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Union des associations
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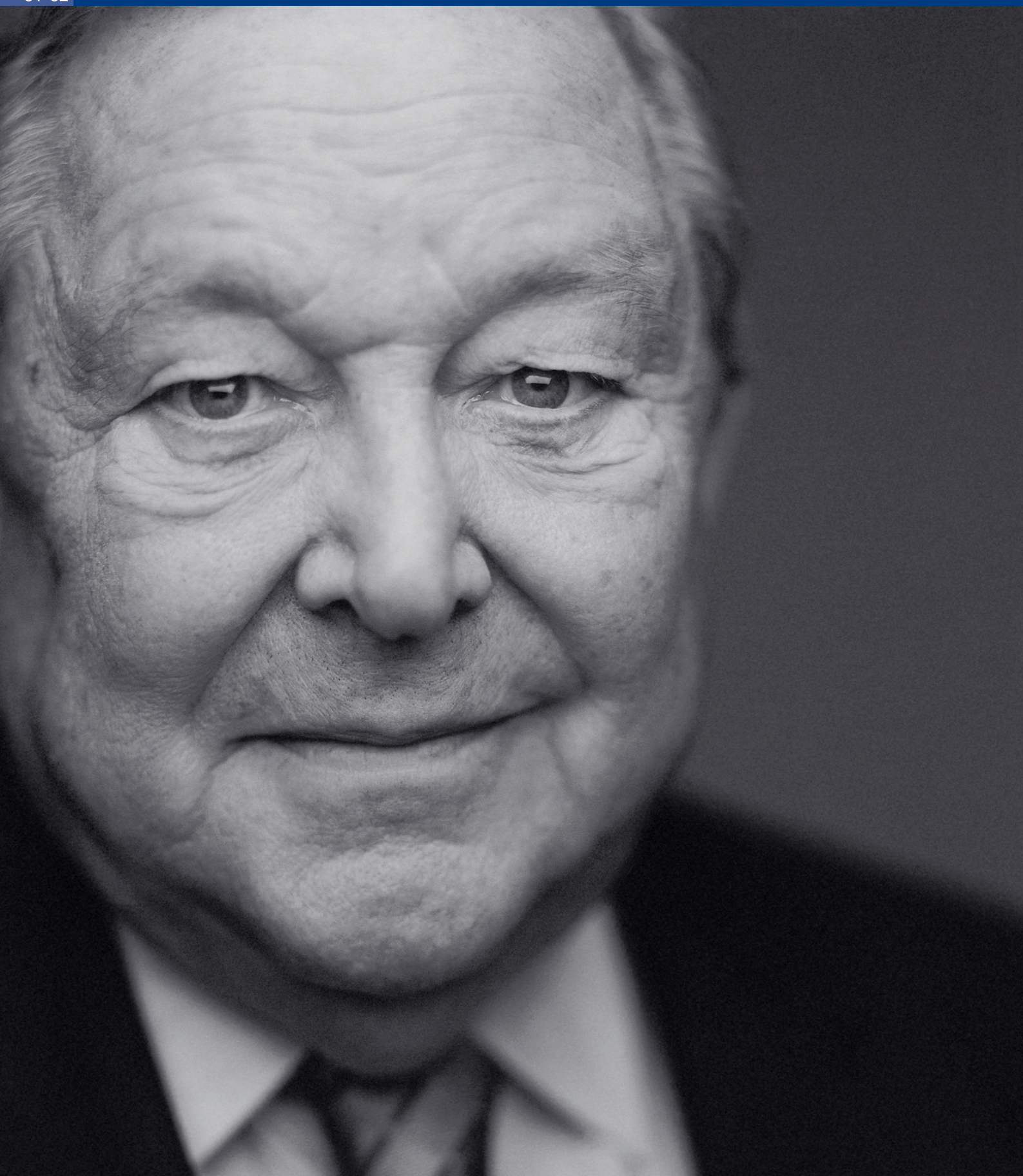


Report to the XXVI
Ordinary UEFA Congress
UEFA Executive Committee



Report of the UEFA Executive Committee

01-02





Overview

The period 2000 – 2002 has been an important and exciting one in the history and development of UEFA and the work of the UEFA Executive Committee.

It has been a time of organisational change, new political challenges and important developments in the workings of European football.

UEFA has had to adapt to these changing circumstances and to ensure that as the European governing body it is truly fit and ready for the demands of the first decade of the 21st century.

The key element in delivering this has been the implementation of the new structures recommended by the FORCE Project and approved by the UEFA Congress in 2000.

This implementation of the Congress decisions has meant changes to the UEFA Committee structure, a reduction in the size and number of Committees, a new role for the Executive Committee and the development of a more professional administration headed by CEO, Gerhard Aigner.

The UEFA Executive Committee, as the political and strategic leadership of the organisation, has overseen those changes and reviewed the impact of the new structures on the effectiveness of UEFA.

We are pleased to report that the changes, which were foreseen, have been implemented successfully with a new management team in place and a smooth transition completed from old to new structures.

The new Committee system, supported by expert Panels and working groups, is functioning well with the Executive Committee increasingly able to concentrate on the major areas of policy and strategic direction.

In addition, the delegation of responsibilities and the reporting systems that have been created in the new structures mean that the transparency and the accountability of UEFA has been further strengthened.



Of course change on this scale is impossible without a period of adjustment, some “teething” problems and the need to confront and meet new challenges. This has been our experience but the joint approach of everyone involved has made this process a healthy and productive one.


All the Member Associations and those who have served UEFA over this period deserve the thanks of European football for their co-operation and their willingness to support new ways of working.

The new structures will, inevitably, continue to evolve and the 2002 Congress will be an opportunity for the Member Associations to give additional feedback as the UEFA President, the Executive Committee and the CEO look ahead to the next phase of UEFA’s development.

Work Programme

The Executive Committee has had an extremely busy schedule since the Congress in 2000. Much of the detail of the work, decisions taken and initiatives launched is covered in the CEO’s Report to Congress and the action lists of the thirteen Executive Committee meetings which have taken place between the Luxembourg Congress and the end of 2001.

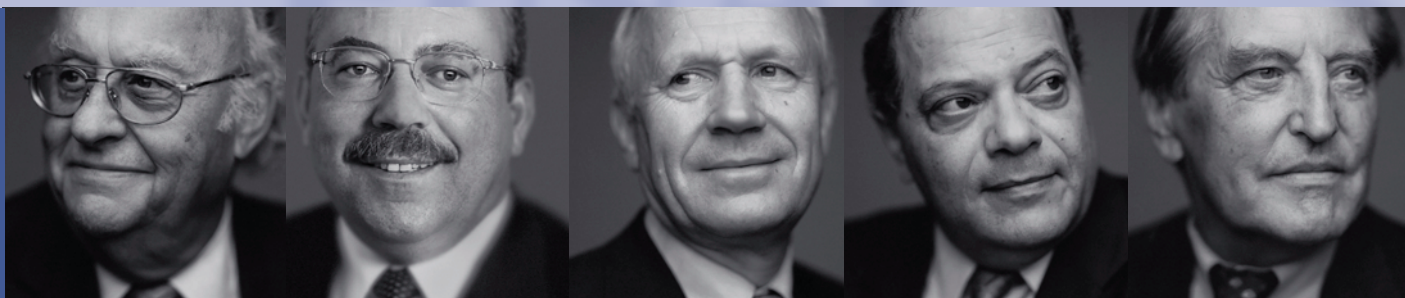




Some of the key areas which have been addressed include:

- the future of the international transfer system
- improving relations with the European Union
- the introduction of a club licensing system for European club football
- the development the new Committee and Panel structures
- the future of the UEFA Presidency
- strengthening UEFA's links with the football family
- establishing important new UEFA initiatives via the creation of UEFA New Media and the Marketing Operations Centre
- deciding the future shape of the UEFA Champions League and launching new Futsal and Women's club competitions; and
- creating a policy framework for the development of artificial turf in Europe.

In order to facilitate the work of the Executive Committee four Working Groups have also been established relating to FIFA (chaired by Angel Maria Villar Llona), the European Union (Per Ravn Omdal), National Associations (Des Casey) and Clubs and Leagues (Senes Erzik).





All of these groups have undertaken useful activity and allowed the Executive Committee to develop its work in each of these areas.

In addition steps have been taken to formalise the coverage of Member Associations by the Executive Committee by providing direct links between members and groups of Associations. This remains in the early stage of development and will be further refined following the 2002 Congress.

FIFA Relations

This has been an important area of activity over the period covered by this report. The UEFA Executive Committee and the European members of the FIFA Executive Committee have worked hard to ensure a positive link between the two organisations and to reinforce the operational connections which exist at many levels.

However, there have been tensions and areas of disagreement and it has not always been easy to maintain the level of harmony that we all desire.

There was a difference of approach in the work on the international transfer system following the challenge from the European Commission, which led to some difficult moments. Nevertheless, in the final analysis, the two organisations were able to come together to agree a common negotiating position with the Commission which eventually led to the agreement on which the new transfer regulations are based.

The relationship has not been helped by suggestions of a World Cup every two years and the insistence on pursuing initiatives such as the World Club Championship. More recently, concerns have also been raised concerning the finances and management of FIFA.

We must continue to hope that these matters can be settled amicably and in a manner which is both accountable and transparent. It is in the interests of the whole football family that UEFA and FIFA find a common understanding and a more effective working relationship.

Political institutions

The UEFA Executive Committee is firmly committed to improving UEFA's relationships with other sporting organisations and also political decision-makers at both a national and a European level.

The role of football in the modern world, its capacity to aid social integration, help young people's development and its impact on economic activity, mean that governing bodies do carry important responsibilities.

This role also means that football, perhaps more than any other sport, attracts the attention of the political and regulatory authorities. Whether it be in the sphere of international transfers or the way in which broadcast rights are marketed, these bodies are evaluating and intervening in our daily business. We have a duty to not only respond but also to work constructively with them to plan positively for the future.

This is the reason that the Executive Committee has set up a Working Group, under the Chairmanship of Per Ravn Omdal, to take forward new initiatives with the European political institutions and support complimentary activities at a national government level. The main focus of this has been responding to the Statement of Objections from the European Commission to the marketing of television rights for the UEFA Champions League, however we are seeking to develop our dialogue around other key issues.

At the top of our agenda has to be the need for a Sports Protocol to be established alongside the European treaties. For UEFA this is a crucial issue if we are to be able to defend the fabric of European football, improve regulation in the European game and bring forward new initiatives to help in areas such as youth development.


We have already discussed our approach with the new President of the IOC, Jacques Rogge, and begun a programme of events and meetings to promote the idea of a Sports Protocol being introduced at the 2004 Inter Governmental Conference.





07-08





Our aim is to provide a legal framework of rights and responsibilities for governing bodies in the context of European legislation and to provide proper recognition and protection of the special characteristics of sport.

We hope that all Member Associations, and particularly those in (or about to join) the European Union will join us in this campaign.

The Future

There is much to be proud of since we gathered in Luxembourg for the XXVth Ordinary Congress. Much has been achieved within European football and our game is in a healthy and thriving state in many parts of the continent.

However, there are challenges ahead which we must be prepared to understand and face.

We must do what we can to support the development of our game in all parts of Europe, we must ensure that the grassroots of the game are strong and that our competitions are truly in the interests of fans as well as clubs and national teams.

Undoubtedly there are some worrying trends. Wealth gaps in the game are widening and financial stability is being threatened by a spiral in players salaries and a possible reduction in future income through television. UEFA cannot solve these problems or face these challenges alone. Everyone involved in European football has a responsibility to act and to ensure that unity and solidarity remain the twin foundation stones of our great game in Europe.





Working together, UEFA, the Member Associations, Leagues and Clubs can face the future with optimism and a belief that our game can thrive if we get the strategy right. This is our challenge and we face it with a UEFA administration which has given us tremendous support over the last two years.

Our thanks go out to Gerhard Aigner, his team of Directors and all the staff at the House of European Football. It is a strong team and we believe a winning one.

We also pay tribute to all those who have served and worked on the various UEFA Committees, Panels and other working groups without their service European football would be a poorer place.

We have built a partnership which we want to strengthen and improve and ensure that our Member Associations are well served and fully involved in UEFA's progress.

Together we can build a better future for the European game and we hope that the 2002 Congress in Stockholm will provide us all with a great start to the next phase of our development.

Lennart Johansson
President

UEFA Executive Committee





The European football family is built on the principles of unity and solidarity. This is our history and it is the basis of our future.

