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uefa.com Team of the Year 2004

Six new faces in fans' selection

A year of surprise in European football is reflected in the uefa.com users' Team of 2004 that was announced today. Over 1.2 million votes were cast by uefa.com users for the fourth edition of the awards, and the resulting selection showcased a new wave of European football superstars. While Arsenal FC's French forward Thierry Henry continued his record of being selected every year since the awards' inception in 2001, six of the team are honoured for the first time.

The team features two players who were part of FC Porto's triumphant UEFA Champions League-winning team in midfielder Maniche and defender Ricardo Carvalho. In addition, coach José Mourinho, who guided Porto to glory before moving to Chelsea FC, is selected for the second successive year. Manchester United FC prodigy Cristiano Ronaldo brings the Portuguese representation to four with his selection on the right side of midfield.

The high Portuguese presence reflected Porto's success, as well as Portugal's achievement in finishing runners-up at UEFA EURO 2004™. However, surprisingly, there were no players from EURO 2004™ victors Greece in the final selection, underlining that Greece's breakthrough success was a triumph of team strength over individual brilliance.

Perennial selection Henry is joined in attack by Ballon d'Or winner Andriy Shevchenko. His AC Milan colleague Alessandro Nesta was selected for the third successive year. Juventus FC pair Gianluigi Buffon and Pavel Nedved were both honoured for the second year in a row.

Among the new faces were veteran right-back Cafu, who narrowly pipped Greece's Giourkas Seitaridis, Arsenal FC and England star Ashley Cole at left-back and FC Barcelona and Brazil playmaker Ronaldinho, who scooped over half of the votes in the star-studded attacking midfielder category, leaving current club-mate and former Porto star Deco trailing in his wake.

José Mourinho's record in owning having lost two competitive matches in 2004 saw him selected again in the coach category, with Greece coach Otto Rehhagel second after his achievement in leading his team to the EURO 2004™ crown against all the odds.

uefa.com users' Team of the Year 2004:

Gianluigi Buffon (Juventus FC and Italy) – Cafu (AC Milan), Ricardo Carvalho (Chelsea FC and Portugal), Alessandro Nesta (AC Milan and Italy), Ashley Cole (Arsenal FC and England) – Cristiano Ronaldo (Manchester United FC and Portugal), Maniche (FC Porto and Portugal), Ronaldinho (FC Barcelona), Pavel Nedved (Juventus FC and Czech Republic) – Thierry Henry (Arsenal FC and France), Andriy Shevchenko (AC Milan and Ukraine) – José Mourinho (Chelsea FC).

Full results and voting figures can be found at www.uefa.com

For further information:
UEFA Media Services: ++41-22 99 44 55 9

Route de Genève 46
CH-1260 Nyon 2
Tel. +41 22 994 45 59
Fax +41 22 994 37 37
media@uefa.ch
uefa.com