verdict of Nir Biton, captain of an Israel side who performed creditably in front of their home spectators. That enthusiasm was shared by a high number of Israeli football fans given an impressive aggregate attendance of over 170,000 spectators – exceeding the totals from the previous two U21 final tournaments.

Ronen Hershco, the tournament director, was delighted to see large attendances at the matches and also by the make-up of the crowds, which featured many families. "You can see three generations walking to the stadium," he said. "Two days ago, someone texted me and said, 'I just want to let you know

that a few days ago, my father went to the stadium for the first time in 15 years!'"

Playing football on balmy evenings in front of enthusiastic audiences on pristine pitches made for a memorable experience for visiting players too – even those whose teams did not succeed. "The atmosphere is fantastic and the place is just gorgeous," said Germany captain Lewis Holtby, whose praise extended to the "outstanding hospitality and support" received. With his coach Rainer Adrion adding his own words of praise – "the fans here in Israel are great and they showed a lot of enthusiasm for this tournament" – it was evidently not only the hosts who had a fortnight to remember.



**"This is fantastic for Israel, not only for the football but for the country as a whole"**

Guy Luzon, Israel coach

The Netherlands take time out on the beach in Tel Aviv

# Full house



The evening of 18 June 2013 will live long in the memory of the Spain and Italy players who were participants in the last act of the UEFA European Under-21 Championship, but they will surely not be the only ones. Anybody else present at an exciting final has good reason to remember the spectacle that unfolded in front of 29,320 spectators as day turned to night at Jerusalem's Teddy Stadium.

It was one of those memorable summer evenings of football – the pitch awash with colour and the crowd buzzing with excitement as six goals flew in and Spain reaffirmed their supremacy. Above all, it was the perfect conclusion to a fortnight of excellent football in four welcoming venues.

Ancient Jerusalem may have been the most evocative of the host cities but each venue had its appeal, from the bright lights of Tel Aviv, Israel's commercial and cultural capital, to the smaller cities of Netanya and Petah Tikva. All four let you know there was a special tournament taking place: on the route to each

of the grounds, the 'city dressing' operation ensured the presence of eye-catching blue tournament posters. This was even the case on arrival at Ben Gurion Airport where the walk down to the luggage carousel led you past tournament logos and the flags of the competing nations.

Netanya was where Israel kicked off the finals with an incident-packed 2-2 draw against Norway. The Municipal Stadium staged a pre-match opening ceremony including a rendition of the official tournament song, *Always My Number 1*, by Eyal Golan. For those unfamiliar with the Israeli match-going experience the sound of fans chewing on sunflower seeds and the smell of hot bread wafting from the food stalls only enhanced the experience.

Built in 2012, Netanya's was the newest of the stadiums by a short margin from Petah Tikva's Ha Moshava Stadium, which opened 12 months earlier. Ha Moshava was particularly colourful when hosting the Spain v Netherlands match: the Spanish attracted a fair sprinkling of Spain

and FC Barcelona shirts wherever they played but on that night the Dutch fans turned out in force and Oranje was the dominant colour.

For some players, the beaches of Tel Aviv offered a welcome escape from the pressures of tournament football and the Netherlands and Norway squads seemed particularly eager to take advantage. As for the city's Bloomfield Stadium, it became a home from home for Italy, who played all three group games there. They were popular visitors, too, judging by the cries of "It-a-lya" as they secured first place in Group A against Norway.

## 172,543

The aggregate attendance over the 15 matches in Israel with a tournament high of 29,320 attending the final in Jerusalem



### TEDDY STADIUM

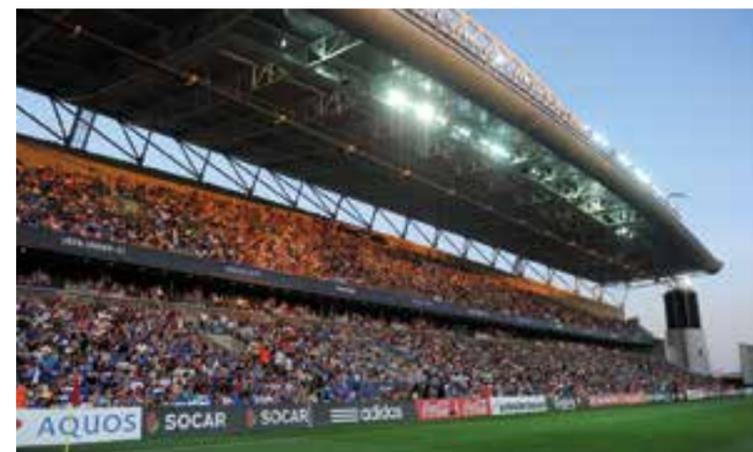


TOURNAMENT CAPACITY: 30,000

MATCHES:

- Group B Spain 1-0 Russia
- Group B Netherlands 5-1 Russia
- Group A Israel 1-0 England
- Final Italy 2-4 Spain

AGGREGATE ATTENDANCE: 64,219



### NETANYA MUNICIPAL STADIUM



TOURNAMENT CAPACITY: 13,800

MATCHES:

- Group A Israel 2-2 Norway
- Group B Germany 0-1 Spain
- Group B Russia 1-2 Germany
- Semi-final Spain 3-0 Norway

AGGREGATE ATTENDANCE: 42,808



### HA MOSHAVA STADIUM



TOURNAMENT CAPACITY: 11,500

MATCHES:

- Group B Netherlands 3-2 Germany
- Group A England 1-3 Norway
- Group B Spain 3-0 Netherlands
- Semi-final Italy 1-0 Netherlands

AGGREGATE ATTENDANCE: 33,961



### BLOOMFIELD STADIUM



TOURNAMENT CAPACITY: 14,400

MATCHES:

- Group A England 0-1 Italy
- Group A Italy 4-0 Israel
- Group A Norway 1-1 Italy

AGGREGATE ATTENDANCE: 31,555

# Loyal supporters

The 2013 UEFA European Under-21 Championship final tournament had a vibrant commercial programme comprising eight global sponsors and three national sponsors. As in the past, this mix of brands enabled UEFA to balance the need for local market promotion – which drives people to the stadiums – with the broader objective of generating interest in the competition among its increasingly global audience.

The tournament was the first to take place since the centralisation of commercial rights for European qualifiers – a change that has led to the creation of a national team football strategy which will include the following events from UEFA's national team portfolio: UEFA European Championship final tournament, UEFA European Championship qualifiers, UEFA European Women's Championship,

UEFA European U21 Championship and UEFA European Futsal Championship. By associating with this concept, UEFA's partners will now benefit from a continuous stream of events, thereby ensuring their brands are continuously linked to, and synonymous with, the development of national team football.

## GLOBAL SPONSORS



## NATIONAL SPONSORS



## Global sponsors



adidas is one of several commercial partners inextricably linked with the history of the UEFA national team competitions and, as at previous U21 tournaments, it had a prominent role as supplier of the official match ball. The ball's distinctive colours were chosen to fit the host country, matching the white and blue of the Israeli flag. adidas had a range of official tournament products for supporters to buy at the stadiums and achieved additional prominence via its association with the top scorer of the competition. The sports brand was presenting partner of the adidas Golden Boot award, which was handed over at the end of the championship to Spain's Álvaro Morata who scored four goals. The visibility of the adidas brand was further enhanced on and around the pitch thanks to the fact it provided the Sponsors' Youth Programme kits and the uniforms of the tournament volunteers.



The Israeli asset management firm Altshuler Shaham signed as a global sponsor in November 2012 and used its extensive local market knowledge and experience to raise awareness of its association with the tournament. At the heart of this was the Play, Enjoy, Win promotion. This comprised various competitions – on national radio, social media and even a ball juggling contest carried out by roving teams of Altshuler promotional staff in town centres nationwide. The prize for each of the winners (a pair of whom are pictured here) was a matchday stadium tour during the championship.



Global sponsors

Carlsberg continued its long-standing association with the UEFA European U21 Championship and it was fantastic news for the final tournament that such an important partner and globally recognised brand was again involved. Carlsberg utilised its full allocation of tickets, while promoting its core brand/drink responsibly messaging on perimeter boards, as well as providing Carlsberg products to key areas on-site.



Having recently entered Interbrand's globally recognised list of top 100 brands, Kia once again played a key role in servicing the national teams, tournament officials and UEFA/LOC staff at a UEFA event by organising the seamless provision of over 60 new vehicles for the duration of the competition. In addition to this logistical support, the company was busy driving awareness via its Official Match Ball Carrier programme for all 15 games. For this edition of the competition Kia chose to work closely with the Peres Centre for Peace, a non-governmental organisation promoting peace in the region, when recruiting participants. The charity, based in Jaffa, conducts projects involving Israelis and Palestinians, Jews and Arabs inside Israel, fostering socio-economic cooperation and interaction. In undertaking this initiative Kia afforded children from a variety of backgrounds an experience they will not forget.

As ever, Coca-Cola was very active in its involvement with the U21 tournament, notably through its national team Flagbearers programme which took place on the day of the final. This gave children from a variety of backgrounds the opportunity to walk out onto the pitch with the Italy and Spain teams for the pre-game ceremony in Jerusalem and then be pictured alongside the players during the playing of the national anthems. In addition to its usual activities, Coca-Cola also helped to keep all stakeholders refreshed throughout the competition through drinks supplied as value in kind – be it teams in training, officials during their preparations, spectators in the stands or staff in their offices, Coca-Cola's range of drinks helped to ensure nobody went thirsty in the hot Israeli summer.



McDonald's has been a long-standing partner of UEFA and it maintained a distinctive presence throughout the U21 finals, which ensured a fitting conclusion to a busy sponsorship cycle. Working in association with the Peres Centre for Peace, McDonald's laid on a once-in-a-lifetime experience for some lucky youngsters through its Player Escort programme. This allowed local children the unique and privileged opportunity to play their part in the preamble to every match at the tournament – each of them walking onto the pitch hand-in-hand with one of the best U21 players in Europe. And it was not just the children who enjoyed the benefits of this promotion: each player escort had the chance to bring their family with them and share the magic of the event courtesy of the Family Day Out campaign run by McDonald's.



Global sponsors

This was Sharp's second involvement with the UEFA European U21 Championship and the consumer electronics company focused much of its local activity on business-to-business promotion across its network of dealers and subsidiaries. In addition, the company ran its Fan of the Match programme for the third time following the 2011 U21 final tournament and UEFA EURO 2012. The two lucky winners had taken part in an in-store promotion conducted by Sharp and were rewarded with a VIP trip to the final at the Teddy Stadium where they participated in a pitch-side shirt swap 45 minutes before kick-off.

SHARP



In 2013, Socar (State Oil Company of Azerbaijan Republic) became a global sponsor for UEFA's national team competitions and the U21 finals formed part of this new association – an early step towards increasing the company's brand awareness across Europe. This international exposure was more significant than any other cultural or sporting partnership Socar has been involved with previously and the visibility in Israel was maximised across several platforms including media backdrops, perimeter boards and the UEFA.com website.

SOCAR



National sponsors



One Radio gave valuable publicity to the tournament via its on-air promotions which began in the weeks leading up to the event and continued throughout. The live spots included daily interviews with players and coaches, as well as previews before matches, with the presenters also encouraging listeners to take part in their ticket giveaways via social media.



Yedioth Ahronoth, the respected Israeli national daily newspaper, played a pivotal role in driving ticket sales as the tournament approached. Working closely with the LOC, the newspaper offered 100 tickets for each fixture through a variety of promotions directed towards its readership.



A mix of brands enabled UEFA to balance the need for local market promotion with the broader objective of generating interest in the competition among its increasingly global audience

Israel Discount Bank played a significant part in helping to promote the tournament throughout its branches and via a complementary TV campaign. Working closely with the local organising committee, the popular bank utilised its local expertise and, together with its fellow national partners, helped galvanise local interest and prompt a late surge of ticket sales.

# Global coverage

The UEFA European Under-21 Championship has established itself as a major global football event and millions of fans worldwide tuned in to the action at Israel 2013, either watching on a variety of platforms or listening to radio coverage provided by the likes of BBC Radio or RAI Radio. UEFA had broadcast partners on every continent and in all eight participating countries and through their unilateral activities on-site they were able to complement the live feed supplied by host broadcaster Charlton to the needs of their own individual markets.

UEFA aims to continuously broaden the reach of the competition. As such UEFA ensured extensive coverage in the eight participating countries and established a broad broadcast network by partnering with major media outlets in other territories (covering all continents). Rights were granted on a platform neutral basis, allowing partners to show the matches across all of their outlets (TV, internet and mobile). Overall, a cumulative audience of more than 120 million viewers followed the championship. In addition to the broadcast network, UEFA provided a free live streaming

service via UEFA.com in the territories within the UEFA footprint where rights were not sold, making sure any football fan in Europe could watch the tournament. UEFA also provided its broadcast partners with branding elements to allow for the creation of branded studio backdrops, promotional trailers and online and print promotion.

## ISRAEL 2013 BROADCAST NETWORK

EUROPE			
France	BelN Sport France	Norway	TV2 Gruppen
Germany	ProSiebenSat.1 Media	Portugal	Sport TV Portugal
Israel	Charlton / Channel 1	Russia	State Television Company "TV Channel Russia"
Italy	RAI-Radiotelevisione Italiana	Spain	Mediaset España Comunicación
Netherlands	SBS Broadcasting BV/Eredivisie Media and Marketing CV	Ukraine	TV Broadcasting Company Ukraine
		United Kingdom	British Sky Broadcasting

OUTSIDE EUROPE			
Australia	Setanta Sports Australia PTY	Mexico	OTI
Brazil	Globosat	Middle East & North Africa	Al-Jazeera
Canada	CTV Speciality Television Enterprises	Mongolia	Media Holding LLC
Caribbean	ESPN	Myanmar	Shwe Than Lwin Media Company
Fiji & Pacific Islands	Fiji Television	Philippines	Solar Entertainment Corporation
Hong Kong	PCCW Media	Singapore	Starhub (Mauritius)
Indian Subcontinent	Neo Sports Broadcast PVT.	Sub-Saharan Africa (incl South Africa)	Supersport International (PTY)
Indonesia	PT Rajawali Citra Televisi Indonesia	Thailand	GMM Grammy Public Company
Japan	WOWOW	USA	ESPN
South Korea	IB America	Venezuela	Continental TV
Laos/Cambodia	GMM Grammy Public Company		
Latin America	Televideo Services		
Malaysia & Brunei	Measat Broadcast Network Systems		

# 3.17<sub>M</sub>

## SPANISH HIGH

Spain's final triumph against Italy was watched by 3.17 million people on Cuatro, an audience share of 28.05%. That was higher than any broadcast at the U21 final tournaments in 2011 (Denmark) or 2009 (Sweden) and 9.2% higher than the number of people (2.905 million) in Spain that watched their side win the 2011 final.

# 196,000

## ISRAEL TUNES IN

An audience of 196,000 saw Israel take on Norway on Channel 1 in the opening match at an average share of 12.7%, almost three times the channel's average prime time share (4.5%). The final was the most viewed match in Israel, drawing 216,000 viewers to Channel 1 and Channel 511 (HD), resulting in a share of 13.8%.

# 5.4<sub>M</sub>

## ITALY'S STRONG SUPPORT

Italy's opening match against England had a combined audience of 4.02 million on Rai 3 and Rai Sport 1. The semi-final against the Netherlands was watched by 5.4 million viewers on Rai 1 and Rai Sport 1, a share of 27.7%. That share increased to 34.7% for the final, watched by an impressive 4.6 million even though it was an early evening kick-off.

# 500,000

## BRITISH U21 INTEREST

Despite England's opening match being scheduled against live international cricket on Sky Sports 1, a peak audience of 500,000 viewers tuned in to Sky Sports 2 to see Stuart Pearce's side take on Italy.

# 1.6<sub>M</sub>

## DUTCH DELIGHT

The Netherlands' Group B game against Germany attracted an audience of 1.38 million, with the majority (1.078 million) watching on SBS6. That represented a share of 20.3%, more than double the average prime time share for the channel (9.1%). The semi-final against Italy attracted the highest audience in the Netherlands: 1.6 million viewers across free-to-air broadcaster SBS and pay broadcaster Eredivisie Live.

# 263,700

## NORWAY'S RECORD BREAKERS

Norway's semi-final against Spain was watched by 263,700 viewers across TV2 Zebra and TV2 Sport. TV2 Zebra's audience share of 41.6% was a new record for the channel.

# 2.25<sub>M</sub>

## RIVALRY IGNITES GERMAN PASSION

Germany's opening match against rivals the Netherlands on Kabel Eins proved its biggest draw of the tournament, attracting an average of 2.25 million viewers.



# In the picture



The Tel Aviv-based media company and long-standing UEFA partner Charlton was appointed host broadcaster for the 2013 UEFA European Under-21 Championship final tournament and implemented the outside broadcast production of the competition, providing the technical facilities and staff at all four venues. All matches were covered live, in high definition and with Dolby 5.1 surround sound. A 12-camera multilateral plan was adopted during the group stage, and this was supplemented at the semi-finals and final by the addition of a 6m camera and a steadicam, bringing the viewer even closer to the action.

Charlton's host broadcast operation was supervised and supported by UEFA's TV Production Host Broadcast Control team, which offered production and operational advice and guidance on all aspects of the host broadcast. A UEFA producer and technical manager were on-site at every match, the former based in the multilateral OB van alongside the host director and production team to ensure that coverage was unbiased, that the multilateral running order was adhered to, and that UEFA's production philosophy and principles were applied to guarantee quality and consistency of coverage across all venues. Further monitoring and quality control took place at the Match Command Centre at UEFA's headquarters in Nyon, Switzerland, where all elements of the multilateral production were observed and reviewed. The good cooperation with the host broadcaster, and

their professional set-up, contributed to the high quality coverage of the tournament.

In addition to the multilateral facilities, Charlton supplied the unilateral facilities booked by on-site broadcasters, servicing and supporting them with commentary and camera positions, camera feeds, and interview facilities, allowing each broadcaster to tailor production for their country. Some broadcasters had unilateral operations just at their own national team's matches while others, such as BSkyB, attended every game. Broadcasters from some non-participating countries also attended the tournament with a production team, most notably BeIN Sport from France who delivered live commentary from the stadiums. Bookings for unilateral facilities and services were organised by UEFA's in-house unilateral bookings team while a UEFA-employed broadcast liaison officer at each stadium coordinated the implementation of the services.

The European Broadcasting Union (EBU) was responsible for worldwide satellite distribution. English commentary was added to the non-European feed and distributed to all broadcast partners. UEFA's TV production team also made available additional content for broadcast partners comprising two promos and two hours of supplementary raw material, which included interviews with players and coaches of all the participating sides.



A poster promoting Charlton's live coverage



The world's media turned out in numbers for the final tournament



The host broadcaster's match director at work during the Italy v Israel match



HB steadicam deployed during the Spain v Norway semi-final

# On the ball

Fans around the world were kept up to date with the action in Israel thanks to UEFA's comprehensive media output. Whether accessing the latest information digitally via UEFA.com, new mobile platforms and social media, or through traditional print offerings such as the official tournament programme, the UEFA European Under-21 Championship final tournament was more accessible than ever before.

With a team of on-site reporters, UEFA.com provided comprehensive coverage in ten languages, drawing more than 1.3 million unique visitors – with 1.9m visits and 7.6m page views – over the course of the two-week tournament. The work actually began long before the first ball was kicked in Israel. The qualifying campaign was comprehensively covered on UEFA.com, with reports available from every match. An official tournament programme was also produced, offering analysis of the competing teams and interviews with players from U21 finals present and past. The team was also responsible for compiling the in-depth press kits issued to journalists before every game which featured all the key facts and figures, tables, match official details and squad lists.

The centrepiece of UEFA.com's coverage was its live reporting, which featured build-up from the stadiums, minute-by-minute commentary, match galleries, match reports and player and coach reaction. UEFA.com's reporters – including speakers of Hebrew, German, Italian, Russian and Spanish – had the additional task of conducting all after-match flash interviews for the live world television feed, which appeared subsequently in edited form on the website as post-match video reaction. Highlights of all the games could also be seen on European football's official website.

Away from the stadiums, UEFA.com attended each and every pre-match press conference and carried out a series of exclusive sit-down interviews with coaches, players and other personalities at the finals. These videos helped convey some of the colour of the event, showing players relaxing in their hotels and training bases – and even, in the case of Netherlands midfielder Leroy Fer and his team-mates, having fun on the beach.

Further colour came via a dedicated photography section. This included shots of training sessions, press conferences, fans and exclusive behind-the-scenes pictures from inside the stadiums on matchdays, including players arriving and the dressing rooms.

UEFA.com's social media activity at the tournament included a dedicated Twitter account for the competition – @UEFAUnder21 – and also a designated hashtag – #U21EURO. Reporters tweeted from every venue with live updates, news, videos and photos from the website also posted on other social media platforms – namely the UEFA.com Google+ page, which has over 4.2 million fans, and the official UEFA European Under-21 Championship Facebook page, which has around 100,000 fans.

Website users could also join in the official Under-21 Fantasy Football and Predictor games, while those living in territories where rights for the tournament had not been sold had the additional bonus of free live match streaming of every game.



**UEFA.com** **1.3m**  
unique visitors  
during the  
tournament

**f** **100,000**  
fans on UEFA.com's  
U21 Facebook page

**t** **9,000+**  
followers of the  
@UEFAUnder21  
Twitter account



Thiago Alcántara is interviewed by UEFA.com

# Purchasing power

The main function of UEFA's licensing and retail programme was to promote the UEFA European Under-21 Championship within Israel and create a connection with the fans.

adidas, in its role as the official sports shop of licensed products, created an exclusive range of event-themed apparel and balls which were sold in its outlets within Israel. It also set up concessions at all the stadiums to give fans at the matches the opportunity to buy tournament merchandise.

Another initiative – and a first in the history of the U21 tournament – was the launch of a sticker album for the finals. Produced by PMI, it featured over 200 stickers, including all the participating teams, the four venues and the match ball. To advertise this unique collection, 100,000 items were given away for free at schools and football clubs, while there was a promotional campaign involving official sponsor McDonald's at its restaurants across Israel. In addition, albums and stickers were sold via retail channels and kiosks all over the country.

The popular Israeli singer Eyal Golan was appointed to write the official song for the tournament, *Always My Number 1*. Before becoming one of Israel's best-loved artists and hosting his own television talent show, Golan was actually a keen football player himself and played as a striker in the lower leagues. Following the launch of the song and accompanying video in advance of the championship, Golan performed it during the opening ceremony at the Netanya Municipal Stadium alongside Meital De Razon and it figured prominently on the playlist at all four venues on matchdays.



adidas created an exclusive range for the tournament



Sales of Israel shirts spiked during the finals



Israel players meet their sticky-backed counterparts



PMI's sticker album engaged younger fans



Israel enjoyed tremendous support on home soil

# Audience participation

With an enticing lineup of participating teams, there were hopes of large spectator numbers at the 15 matches at the 2013 UEFA European Under-21 Championship – and those hopes were fulfilled.

Indeed, thanks to a combination of the various promotional campaigns and activities aimed at attracting all age groups to the stadiums, and a ticketing strategy offering seats at reasonable and affordable prices, the overall outcome was hugely satisfactory with over 170,000 people attending the event.

This meant an average attendance of around 11,500 – just short of a 70% take-up of the total tournament capacity, especially impressive bearing in mind four of the matches were played at the 30,000-capacity Teddy Stadium.

Ticket sales were handled by Leaan, a leading local agency offering a well-established network within the host country. Tickets were sold mainly via Leaan's online platform, but were also available through their box office and call centre. For those fixtures not sold out in advance, remaining tickets were put on sale at the respective stadiums on the day of the match.

Despite the fact that Israel did not advance from the group stage, both the semi-finals and the final at the Teddy Stadium attracted near sell-out crowds. All in all, Israeli football watchers proved a lively and appreciative audience, helping provide an enjoyable atmosphere for the visiting sides to play in.

## HOSPITALITY



The individual characteristics of the four stadiums were reflected in the tournament's hospitality programme. There were modern and up-to-date facilities at the recently constructed Netanya Municipal Stadium and Ha Moshava Stadium; on the other hand, the Teddy and Bloomfield Stadiums each had their own character and sense of history.

The combination of these appealing settings and the varied and delicious Israeli cuisine offered guests a memorable environment in which to experience the high-class football delivered by the eight nations involved.



Affordable tickets were a key tournament principle

# Attention grabbing

The 2013 UEFA European Under-21 Championship was the first major international footballing event to be staged in Israel, and promotional work around it underlined the importance of the competition and the unique opportunities it presented – for the world to see Israel and for Israeli fans to see some of the world's finest young players on their doorstep.

That sense of occasion was palpable at the draw for the final tournament in Tel Aviv on 28 November 2012, then again in April when the Israel Football Association (IFA) management and senior foreign ministry officials invited ambassadors from the participating nations to a gala lunch to herald the start of ticket sales for the finals. At street level, the trophy took a tour of Israel on a branded bus, giving supporters a further reminder of the event and pushing ticket sales.

As the tournament approached, promotional activities intensified, with the U21 championship publicised on over 500 major billboard sites throughout the country while branded tournament banners adorned many major traffic routes. Advertisements were included in IFA-controlled pitchside LED displays at major domestic and international matches; a quarterly newsletter was delivered to key opinion leaders and journalists; a direct mail campaign targeted 1.7 million local residents; while broadcast sponsorship was also acquired for high-rating programmes on Channels 9 and 22.

Stressing the value of young people to the ethos of the tournament, the promotional drive also went into schools, with educational programmes looking to engage with students on the themes of friendship, tolerance and respect. Further impetus was lent to the promotional campaign by the release of an official song, *Always My Number 1*, sung by footballer-turned-pop star Eyal Golan,

which had been viewed more than 350,000 times on the singer's official YouTube channel by the summer.

The IFA helped to set up a Hebrew-language tournament website in November 2012, appealing to local fans with tailored news stories and competitions, while UEFA.com – UEFA's official website – provided a stream of features and news stories on its dedicated U21 pages and ran Predictor and Fantasy Football games throughout the finals. As well as online publicity from official UEFA broadcast partners, good use was made of advertising opportunities on major sports websites including Ynet, One, Walla and Sport.

Social media played a part too, with the 'Pass The Ball' viral featuring a variety of national celebrities and politicians – not least among them, Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu – while ambassadors were enlisted from all sectors to reach out to the public. Former Israeli internationals Avi Nimni and Eli Ohana covered the footballing end, with chef Aviv Moshe, television presenter Guy Pines and children's TV star Tal Mosseri also spreading the word.

U21 partners also did their bit. PMI launched an official sticker collection to attract children and build awareness of the participating teams and players; newspaper partner Yedioth Ahronoth delivered an advertising campaign; and promotions were undertaken across the 150 branches of the Israel Discount Bank network, which also put out 12 TV spots on Channels 2 and 10 plus 120 radio endorsements across Israel Radio and 99 FM. One Radio, meanwhile, broadcast sponsored content every day during the tournament, including interviews and discussions, with its efforts reinforced by an extensive campaign on its dedicated Facebook page.

## Educational programmes looked to engage with students on the themes of friendship, tolerance and respect



From top: Tournament ambassadors Eli Ohana and Avi Nimni played a key part in promoting the event; kids get involved in a 'Football for all' initiative with the England team; Eyal Golan's official song proved a hit; host city dressing helped create the sense of occasion

### BRAND IDENTITY



The UEFA European Under-21 Championship's status as a competition of quality and prestige is reflected by its strong brand identity. The tagline 'Stars of today, Superstars of tomorrow' captures the essence of the brand and was used in the build-up to the 2013 tournament – on posters and flyers – to advertise that Israel would be hosting the next generation of leading European football talents. The main tournament logo itself matched the colours of the host country, namely light blue and white, though the colour scheme also included elements of dark blue. This was the primary visual element of the brand identity and it featured on all branding – from city signage (such as lamppost flags) to backdrops in the stadiums to the tournament home page on the UEFA.com website. UEFA's broadcast partners, meanwhile, were provided with a variety of branding elements to ensure a consistent look and feel, from the brand source file to create studio backdrops or promotion campaigns, to custom-made microphone windshields and sponsor backdrops to allow for a seamless visual transition between the presenters at the stadium and the studio back home. An additional component on display in Israel were the separate host city logos, which combined the official logo with the host city name.



# Next stop Prague



The Czech Republic celebrate winning the competition in 2002

One particularly captivated spectator at the 2013 UEFA European Under-21 Championship was Petr Fousek, the man charged with overseeing the 2015 finals in the Czech Republic as chairman of the Football Association of the Czech Republic's (FAČR) organising committee. He took home with him some valuable lessons and was particularly impressed by the size of the crowds in Israel. "They really set the bar high with attendances," said Fousek. "The attendances at the matches not featuring Israel were really impressive."

The 2015 tournament will take place in three cities – Prague, Uherske Hradiste and Olomouc – and qualifying began in June, before the 2013 event had even finished. For Fousek, the experience of seeing so many talented young players on show in Israel means he is already looking forward to his own country's turn. "They play in the top leagues, in the top clubs; many of them are already involved in their senior national teams, so this is not a youth tournament," said Fousek. "You can see the level of professionalism not only on the pitch but also off it," he added, pointing to the marketing of the championship and media coverage.

Fousek's ambition is to create "football fever" in 2015 and to this end he hopes to see the best young Czech players involved – prospects such as Tomáš Kalas (pictured) and Ladislav Krejčí, already senior internationals but available for action in two summers' time – as they look to recreate past successes in a competition they won in 2002. "It can help with the attendances and also the whole country's interest because we want to create a real football festival."



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