

12.05

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Supplement



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COVER

The UEFA Champions League group matches are reaching their conclusion. The contest is particularly close in Group E, which includes Schalke 04 (Mladen Krstajic, in blue) and Fenerbahce (Luciano).

PHOTO: KOEPEL/BONGARTS/GETTY IMAGES

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Editorial

From one anniversary to another

Following on from its golden jubilee celebrations last year, UEFA is presently commemorating 50 years of European club competitions. As an opportunity to pay tribute to the founders of our organisation and of its competitions, these celebrations recall the early days of UEFA and the launch of what were to become its most prestigious competitions: the European Champion Clubs' Cup (UEFA Champions League) and the European Football Championship.



2005 also marks another anniversary, that of a ruling which shook European football: in December 1995, the European Court of Justice issued its verdict in the Bosman case

and put an end not only to the transfer system in place at that time, but also to the limitation on the number of foreign players, in the name of the free movement of workers within the European Union.

The Bosman ruling is certainly not the cause of all the evils afflicting European football but it did away with safeguards that the game's leaders had established quite consciously, not to raise football above EU legislation, but to preserve the special nature of the game and to prevent exploitation.

Since then, transfers have mushroomed and the masses of money flowing into the game have accentuated this tendency, gradually depriving clubs of their local identity. Some astute clubs have taken advantage of this enlargement of the market to reach unprecedented heights, but they are in a minority. Generally speaking, the gap between the rich and the less well-off has widened, a phenomenon which can be nothing but detrimental on the competitions, making them less interesting.

There is no point in calling the Bosman ruling into question; it would be a waste of time to do so. What matters is learning from the past and from the Bosman ruling and, as a result, maintaining close dialogue with the European Union in order to be able to convince its leaders of the special nature of our game and of the challenges issues facing it. Such dialogue is already on the right track, but if football's arguments are to be clearly heard and understood, then it has to speak with one voice – like in favour of the training and protection of youth players. A united stand is a persuasive force.

Lars-Christer Olsson
Chief Executive

Football development
is an absolute priority.

EMPICS/UEFA

WE CARE ABOUT FOOTBALL



Top Executive Programme

A need for change



UEFA deliberately opted for an informal atmosphere.

UEFA

UEFA'S NEW TOP EXECUTIVE PROGRAMME (TEP) IS DESIGNED TO STRENGTHEN THE ROLE OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND IMPROVE THEIR ABILITY TO ACT. THE PROJECT SWUNG INTO ACTION WITH AN INITIAL SERIES OF ROUND-TABLE DISCUSSIONS NEAR GENEVA.

The Top Executive Programme aims to help the associations in their role as decision-makers and the governing bodies of football in their own country. UEFA decided to create the programme because of changes in the European football landscape in recent years. *"European clubs and leagues have become more professional. We must gain some respect. Our member associations need to be able to make decisions and their authority must no longer be challenged,"* said Geoffrey Thompson, a UEFA vice-president and chairman of the Executive Committee's National Associations working group.

The TEP is coordinated by the recently created UEFA National Associa-

tions division. One important pillar of the programme is the exchange of information. Using a database, round-table discussions, personal consultations and further training courses, the aim is to set in motion a dynamic process which will benefit all parties: if the associations' top executives can clearly explain the needs of their organisation, middle managers will also be in a better position to do their jobs.

A dynamic process

So what are the needs of the national associations? The UEFA Administration visited 27 medium-sized associations in order to gather the necessary information and to plan the

round tables and subsequent projects and courses. Projects will be based on the outcome of these discussions and will be repeated regularly on a cyclical basis.

In order to launch this dynamic process, UEFA invited the presidents and general secretaries of five associations with similar needs to the first of three series of round tables in October and November. In order to ensure the talks were as open and interactive as possible, UEFA deliberately described the meetings as informal, with no reports, presentations or dress code. It also emphasised that, although the TEP had been launched at UEFA's initiative, the associations would play an essential role in shaping the programme. *"There is huge potential here, but our mutual success depends on your participation in these discussions,"* said



Active discussions.

The UEFA Chief Executive, Lars-Christer Olsson, opens the round table.



UEFA Chief Executive Lars-Christer Olsson at the opening of the discussions. *"We are here to assist you, but ultimately you will have to solve the problems yourselves".*

Potential for improvement

After this opening message, the presidents and general secretaries were asked to list their most pressing needs, i.e. the areas in which they would like support or advice. These were then divided into categories in which they could be tackled.

One area in which the national associations definitely want and have to improve is marketing. With an



The needs of the associations were noted...

effective marketing strategy, an association can kill two birds with one stone by increasing its income at the same time as reducing its costs.

Associations which have additional financial resources find it easier to pursue a second important objective: youth development. For example, they can invest in national youth academies and other development programmes, which have long-term benefits for the senior national team. Then, if the national team is successful, more money becomes available for football development.

Internal organisation

Internal organisation, another core aspect of the TEP, was recognised as being essential to an association's ability to perform better. The round table began by looking at this subject. The UEFA Chief Executive referred to the success of UEFA's internal reorganisation as part of the FORCE project in 2000 and said that this was a recipe for success that the associations could follow: *"You shouldn't think: I've never done this before, so why should I start now?"*

A clear separation of tasks, duties and responsibilities is essential."

The presidents and general secretaries in attendance agreed. One president thought that the associations were not professional enough and lacked the necessary expertise to keep up with the professional leagues. The current committee structures were also considered to be a hindrance. Everyone agreed on one thing: the necessary resources were lacking and outside help was needed. Clear progress had been made in areas in which investment had been possible thanks to state subsidies or the UEFA HatTrick programme. The top executives were therefore very grateful for UEFA's support and praised the mini-pitch project in particular.

First step taken

Many associations have a long way to go in order to achieve the goal of becoming more professional and efficient, with numerous courses and consultations ahead of them. However, feedback on the launch of the TEP has been very positive, which augurs well. It should be remembered that this is a brand-new programme, which the associations will take a while to get used to. However, everyone agrees that fundamental changes are required. Lars-Christer Olsson summed it up perfectly: *"We cannot change the balance of power just by amending our statutes. We need to recognise our own qualities as a means for us to compete, and put them into practice!"*



... then shared.

PHOTOS: UEFA



Ukraine (goalkeeper Oleksander Shovkovski and defender Serhiy Fedorov) were the first team to qualify.



Holland and the Czech Republic have met several times in recent years.

2006 FIFA World Cup

A first and several expected qualifications

TEN EUROPEAN NATIONAL TEAMS HAD ALREADY QUALIFIED FOR THE WORLD CUP BY THE END OF THE GROUP PHASE, WHILE THE OTHER SIX HAVE BEEN CONTESTING THE PLAY-OFFS FOR THE THREE REMAINING PLACES.

It was a tense struggle in almost every group, the outcome remaining undecided until the very end. In the run-up to the draw to be held in Leipzig on 9 December, we look back at nearly 18 months of this exciting qualifying competition.

A successful start for Marco van Basten

The Netherlands finished way ahead of the Czech Republic, beating them twice. Since they had previously met the Czechs in the EURO 2000 final round and in the qualifiers and finals for EURO 2004, this was a team that the Dutch knew well. As a former top-class striker who brilliantly combined elegance and effectiveness, Marco van Basten seems to have bequeathed the same qualities to the squad which has been in his care since the end of the last European Championship. While relying on several members of the "old guard" (Van der Sar, Cocu, Van Nistelrooy), the new manager has not hesitated to bring a number of talented youngsters into the fray. The Netherlands have been impressive as well as victorious. In qualifying for the play-offs, the Czechs also lost in Romania but secured maximum points against the other teams in the group (Finland, FYR Macedonia, Armenia and Andorra). The Romanians paid dearly for their draw in Armenia.

A first for Ukraine

Winner of the Ballon d'Or (European Footballer of the Year) award in 2004, Andriy Shevchenko will finally be appearing in the World Cup finals:

Ukraine, managed by the great former striker Oleg Blokhin, who also won the Ballon d'Or in 1975, have qualified for a major final tournament for the first time in their history. In fact they were the first European nation to secure a berth in the current finals, on 3 September. Blokhin had been obliged to resign temporarily from his post as national coach, having been elected member of parlia-

ment in March and being forbidden under Ukrainian law to perform any other duties. A few days later, however, a court authorised him to resume his post on condition that he was not paid. Behind the swift and well-organised Ukrainian team, Turkey claimed the runners-up spot in this

dynamic group. The 2002 World Cup "bronze medallists", who benefited greatly from Fatih Terim's return to the dugout in spring 2005, pipped Denmark and reigning European champions Greece at the post.

Pauleta's record

Portugal, the EURO 2004 hosts and runners-up, were streets ahead of the rest in Group 3. Despite an unexpectedly tough time against Liechtenstein, with a

draw in the principality and a 2-1 victory at home, Luiz Felipe Scolari's men fulfilled their attacking potential. With a tally of 35 goals, they share the distinction with the Czech Republic of having the most prolific front line in Europe. Surpassing Figo, Deco and Cristiano Ronaldo, the star of this qualifying campaign was surely Pedro Pauleta, who notched an unmatched 11-goal total. To top it all, the Paris Saint-Germain striker has become Portugal's all-time leading scorer, beating the legendary Eusebio's record of 42 goals.

The battle for second place was very tight. It culminated in a major upset, with Slovakia finishing ahead of Russia on goal difference.



Pauleta, top scorer in the European qualifying competition.

GETTY IMAGES



Shaun Wright (England, No. 7) and Mariusz Lewandowski (Poland) have both helped their respective teams through to the finals.



Italy (Francesco Totti) overcame all the obstacles.



Spain (Carlos Puyol) had to leave to Serbia and Montenegro (Mateja Kezman, No. 8).

Despite a lack of big-name players in his squad, coach Dusan Galis was able to field a strong and determined team.

Three teams unbeaten

Right up to the last day, four teams – France, Switzerland, Israel and the Republic of Ireland – were still battling it out for one of the first two places. Eleven of the 12 matches between these four teams ended as draws! France were the only team to win in Ireland and consequently topped the group. The return to the line-up of Zidane, Thuram and Makelele paid dividends. Even so, despite the presence of Henry and Trezeguet, two of the world’s most prolific strikers, Raymond Domech’s men scored only 14 goals in the qualifiers, the lowest total among the teams which qualified automatically.

Switzerland, in second place, have continued to make good progress. With striker Frei and skipper Vogel forming the nucleus of the team, they have a highly promising younger generation of players. The

team should be reaching a peak at the time of EURO 2008, which Switzerland will be co-hosting with Austria. Despite being unbeaten like France and Switzerland, Israel were still eliminated, resulting in the resignation of coach Avraham Grant.

No worries for Italy

Italy qualified without any great difficulty. After enjoying success as the coach of Juventus, Marcello Lippi took over from Giovanni Trapattoni at the helm of the “Squadra Azzurra” after EURO 2004.

Even though the stalwarts of the team – Buffon, Nesta, Zambrotta and Totti – are still there, the coach also brought in a large number of newcomers, the biggest impact being made by laquinta, Gilardino and above all Toni in what was already a particularly strong attack.

Despite a couple of slip-ups, Norway easily secured the runners-up spot. However, even with the strike force of Carew and Iversen, they scored only 12 goals, the lowest tally of all 16 top-two finishers in the eight groups.

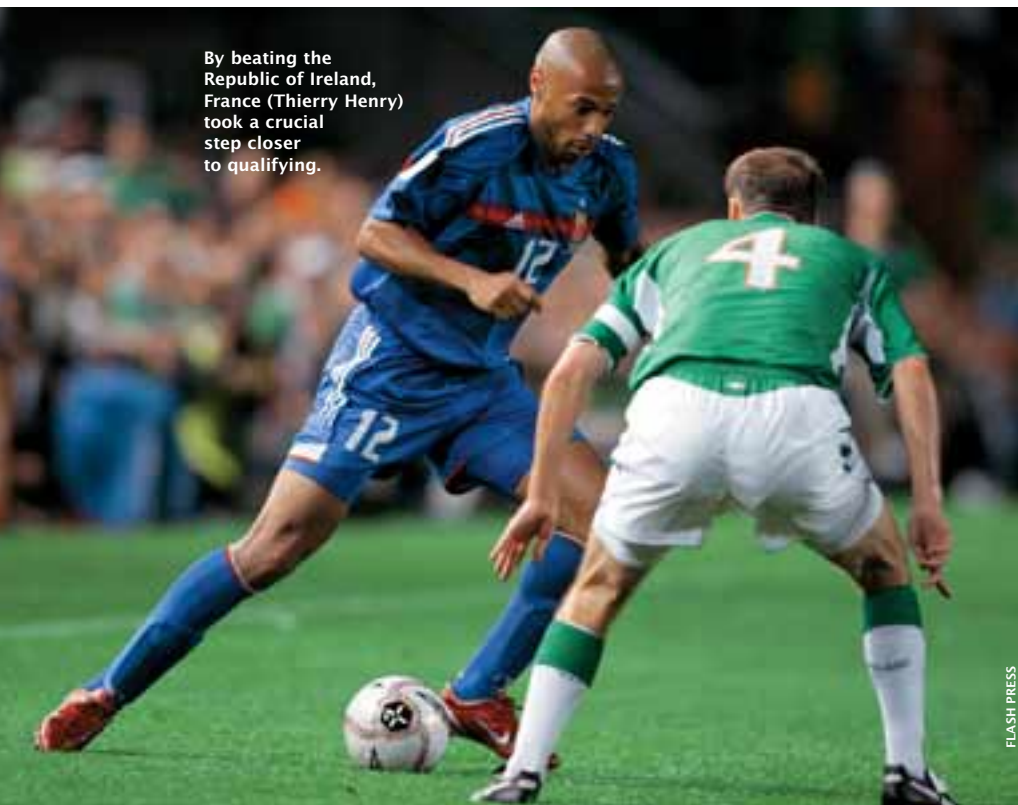
England silence the critics

Despite a historic defeat by Northern Ireland, for which coach Sven-Göran Eriksson was heavily criticised, England won their group thanks to two victories against their main rivals, Poland. The English side appears competitive in all areas of the field, even if there seem to be few alternatives up front to the pairing of Owen and Rooney.

Poland finished as one of the best runners-up, winning all their fixtures apart from the defeats by England, and thus booked a finals berth in Germany, where they shone in the 1974 World Cup, finishing third. In 2006 they will feature one of the most prolific and well-matched attacking duos in Europe: Zurawski and Frankowski put the ball in the opponents’ net a total of 14 times (seven goals each). In third position and some way behind the top two, Austria bade farewell to Hans Krankl and will replace him on 1 January with Josef Hickersberger. They will have to make considerable progress to be competitive in EURO 2008, which they will be co-hosting in two-and-a-half years’ time.

An iron defence

Serbia and Montenegro created a real upset in finishing above Spain. Although the side has no real international stars apart from Stankovic and Kezman, the experienced Ilija Petkovic has succeeded in creating a team spirit which is second to none. Success has been built from the back, with the most water-tight defence of all 51 European competitors. In combining goalkeeper Jevric with Dragutinovic and Gavrancic on the flanks and Vidic and Krstajic in the middle – five men who always train together – the coach conceded just one goal in the whole qualifying campaign. Only Spanish marksman Raul was able to breach this defensive barrier.



By beating the Republic of Ireland, France (Thierry Henry) took a crucial step closer to qualifying.

FLASH PRESS



STRINGER/APP/GETTY IMAGES

Croatia (Dado Prso, No. 9) and Sweden (Teddy Lucic) are on their way to Germany next year.

This was not enough, however, for Luis Aragones' side. Despite being unbeaten, the Spaniards ended up in second place, having one more draw to their name than Serbia and Montenegro. The team of Raul, Fernando Torres, Vicente, Salgado and Casillas had to settle for the play-offs, an objective that was beyond Belgium, who were overtaken by Bosnia and Herzegovina. The "Red Devils" will be absent from the World Cup finals after six successive appearances.

The dynamic duo

Despite three draws, including one against Malta, Croatia, the third-placed team in the 1998 World Cup, came top of their group. The side coached by Zlatko Kranjcar, who succeeded Otto Baric after EURO 2004, helped to decide the outcome through two 1-0 victories over Sweden, with midfielder Srna scoring on both occasions. The other outstanding players in the Balkan line-up were striker Prso, the Kovac brothers and the young Nico Kranjcar, the son of the coach.

Apart from their double setback against Croatia, Sweden won all their matches, thereby securing one of the two best runners-up places. After EURO 2004, the coaching partnership of Tommy Söderberg and Lars Lagerbäck came to an end, leaving the latter in sole control. The Juventus striker Ibrahimovic was the team's top scorer during the qualifying round, finding the net eight times, once more than the other star performer, Arsenal's attacking midfielder Ljungberg.

Emanuele Saraceno



PHOTO NEWS

The Ukrainian Under-21 team (Grygoriy Yarmash, No. 15, against Belgium's Maarten Martens) have imitated their seniors and qualified for the final round.



GETTY IMAGES

A close contest between the Under-21s of England and France.

Under-21 Championship

Italy set to defend their title

PENDING ITS IMMINENT EMANCIPATION, THE EUROPEAN UNDER-21 CHAMPIONSHIP - OR RATHER ITS QUALIFYING COMPETITION - IS STILL MORE OR LESS A CARBON COPY OF THE SENIOR EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP AS FAR AS THE CURRENT COMPETITION IS CONCERNED, THE KEY DIFFERENCE BEING THAT THE GROUP-WINNERS DO NOT QUALIFY DIRECTLY FOR THE FINAL ROUND BUT HAVE TO CONTEST PLAY-OFFS AGAINST THE GROUP RUNNERS-UP.

The outcome is not always a foregone conclusion and the group-winners sometimes stumble at the final hurdle, as was the fate of Croatia and Belgium this time round, eliminated by Serbia and Montenegro and Ukraine respectively.

Belgium had got that far without losing a single match in their group, a feat shared with Germany and even bettered by Portugal, who won all ten of their qualifying matches. In the play-offs, the Portuguese had a rough ride against Switzerland, achieving a satisfactory 1-1 draw away in the first leg, only to then have to suffer until the second half of the return leg before equalising and eventually winning the tie 2-1.

The other group-winners also qualified for the finals. Italy beat Hun-

gary 1-0 at home, following a draw in the first leg; Germany won both legs of its their against the Czech Republic;

France won their return leg against England, having drawn with them away; Denmark notched up two wins against Russia; and the Netherlands built on a draw in the first leg of their tie against Slovenia to qualify in front of their home crowd.

Of the eight finalists in 2004, only four will be taking part in the final round in 2006: Italy and Serbia and Montenegro, who went as far as the final in 2004, plus Portugal and Germany.

The Executive Committee will decide on the tournament hosts at its meeting in December, and the draw for the final round will be made on 8 February.



European delegation complete

The Czech Republic, Spain and Switzerland have completed Europe's World Cup line-up via the play-offs played on 12 and 16 November.

The Czech Republic, who had Pavel Nedved back in the team for both legs, eliminated Norway. Having gone into the second leg with a very strong 1-0 advantage from the first leg away, the Czechs confirmed their qualification by achieving the same result at home.

Spain also made a serious impact in the first leg of their tie against Slovakia, beating them 5-1 at home and leaving the Slovaks with little hope for the return leg in Slovakia, which finished 1-1.

Having only just missed out on direct qualification, Switzerland continued their unbeaten run in the qualifiers by beating Turkey 2-0 in Bern. Despite getting off to a perfect start in the return leg in Istanbul by converting a penalty in the first few minutes, the Swiss were then left to fret until the very end, qualifying thanks to the away-goals rule at the end of a match which they lost 4-2.



Pavel Nedved dodges two Norwegian players.

GETTY IMAGES



A glittering setting for the draw in Leipzig.

DFB

Exempt from the qualifiers, Germany are using friendly matches to prepare, like this match against France in November.



LANG/ARF/GETTY IMAGES

Final-round draw in Leipzig

Set to enter the record books

IT WOULD NOT COME AS A COMPLETE SHOCK TO LEARN

THAT FRANZ BECKENBAUER HAD BEEN DIAGNOSED WITH A NEW AND HITHERTO UNKNOWN CONDITION CALLED 'CEASELESS REPETITION DISORDER'.

The two-times FIFA World Cup winner has spent the last year answering the same question over and over again at every public appearance. "I don't have tickets. You have to order them. Only through the internet. I'm not a ticket office." Beckenbauer's global Welcome Tour hit the road a few weeks ago, pursuing an itinerary equating to three round-the-world trips in 50 days. The 2006 FIFA World Cup Organising Committee (OC) president is personally visiting all 31 of the summer 2006 contestants, passing on congratulations, listening to wishes expressed by the local association, and discovering that alongside ticketing, another topic has begun to provoke a few sleepless nights in the footballing community. "Who will be seeded, apart from Germany and Brazil? Where does our nation fit into the draw?"

All will become clear on 9 December from 8.30 pm CET onwards at the final draw for the 2006 FIFA World Cup, to be conducted by stars of world football in the 20,000 square metre Hall 1 at the Leipzig Trade Fair. "We're expecting record TV ratings," commented Wolfgang Niersbach, OC vice-president responsible for media. TV stations from 136 countries have agreed deals with international rights-holder Infront for coverage of the event. Back in 2001, a quarter of a billion people from 100 countries were glued to their screens, but this time around the viewing figure should shatter the 300 million mark.

"The draw has evolved into a show provoking immense interest around the world," observed OC senior vice-president Horst R. Schmidt. Beckenbauer and his team have felt the rising sense of anticipation everywhere, from Iran to Italy, but on the night itself the

hall can only accommodate approximately 4,000 people, including some 1,300 accredited media representatives. Two-thirds of the journalists are coming from overseas, including reporters from Korean daily Chosum Ilbo, Ecuador's El Universo and Pakistan's Daily Azkaar. A total of 198 hopefuls entered the qualifying tournament, but only 32 names go into the hat to be drawn into eight groups of four teams.

"The only seeds so far are Brazil as FIFA World Cup holders, and Germany as hosts. Remaining procedures for the draw will be finalised by the Organising Committee for the FIFA World Cup chaired by Lennart Johansson when it meets on 6 December in Leipzig," Franz Beckenbauer explains. Further highlights include the unveiling of the official match ball by adidas, with the OC presenting the tournament corporate identity for the first time. The FIFA Executive Committee is to meet in Leipzig, 'Place of the linden trees' according to the Slavic origins of the city's name, with the German Football Association (DFB) gathering on Friday morning for an extraordinary general meeting. Also on the day of the draw itself, the OC hosts a team seminar for the associations, tabling themes to be explored in more depth at a workshop in Dusseldorf over a number of days in March 2006.

Supermodel Heidi Klum and sports reporting legend Reinhold Beckmann will present the show. Klum, married to singer Seal, made her personal breakthrough in 1998 as cover girl for Sports Illustrated's "Swimsuit Edition". Beckmann revolutionised TV coverage of the game in Germany with the "ran" concept in the early 1990s.

At a press conference in Leipzig on 17 November, the OC and FIFA revealed the identity of the star musical guest: Colombian rocker Juanes.

Thomas Hackbarth



Gerhard Mayer-Vorfelder, Michael Schumacher, Joseph S. Blatter, Pelé and Franz Beckenbauer at the draw for the qualifying competition.

DFB



PER RAVN OMDAL

Norway
20.8.1947

Member of the Executive Committee since 1992.
Vice-president since 1996.
Member of the FIFA Executive Committee
from 1994 to 2002.
Former president of the Norwegian Football
Association and now honorary president.
Business consultant.

Eleven questions for the Executive Committee members

Per Ravn Omdal

**AFTER SENES ERZIK, IN THE LAST ISSUE,
THE SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT OF UEFA, PER RAVN OMDAL,
ANSWERS THE QUESTIONS OF UEFADIRECT.**

Your first football memory?

I think I was three or four. My father was chairman of a football club and he took me along. So I think I must have started kicking a ball at that age. As a player, I started when I was seven at Stavangers, a club which celebrates its centenary this year.

First meeting in a UEFA committee?

In 1990, I was appointed as a member of the European Football Championship Committee which was preparing for EURO '92 in Sweden under the chairmanship of Nikolay Ryashentsev. We had a trial tournament in Sweden for the European Championship final round, and it was very exciting. It was a new world for me, even though I had already been in football for many years.

A player?

For me, Pelé was without a doubt the best player. I followed his career from when he first appeared on the scene, in the 1958 World Cup, and I have had the pleasure of meeting him on several occasions. He was the greatest player and is a big, big personality, a true ambassador for football.

A memorable match?

The 1998 World Cup match when Norway beat Brazil in Marseilles in the group phase and we qualified for the next round to meet Italy. For a small country like ours, to play Brazil and to beat them at that was a fantastic moment in my football life. It's almost impossible to describe.

An anecdote from a UEFA event?

I used to be chairman of the East European Assistance Bureau and visited East European countries many times. I must say it was fantastic to experience the cooperation, to discover the different cultures, and to help those football associations to establish themselves.

It has been very rewarding to be part of this development, which has been rewarding not only for the individual countries but for European football as a whole because the East European associations

have since contributed a lot to European football and raised the sporting standards. This is a very important development, because the gap between the big and the small associations used to be so much wider. But now, we have a competitive level in the middle, which has helped improve the overall competitive level.

Defender or attacker?

I was a midfielder when I was a player, and I guess that could also describe my life as a football politician. In some respects, I am very insistent and impatient, like when I come up against racism or intolerance, or when it comes to making grassroots football a priority. But I am also a true defender of the institutions, a true defender of FIFA, UEFA and the national associations, and I think the old expression of "association football" says a lot. The national associations must be the ones organising, protecting and developing the game in the different countries. It is very important to consider all the elements of football in the overall picture.

We give you a ball, what do you do with it?

Normally, if my feet were good, I'd start to juggle with it. When I was young, I was very good at doing that.

A city?

Paris, because Paris has everything: football, history, culture, people... everything. It is a real metropolis.

Detective story or economic treatise?

The honest side of me would say detective novel. I read a lot: I spend quite some time on planes and read then, and when I am on holiday I read almost all the time.

Sea or mountains?

We are a country of both mountains and sea, but I have to say I prefer the sea.

A dream?

My biggest dream is that the efforts of UEFA and the national associations will eventually get rid of racism in society and in football because I think that is one of the worst elements of our daily life. For me, everybody is equal and everybody should have the same opportunities to participate in society.



PHOTOS: UEFA



Exercises on the field and group discussions are the key to the success of such conferences.



Plenary meeting.



UEFA Women's Football Conference in Oslo

A b u z z o f e x c i t e m e n t

THE FIFTH UEFA WOMEN'S FOOTBALL CONFERENCE WAS IMPECCABLY HOSTED BY THE NORWEGIAN NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FROM 17 TO 19 OCTOBER IN OSLO AND LED WITH PASSION AND COMMITMENT TO THE CAUSE BY PER RAVN OMDAL, HONORARY PRESIDENT OF THE NORWEGIAN FA AND VICE-PRESIDENT OF UEFA. IT WAS THE FIRST CONFERENCE TO BE STAGED SINCE THE EUROPEAN WOMEN'S CHAMPIONSHIP CAME UNDER THE AEGIS OF UEFA'S PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL DIVISION, WHOSE DIRECTOR, GIORGIO MARCHETTI, WAS IN OSLO TO OUTLINE THE IMMEDIATE IMPACT OF THE DECISION, WHILE UEFA'S TECHNICAL DIRECTOR, ANDY ROXBURGH, REVIEWED THE MULTITUDE OF UEFA ACTIVITIES AND PROJECTS CURRENTLY UNDER WAY WITHIN THE REALM OF WOMEN'S FOOTBALL.

During her review of the recent European Championship finals in England, Vera Pauw, a member of UEFA's Technical Study Group at the event and currently head coach of the Dutch national team, remarked that *"the pace of women's football has increased incredibly. The teams were able to sustain a high tempo over the full 90 minutes and to put the player in possession under constant pressure. But the high pace was sometimes a barrier to clarity and control, espe-*

cially in the last third of the pitch, where players did not have time to pick off the decisive pass."

Vera's observation could perhaps be extended from the pitch across the whole of the women's game. In Oslo, three days of discussion confirmed that Europe's fastest-growing sport has reached a stage where 'decisive passes' need to be delivered. The sheer pace of development has created a situation where, for example, there are openings for

many more female coaches and referees to be invited into the party.

Germany still a reference

Germany's victory at WOMEN'S EURO 2005 underscored the fact that they are still a point of reference for the rest of the field. That's why the 51 European national associations and the representatives from Africa, Asia, the Americas, Oceania and FIFA were all ears during the opening-day session dedicated to women's football in the



PHOTOS: UEFA



The captains of the UEFA Champions League teams wore anti-racism armbands.

EMPICS



Racism gets the red card in the Hungarian first division.

SZOBOLITS

country that currently holds the world and European titles. Tina Theune-Meyer (who stood down as head coach after the victory in Blackburn), Willi Hink (Director of Amateur & Women's Football) and Heike Ullrich (Manager of the Women's Football Department) reviewed the development of women's football in Germany over the last 20 years or so and outlined all the hard work invested in coach and player education, promotion and projects which target schoolchildren.

World Under-17 Championship

The information was invaluable to the national associations who have travelled much shorter distances along the development road than the world champions. And additional messages were transmitted by speakers such as Elisabeth Loisel, who explained how her French national teams have managed to take giant strides in such a short time, and Sheila Begbie, who explained how the Scottish FA is setting about building a healthy future.

'Building a future' obviously hinges on grassroots programmes. So, apart from assessing the state of play in the European Championship at the peak of the pyramid, there was great emphasis on laying a solid base by giving girls equal opportunities to play football. Encouraging them to stay in the game during their teens is another crucial element and, with FIFA's Director of Football Development, Mary Harvey, confirming the introduction of a world championship for the Under-17s, there is important work to be done in an age group where, at the moment, no pan-European women's competition exists.

With so many pots on the boil, it was understandable that the discussion groups in Oslo generated pages and pages of proposals for UEFA's 'action list'. So many that, as the women's game develops at full pace, the moment has come to raise heads and 'pick off the decisive passes'.

Anti-racism Action week

UEFA AGAIN LENT ITS SUPPORT TO THE EUROPEAN ANTI-RACISM

ACTION WEEK ORGANISED BY THE FARE NETWORK.

Events were held all over Europe from 13 to 25 October in order to help kick racism out of football, both in stadiums and elsewhere. Numerous anti-racism banners, T-shirts, red cards and magazines were distributed. Friendly matches were organised, information leaflets handed out and discussions held in order to find ways of eradicating the scourge of racism.

The action week has proven to be a resounding success, with more than 1,000 activities happening in 32 European countries, reaching millions with a strong anti-racism message.

This year's action week was FARE's most successful in Eastern Europe. All Slovak first division teams showed racism the red card. In Romania, several top-flight clubs took a stand under the banner "United against Discrimination".

In the UK, community groups, clubs and campaigners hosted a staggering 600 events. In an extraordinary feat of coordination, all 92 professional clubs in England and Wales, together with all 42 Scottish clubs, joined in the action.

The activities involved all levels of the game, from amateurs

to professionals. Matchday 3 of the UEFA Champions League gave the campaign the additional boost of a huge television audience since, in all 16 matches, the teams entered the field accompanied by children wearing shirts with an anti-racism slogan. The same message was printed on the captains' armbands and messages were broadcast over the stadium tannoy systems and in the match programmes.

In Nyon, on the pitch adjacent to the UEFA headquarters, a team of UEFA staff marked this sixth FARE action week with a match against a team of players from different countries: Cameroon, Canada, Morocco, Egypt, France, the Philippines, Russia, Serbia and Montenegro...

The fight against racism is a long-term project in which UEFA is permanently involved: it will play an active part in organising the 2nd Pan-European Conference on Racism, to be held in Barcelona on 1 February next year, and is working closely with the European Parliament on the drafting of a declaration on racism, which will be presented in Brussels at the end of November.



Taking to the field for the match between AC Milan and PSV Eindhoven.

EMPICS



The meeting was also an opportunity for the general secretaries to make their voices heard.



General secretaries meet in Nyon

A review of topical matters

AT THEIR MEETING IN NYON ON 26 AND 27 OCTOBER, THE GENERAL SECRETARIES OF 49 OF UEFA'S 52 MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS WERE GIVEN AN OVERVIEW OF THE VARIOUS INITIATIVES UNDERTAKEN BY UEFA SINCE THE ADOPTION OF THE "VISION EUROPE" STRATEGY, WHICH SEEKS TO ACHIEVE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

It aims, among other things, at modernising the organisation, further strengthening support to the associations, mapping the future for club and national-team competitions, stimulating greater interest in grassroots and women's football, while also developing futsal and beach football.

Opening the meeting, the UEFA Chief Executive, Lars-Christer Olsson, stressed the need to look to the future and keep the football family together. Relations with FIFA and the confederations had to be developed further and agreement reached on how responsibilities should be split in the interests of efficiency. There was a need to constantly develop collaboration, communication and consultations with the leagues, the clubs and

the players. However, UEFA was an association of associations and had to remain that way. Moreover, as demonstrated by recently introduced programmes such as TEP (the Top Executive Programme) and HatTrick, UEFA's aim was not only to manage but also to serve European football.

Particular emphasis had to be placed on grassroots football, for which UEFA has established a charter (see November 2005 issue of *uefadirect*). Numerous initiatives for developing grassroots football are already under way, such as conferences, summer schools, the "Young Champions" programme connected with the Champions League, specialist publications, on-line education programmes and other development measures.

The general secretaries also welcomed the immense progress made by women's football, borne out by the success of WOMEN'S EURO 2005 in England.

Agreements

With dialogue also a highly topical subject, UEFA has signed a memorandum of understanding with the European professional leagues (EPFL), for whom office space is to be made available at UEFA headquarters in Nyon. A memorandum of understanding has also been signed with FIFPro, and a similar arrangement is currently under discussion with the clubs within the framework of the European Club Forum.

On the competition front, UEFA has adopted an integrated marketing approach to EURO 2008, using its affiliated companies to handle marketing, media technology and event management in order to have better control, flexibility and in-house coordination of its activities. UEFA has also revamped its sponsorship activities with the EUROTOP programme, which comprises an exclusive grouping of six partners sponsoring UEFA's top national men's and women's team competitions, including futsal, over a four-year period.

Club licensing

With regard to club licensing, 51 licensors (the national associations or the leagues) have been awarded



PHOTOS: UEFA



Mini-pitches like this one in Zajecar in Serbia and Montenegro are a valuable tool for the development of grassroots football.

FS-UEFA



UEFA



SPECIAL OLYMPICS

quality assurance certification by the Société Générale de Surveillance (SGS). The Scottish FA has even received ISO 9001 certification. For the 2005/06 season, 656 clubs have now fulfilled all the conditions for obtaining the licence, compared with 644 in 2004/05.

The general secretaries also turned their attention to refereeing, coach education and the revamped Meridian Project. They also heard UEFA's position on cross-border competitions such as the Scandinavian Royal League, which UEFA has approved for another four years and from which it can learn lessons which can be applied throughout Europe.

Many other subjects were also covered at this meeting, such as relations with the European Union, positive developments in the HatTrick programme, and the use of artificial turf, which has revealed the need for more testing laboratories and field testers.

Supporting football for the blind

In October, UEFA and the International Blind Sports Federation (IBSF) signed an agreement for the development of football for the blind. UEFA has also made a donation of CHF 160,000 to the federation, to be used notably for the organisation of a pilot IBSF seminar in Cyprus on the topics of the mobility and orientation of blind footballers, and futsal for the blind. The UEFA contribution will also enable the IBSF to produce training and promotional material, to develop its internet site and to recruit a part-time project manager.

IBSF has over 100 member associations worldwide, including 35 in Europe. It promotes sport (14 disciplines) for the blind and visually impaired and organises events and competitions such as the 5th European Blind Football Championship, which took place in Cyprus in November.

Report from Brussels

United by football

UEFA AND SPECIAL OLYMPICS EUROPE/EURASIA ORGANISED A MINI-TOURNAMENT AT THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT IN BRUSSELS ON 11 OCTOBER. IN BRIGHT AUTUMN SUNSHINE, SPECIAL OLYMPICS ATHLETES PLAYED IN MIXED TEAMS ALONGSIDE MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT (MEPS) AND PUPILS FROM THE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF BRUSSELS.

The tournament took place on a small pitch in the Parc Léopold, behind the main building of the European Parliament. The city of Brussels had generously offered to renovate the surface, and the glorious weather did the rest. FIFA referee Paul Allaerts kindly agreed to run the games together with his two Belgian assistants. Around 60 people from the Parliament and the European Commission turned up to watch the action, including the Commission's Sports Unit.

Above all, the afternoon offered MEPs a brilliant demonstration of football's power to bring people together. Special Olympics is trying to develop a new attitude in Brussels towards people with intellectual disabilities and their role in sport. For UEFA, the event was a chance to show our stakeholders in the EU that UEFA actively promotes the idea of sport for all, and supports football of all levels and abilities.

For 90 minutes, nothing mattered except the action on the pitch. Everyone was equal and united in their love of football, separated only by their desire to win the next tackle. If the MEPs could not always match the younger players for speed and acceleration, their enjoyment of the game – and healthy competitive spirit – was visible throughout.

The tournament marked another milestone in UEFA's relationship with Special Olympics Europe/Eurasia. William Gaillard, UEFA Director of Communications and Public Affairs, presented the organisation with a cheque worth CHF 500,000 for its

football development project in 2006.

MEP Chris Heaton-Harris, who surprised the crowd by scoring two long-range efforts, remarked during the medals ceremony, "Today, we all contributed to an event that will foster a better understanding in Parliament of the role sport can play in changing perceptions about intellectual disabilities."

One of the students from the International School of Brussels added, "The extraordinary thing is that, while playing, you never see the differences between each other; on the team we were all equal and that was great."



Unusual activity at the European Parliament.

UEFA



The UEFA Executive Committee in discussion in Malta.



The success of the last European Women's Championship (Germany v. France) has convinced the Executive Committee to increase the number of final-round participants.

Meetings and other activities

EURO 2012 short list

FIFTEEN YEARS AFTER THE CONGRESS WHICH ELECTED LENNART JOHANSSON TO THE UEFA PRESIDENCY, THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE RETURNED TO MALTA FOR ITS FIFTH ORDINARY MEETING OF 2005.

The most eagerly awaited agenda item was the last one: short-listing the contenders to host EURO 2012. With little to choose between the applications in technical terms, political considerations helped to tip the balance. After a single round of voting by secret ballot, the candidates chosen for the next phase of the bidding process were Italy (11 votes from the 12 eligible members), Croatia/Hungary (9) and Ukraine/Poland (7), with Turkey and Greece being excluded from the running at this stage. The three remaining contenders will now be required to supply further documentation, visits to the countries concerned will take place next September and the Executive Committee will take its final decision in December 2006.

New dimension for Women's EURO

The Executive Committee also wanted to send a strong new signal in connection with women's football,

which has already reached remarkable heights. It decided to expand the final round of the European Women's Championship, which will have 12 participants instead of eight as from 2009. At the same time, the two-division system will be abolished to allow all entrants to contest the title (second-division teams could previously only aim for promotion to the first division). Some teams will be required to play qualifying matches before the group phase, and associations eliminated following these qualifiers will be the beneficiaries of a programme to support the development of women's football in their countries.

Under 21 ranking system

With the European Under-21 Championship emerging from the shadows of the senior team competition through the allocation of its own slot in odd-numbered years, it was necessary, for the purpose of forming

the groups - based until now on those of the senior competition - to establish a coefficient ranking system for the national associations in this age group. The coefficients will be based on the results of the previous two qualifying competitions. For the next edition, the qualifying results from 2002-04 and 2004-06 will apply.

After the approval of a new format for the UEFA Intertoto Cup at the Rome meeting in September, the issue of the allocation of vacant places at the closure of registration remained. Whereas these places were hitherto awarded to the associations at the top of the UEFA ranking, the Executive Committee has now opted for a more even distribution. Still in accordance with the ranking, the associations will be divided into three groups. If there is a vacant berth in a group, it will first of all be offered to an association in the same group. The additional team from this association will then enter the first round of the competition, irrespective of the association's ranking.

Otherwise, the Executive Committee:

- gave the go-ahead to a convention on referee education, which will be presented to the UEFA Congress in Budapest in March 2006;
- noted the new form of cooperation between CAF and UEFA, with the focus on education (see the September 2005 issue of *uefadirect*);
- set up a working group responsible for reviewing UEFA competition regulations before they are approved; this group will be chaired by UEFA vice-president Geoffrey Thompson;
- approved the accounts which will be submitted to the Congress in Budapest;
- approved the recommendations of the Technical Development Committee and Jira Panel regarding the UEFA Convention on the Mutual Recognition of Coaching Qualifications and the admission of the football associations of Iceland (A licence), Portugal (A and Pro), Russia (B and A) and San Marino (A and Pro, in partnership with Italy);



On the occasion of its meeting in Malta, the Executive Committee was received by the prime minister of Malta, Lawrence Gonzi. Left to right: Lars-Christer Olsson, Lawrence Gonzi, Lennart Johansson and Joseph Mifsud (president of the Malta FA and member of the Executive Committee).

D.AQUILINA

Chosen as one of the "Twelve Books that changed the World" (the name of a series to be shown on ITV1 in the UK), the first Rule Book of the Football Association, published in 1863, was used for the re-enactment of a match played the same year between Barnes and Richmond, using the kit and rules of the time, with ten players on each side, one hour of playing time, and no referee!



PETER ROBINSON

■ unveiled the re-modelled European Championship trophy, which will be displayed at the draw in Montreux next January.

Youth and women's competitions

Like their A and Under-21 counterparts, the national youth teams have had a busy time of late.



At Under-19 level, 25 teams have qualified for the elite round, where they will join the Czech Republic, England and Spain, who had a bye for the first round, where three of the 2005 finalists fell by the wayside, namely Armenia, Greece and Norway.

The draw for the elite round is being made in Cyprus on 30 November, during the UEFA Youth Football Conference. The teams will be divided into seven groups of four, from which the winners will go through to join hosts Poland in the final round.



In the Women's Under-19 Championship, the second qualifying round lies ahead. The corresponding draw was made during the UEFA Women's Football Conference in Oslo on 19 October, resulting in the following group formations:

Group 1: France, Poland, Norway, Serbia and Montenegro

Group 2: Russia, Finland, Portugal, Israel

Group 3: Italy, Netherlands, Slovakia, Hungary

Group 4: England, Denmark, Iceland, Romania

Group 5: Germany, Republic of Ireland, Scotland, Slovenia

Group 6: Spain, Sweden, Austria, Greece

Group 7: Belgium, Czech Republic, Ukraine, Wales

The round will be played in the form of mini-tournaments between 25 and 29 April. The seven group-winners will join hosts Switzerland in the final round from 11 to 22 July. Switzerland qualify automatically.

■ In the Under-17 Championship, England, France and Spain qualified directly for the elite



round, where they are joined by 25 teams from a goal-packed preliminary round. Played in the form of mini-tournaments, the preliminary round produced 235 goals in total, making an average of 3.26 per match.

The draw for the Elite round is being made in Cyprus on 30 November. The final round itself takes place in Luxembourg in

May and will involve the host nation and the seven winners of the elite-round groups. Two of the 2005 finalists – Belarus and Croatia – have already been eliminated.

■ In the UEFA Women's Cup, the semi-finals are taking place in November. One of the ties opposes title-holders 1.FFC Turbine Potsdam and Djurgården/Älvsjö, and the other 1.FFC Frankfurt and Montpellier HSC.

Futsal Cup and Club World Championship



The second qualifying round in the UEFA Futsal Cup, for which eight teams have qualified, will be played in the following groups, as drawn in July:

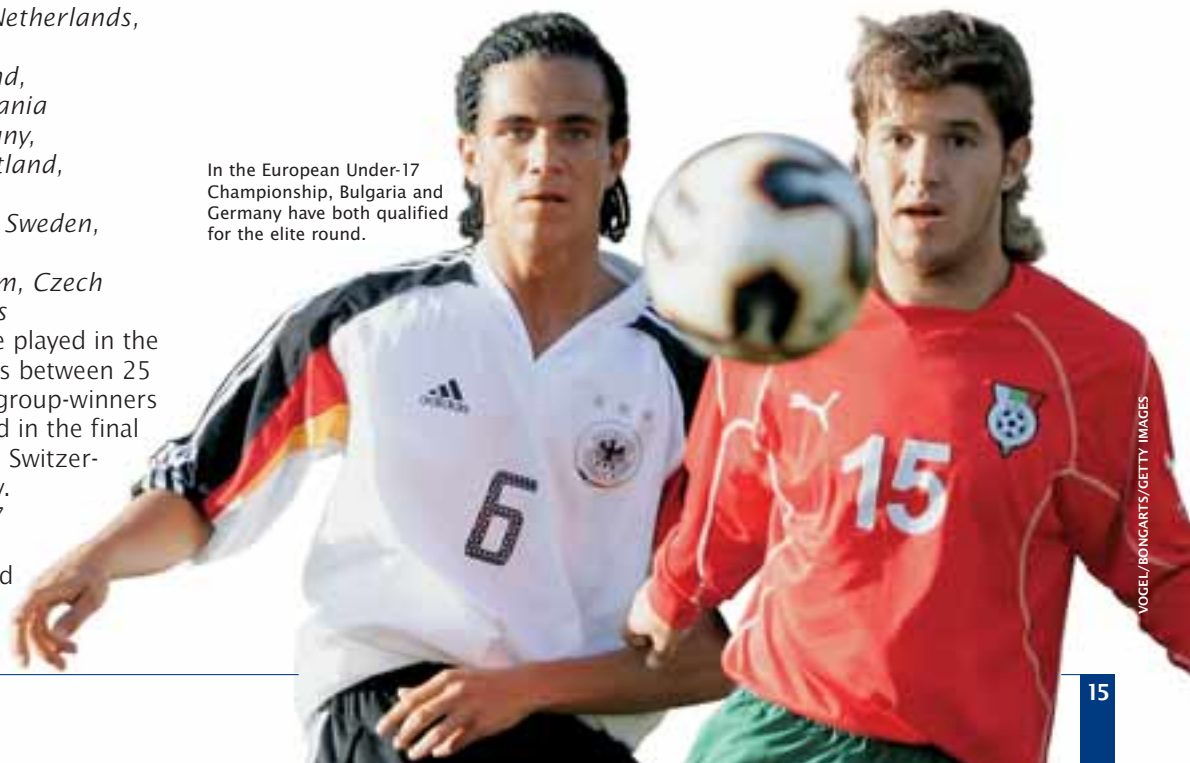
Group A: Kairat Almaty (KAZ), SL Benfica (POR), Cristal Noir MB Morlanwelz (BEL), Boomerang Interviu (ESP)

Group B: MFK Dinamo Moscow (RUS), KMF Marbo Beograd (SCG), Action 21 Charleroi (BEL), FC Shakhtar Donetsk (UKR)

The group matches will be played in the form of mini-tournaments next March. The group-winners and runners-up will contest the semi-finals, in accordance with the new competition format. Last year's finalists – title-holders Action 21 Charleroi and Dinamo Moscow – are in the same group.

■ Liverpool are competing in the FIFA Club World Championship in December in Japan. The UEFA Champions League title-holders have a bye until the semi-finals on 15 December, when they will come up against the winners of the match between FC Sydney and Deportivo Saprissa.

In the European Under-17 Championship, Bulgaria and Germany have both qualified for the elite round.



VOGEL/BONCARTS/GETTY IMAGES



News

from member associations

ARMENIA



Second B level coaching course launched

The FA of Armenia (FFA), which now belongs to UEFA's coach education convention, has successfully completed the first stage of its coach education programme.



The graduate coaches.

The first B level licensing course involved 19 Armenian coaches from top and first division clubs. After theoretical and practical modules in April and May, the coaches sat their final exams to obtain the UEFA B licence. The practical part of the final exams, which was held from 21-23 September, took place in the presence of youth teams, the young players' parents and a large audience. The final exams were observed by Jira Panel instructor Zdenek Sivek from the Czech Republic, whose help to the FFA was indispensable during the courses. The new B licence holders will go on to follow an A licence course. In the meantime, they have to clock up one year's coaching experience in their clubs.

The FFA decided to start a second B level course immediately. The course began on 20 October. There are 19 coaches participating in this course as well. The UEFA coach education convention, which has gained wide popularity in Armenian football circles, is very important for the FFA, as it is a basis for educating high-level coaches in the future.

Arayik Manukyan

AUSTRIA



First UEFA mini-pitch inaugurated

UEFA's golden jubilee has provided an opportunity to highlight UEFA's commitment to grassroots football.

"With this mini-pitch, we are taking into account the growing popularity of recreational sport. I am sure that it will be a popular meeting point for children, young people and adults who are sports enthusiasts," said the president of the Austrian FA, Friedrich Stickler, at the opening ceremony.

Friedrich Stickler was particularly pleased to welcome Mathieu Sprengers, UEFA treasurer, to the opening ceremony: *"It is a good thing that we are working for,"* said the Dutch guest of honour in his speech.

Mr Stickler thanked UEFA, on whose initiative the creation of the mini-pitch was based. To mark its golden jubilee, UEFA is helping all its member associations to build such pitches.

The Lower Austrian football association and the city of St. Pölten were ideal partners to help with the implementation of this project. The mini-pitch is ideally located, its proximity to several schools suggesting that it is likely to be very well used.

This positive example is expected to be the first of many mini-pitches to be built in Austria in the next few years.

Ronald Gollatz



Inauguration of the St. Pölten mini-pitch.

BELARUS



Mini-pitches hugely popular

The Belarus Football Federation (BFF) recently opened another two mini-pitches funded from UEFA's HatTrick programme in the cities of Lida (Grodno region) and Ljuban (Minsk region). The football schools in these two regions earned the right to such facilities in recognition of their efforts to support the development of football in these parts of the country. The youngsters for whom these mini-pitches are intended are



A new mini-pitch for Lida.

absolutely delighted to have the opportunity to practise and play football all year around. The managers of the venues are even having to cope with the problem of requests to play on the mini-pitch far exceeding the number of hours available.

Another special event in which the BFF was involved took place in the city of Kopyl (Minsk region). On the initiative of the national paralympics committee, representatives of the Belarusian parliament, the sports' writers association, sportsmen, athletes and businessmen, local children had the great opportunity to meet Belarusian sporting legends and to find out all about them. They also received lots of gifts, including football equipment and kits donated by the BFF. This goodwill and charity action has now become a traditional event, having already been organised in different Belarusian towns and cities for the last four years.

Alexander Leshchik

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA



Success for the seniors only

With the completion of the qualifying campaigns, the results of all the national teams were analysed by the Football Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina executive board. The only team which brought satisfaction to fans and administrators was the senior national side,



which came third in the Group 7 qualifiers for the 2006 FIFA World Cup. Their fight to enter the play-offs ended in Belgrade, when they lost 1-0 against Serbia and Montenegro. This was the second time in a row – following the qualifiers for EURO 2004 – that the senior national team had failed to secure qualification in their final group match. Achieving third place in Group 7 was still a success, however, given that the initial favourites to go through from this strong group were Spain, Serbia and Montenegro and Belgium, with Lithuania rated the same as Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The contract between head coach Blaz Sliskovic and the Bosnia and Herzegovina FA ends in January, but in view of the fact that he has been the most successful national-team coach ever, he can be expected to play a role in the next round of qualifying matches for EURO 2008 in Switzerland and Austria.

The Under-21 side came fourth in their European Championship qualifying group, with three wins and one draw.

The fans had little to celebrate from the Under-19s, who were hosts but finished last in Group 11 of the European Championship qualifying round, losing all three matches. The first was played at the Slavija stadium in Lukavica, where the home team lost to Croatia 5-0, followed by 2-0 defeats against Bulgaria and Iceland. The contracts of the respective team coaches – Ibrahim Zukanovic (Under-21), Nikola Nikic (Under-19) and Velimir Stojic (Under-17) – ended on completion of the qualifiers.

The capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina was the host venue for another UEFA tournament – namely, the Group 6 first qualifying round in the Women's Under-19 Championship. The home side finished third in the group, while the top spot went to Russia and Iceland were runners-up.

The Bosnia and Herzegovina FA and the city of Mostar hosted the Group 5 first qualifying round of the UEFA Futsal

Cup. Despite needing only one point to win the group, local side MNK Karaka lost the decisive final encounter against Morlanwelz 1-0. Even so, finishing as group runners-up signifies major progress for the futsal players from Mostar, which was also the venue for the matches played by Araz Naxcivan and De Hommel.

Fuad Kravac

ENGLAND



Developing girls' football in Lesotho

The FA took its first steps in addressing girls' football development within its International Development Programme with a week-long visit to its Meridian Project partner country, Lesotho, in October. The programme addressed:

- young leadership
- girls' and women's football
- HIV/AIDS awareness through football.

At the heart of the visit was a three-day workshop for 36 delegates involved in some way with girls' and women's football at the headquarters of



Young enthusiasts in Lesotho.

the Lesotho FA (LEFA) in Maseru, discussing the challenges that women's football faces and strategic planning for its future development. At the same time, other members of the ten-strong delegation worked with a local primary school, teaching basic football skills to 60 of its pupils with the assistance of FA-trained 'young leaders' from England and from Lesotho itself.

The FA invited the assistance of the Maseru-based OlympAfrica Youth Ambassadors Programme (OYAP) to integrate HIV/AIDS awareness messages into their training in response to the severity of the HIV crisis in the 'Mountain Kingdom', where young girls are one of the groups most at risk. The OYAP programme focuses on empowering youth through sport. Run by the Lesotho National Olympic Committee, it is supported by Commonwealth Games Canada and UK Sport

who, along with The FA, co-funded the school visit programme.

"Girls' and women's football was identified by LEFA as a priority development area," explained The FA's Head of International Relations, Jane Bateman. "This visit was not only an opportunity to share our experience of developing women's football – which only really started to grow in England in relatively recent times – but also to expose our staff to the issues that other countries are facing as part of their own personal and professional development. Furthermore, it was an opportunity to look once again at how football can be used as a tool to develop leadership skills, to inspire and motivate young people, and to deliver important health messages."

Jane Bateman

FINLAND



New futsal season gets under way

Another futsal season kicked off in Finland as last season's champions, FS Ilves, met cup-holders GFT in the Super Cup final at the end of October. GFT won the tie 6-4 and are among the favourites for the 2005/06 league title.

The futsal league currently comprises 12 teams, but this number will be reduced by two next season and as a result matches will be played on home and away basis. This season, however, each team faces the other contenders once only. The futsal league reaches its peak in early February, when the best six teams play the final round. The last match of the season is the cup final, which is scheduled for 25 February.

The Finnish futsal championship is now into its ninth season. The game was played by students initially, but the number of licensed players has increased drastically in the space of ten years. Although many 11-a-side football players play futsal during the winter period, more and more participants are concentrating solely on futsal.

"Today, we have some 20,000 futsal players, and there is a growing demand for leagues at different levels. At the moment, we are concentrating on making the season longer and increasing the number of pure futsal players. There is a gap between us and countries which have played futsal for years. However, we are aiming to close that gap from year to year," says Kalle Marttinen, futsal expert at the Finnish FA.

Sami Terävä

Final decisive match in Belgrade against Serbia and Montenegro.



F. KRIVAC



GERMANY



Fritz Walter Medal awarded to talented youth players

The German Football Association (DFB) has created an award for promising youth players which is designed above all to benefit the clubs responsible for training them. The award has been called the Fritz Walter Medal, in memory of the honorary captain of the national team and 1954 world champion. *"The players who have received the Fritz Walter Medal are expected to emulate his way of doing things on and off the field. At the same time the award is an expression of gratitude to the clubs which have trained the players,"* said DFB executive president Theo Zwanziger.

The DFB announced the first recipients of the medal in the run-up to the international match in Hamburg on 12 October between Germany and China. A panel composed of DFB coaches and members of the DFB youth committee selected three male players born in each of the years 1986 (Under-19), 1987 (Under-18) and 1988 (Under-17), and also three female players born in 1985, 1986 and 1988, for outstanding performances in the 2004/05 season. The gold medal winners were Florian Müller (FC Bayern Munich), Marc-André Kruska (Borussia Dortmund), Sergej Eвлjuskin (VfL Wolfsburg) and Anja Mittag (1. FFC Turbine Potsdam). *"The players are role models who will lay value-based foundations, with the help of their coaches, for a society characterised by tolerance, respect, sportsmanship and commitment,"* said Theo Zwanziger in his speech at the awards ceremony.

In future the DFB intends the Fritz Walter Medal to be a means of honouring not only promising youth players but also the clubs which are providing the training. Amateur clubs will therefore receive financial awards in proportion to the period for which the talented young player in question was trained at the club.

Maximilian Geis

HUNGARY



MLSZ turns to education

In mid-October, the Hungarian Football Federation (MLSZ) officially launched its new project to set up an education centre, which will comprise four departments. The first will be concerned with coach education under the leadership of György Mezey. *"UEFA approved our efforts to establish coach education here in Hungary and the creation of such a centre reflects the aims of UEFA,"* said Mezey at the press conference in Budapest.

Indeed, thanks to the UEFA-endorsed coach education, qualified B, A and Pro-licence coaches are working throughout the country with the aim of securing the success of future generations.

The other three departments will also be very important for the Hungarian football family. In the key education area of executive management, students will gather information on how to run a football club or a local association. *"We know that this knowledge is so specific that sometimes a general university qualification in economics is simply not enough,"* commented department head Ferenc Dénes.

An additional plus is that the first management education course will be attended by the general secretaries of the local (county) associations.



Launch of the Hungarian FA's new training project.

The third department will be concerned with referee education. *"We do not want to centralise everything for the referees physically but with the launch of the MLSZ education centre we can establish uniform standards, guidelines and roles for all referees,"* said János Ring, department vice-president and former international assistant referee. As in the case of the coaches, there are three levels of education for Hungarian referees. Only those trained to the highest level will be allowed to officiate at top-flight (NB I) games. *"To be frank, with this centre we are a little bit above European standards, as UEFA is just about to launch a referee education programme,"* commented MLSZ president Imre Bozóky.

The fourth department will cover education in physiotherapy, with the aim of helping those working in that field to gain an officially recognised qualification.

"The European Union places responsibility for education in the hands of the relevant social bodies and we are proud to be putting this into practice," said István Baranya, the MLSZ education centre director, who spearheaded the process to achieve state accreditation for the centre. All diplomas issued by the education centre will thus be officially recognised at national level.

Márton Dinnyés

ICELAND



Coaching changes

When the contracts of joint national team coaches Ásgeir Sigurvinsson and Logi Ólafsson expired at the end of the qualifying campaign for the 2006 FIFA World Cup, the Icelandic FA decided not to renew them. A haul of only four points from ten matches in Group 8 - which also included Sweden, Croatia, Bulgaria, Hungary and Malta - was considered simply not good enough. The pair had been in charge since the spring of 2003, starting out as caretakers following the resignation of the previous coach, Atli Edvaldsson. After wins in their first two matches in charge, they agreed a contract to lead the team for the next few years.

The new head coach is Eyjólfur Sverrisson, who has coached the Under-21 team for the past two years. Sverrisson is widely regarded as one of the most successful Icelandic players of all times, having won the Bundesliga in Germany with Stuttgart and the Turkish league title with Besiktas. A dominating central defender, he amassed 66 caps and ten goals for his country, despite never having played club football in Iceland's top flight.

In addition to the respect he commands, Sverrisson's strength of character and coaching philosophy made him first choice for the senior coaching post, and he showed no hesitation in accepting the offer of the job. Iceland has simply conceded too many goals this year, including three in each of the last four matches. Sverrisson will be certain to place the emphasis on shoring up the defence and building up attacks from the back. With a lot of exciting new talent coming through, in particular Gretar Rafn Steinsson at Dutch side AZ Alkmaar and Swedish Allsvenskan top scorer Gunnar Heidar Thorvaldsson at Halmstad, promising times lie ahead for Iceland's national team.

Ómar Smárason

LITHUANIA



A good exercise

Under-17 football teams from Northern Ireland, Malta, Serbia and Montenegro and Lithuania spent a week in Kaunas competing in a mini-tournament in the preliminary phase of the European Under-17 Championship. Although Lithuania finished only in third place in this tournament, won by Serbia and Montenegro, the young players and coaches were left with good memories and impressions which will stay with them for a long time.



The organisation of this tournament was very important and beneficial for the Lithuanian Football Federation (LFF), which has expressed its interest in hosting the final round of either the European Under-17 or Under-19 Championship in 2009.

Shortly after the Under-17 qualifying tournament, a UEFA representative visited Lithuania to take a look at the stadiums and training grounds in Vilnius, Kaunas and Marijampole.

The president of the LFF, Liutauras Varanavicius, announced that more training grounds would be provided in these three cities by 2009 and that the legendary Zalgiris stadium in Vilnius would be renovated.

In other words, the LFF is already doing everything it can to boost its chances of being entrusted with the organisation of a UEFA youth championship final round in 2009.

Vaiva Zizaitė

FYR MACEDONIA



General assembly

The president of the Football Federation of FYR Macedonia, Haralampie Hadzi-Risteski, was re-elected for a further four-year term at the general assembly held in October in Skopje. All 93 delegates present voted for Mr Hadzi-Risteski.

In accordance with the new statutes, the new composition of the assembly also elected the federation's new executive committee, as well as its vice-president, namely Redzep Bedzeti, who will also be serving his second term in this office.

Besides Mr Hadzi-Risteski and Mr Bedzeti, the members of the new executive committee are Zilkadri Iseini, Bekim Bauta, Sehat Redzeqi, Mirce Pavlovski, Lazar Nanev, Ilija Jovkov, Mite Andonovski, Orce Todorov, Ivan Anastasovski, Dragoljub Matoski, Saso Naumoski, Dragi Serafimov and Ilija Kitanoski.

The assembly also appointed the Supervisory Committee, the Court of Arbitration, the Appeals Committee, the Legal Protection Committee and an independent auditor.

The general assembly meeting was attended by UEFA Executive Committee member Marios Lefkaritis. In his address to the assembly, he highlighted the successful collaboration between UEFA and the leadership of the Football Federation of FYR Macedonia, which, according to him, has implemented a lot of great projects and, most importantly, achieved a great improvement in the finances of the federation, club licensing and coach education.

"What I have noticed, as a frequent visitor to your federation, is that it is obvious that your president and the executive committee are working very



Marios Lefkaritis, member of the UEFA Executive Committee (left), and Haralampie Hadzi-Risteski, president of the Football Federation of FYR Macedonia.

hard for the good of the football, and I am convinced that all these efforts will also be reflected in the results of your national teams," Mr Lefkaritis said.

At the end of the meeting, Mr Hadzi-Risteski, in his address to the delegates, said that, among the tasks for the next four years, the priorities were to restore the national team to its previous level in FIFA's rankings, to develop the federation's infrastructure, to improve refereeing and coaching structures, and to implement the UEFA safety and security standards for matches at all levels.

He added that the objective of improving the football infrastructure all over the country could not be achieved without the assistance of the UEFA and FIFA development projects. Funds from the FIFA Goal project and the UEFA Hat-Trick programme had, for example, enabled the federation to bring the Mladost stadium in Strumica up to the required standard, through the construction of a new stand with all the necessary facilities, the installation of floodlights and the fitting of seats in the existing stand. As a result, the federation now boasts one more stadium in compliance with the UEFA club licensing requirements.

Zoran Nikolovski



The Maltese player Etienne Barbara (No. 14) battling with the Bulgarian defender Valentin Iliev in the last World Cup qualifying match.

MALTA



In full swing

The 2005/06 season has entered its fifth month. The BOV (Bank of Valletta) national leagues and the 'Quick Keno' knock-out competition for the teams in the lower divisions are well past the initial stages. So are the youth, futsal and women's leagues, while the 'U* BET FA Trophy' for the top teams, the other knock-out competition also sponsored by Maltco Lotteries Ltd., started early in November.

Malta's national teams, from the Under-17 category upwards, have all been involved on the big stage of international football, with the A and the Under-21 elevens, guided by Horst Heese and Mark Miller respectively, winding up their 2006 World Cup and European Championship cycles on a more than satisfactory note.

Heese, also the Malta FA's technical director, saw off his commitments with the association in positive fashion after his second term as Malta's head coach expired. The Maltese caused a stir and earned the plaudits with vibrant performances by holding the likes of Croatia and Bulgaria to 1-1 draws in their last two World Cup Group 8 matches.

For his part, Miller helped the Under-21s equal the highest ever points' tally obtained by the Maltese cadets in their qualifying campaign, having picked up four points at Iceland's expense and one against Bulgaria.

Seminars, coaching courses, activities for referees, council and executive committee meetings as well as those of various Malta FA boards have also gathered momentum. The culmination of the year was the meeting of the UEFA Executive Committee in November.

The top officials of the European confederation convened in Malta for the first time since the island was the nerve centre of the UEFA Congress in April 1990.



Work on the implementation of a number of projects, including the UEFA jubilee mini-pitches project and others of an infrastructural nature, has been in progress, while the upgrading of the day-to-day administrative activity has also been under way.

In the media sector, the association is playing an important complementary role through its own 'MFA Magazine' TV programme, a venture which has resumed this season after being launched in October 2004.

There is practically no respite for the Malta FA under the expert stewardship of its indefatigable president, Joseph Mifsud. The mission statement is 'Towards a Better Future for the Game' and the action is in full swing.

Alex Vella

PORTUGAL



A "House of Football" for Portugal

The first vice-president and acting general secretary of the Portuguese Football Federation (FPF), Ângelo Brou, has been monitoring the progress of one of the biggest projects the FPF has ever undertaken - namely, the recently started construction of a sporting complex to host all the Portuguese national teams and serve as a true "House of Football".



Photomontage of the interior of the new stadium.

translucent and reflective materials, all of which are designed to minimise the impact on the local area by reflecting as much light as possible.

The budget for the new stadium will be EUR 365 million (EUR 321m plus VAT). Further funding opportunities from the provision of additional premium seats and corporate facilities mean that the FAI and the IRFU are confident that the extra monies needed will be raised by the two associations. The government is providing a generous contribution of EUR 191 million.

The plans are on schedule to enable the application for planning permission to be lodged in December this year. A one-year period has been allocated for due process on the planning application, subject to which construction proper is scheduled to commence in the first quarter of 2007 and finish in the second quarter of 2009. The existing stadium will be available for matches during 2006.

Ireland's Under-17 and Under-19 teams, both managed by Sean McCaffrey, have qualified for the elite phase of their respective UEFA competitions after winning their groups in the qualifying round. Both teams are eagerly looking forward to the next-phase games.

Meanwhile the women's Under-19 team, managed by Sue Ronan, will face Germany, Scotland and Slovenia in the next qualifying phase after topping their group in the first qualifying round.

Pat Costello

First vice-president and acting general secretary Ângelo Brou visits the site.

The academy will be located in Almargem do Bispo, Sintra, on the outskirts of Lisbon, and the first module of the project, including football pitches and technical facilities for the football development department, is due to be concluded by the end of 2006.

The "House of Football" - one of the most ambitious objectives of FPF president Gilberto Madail's programme - will occupy more than 16 hectares of land and contain state-of-the-art equipment and technology geared to the optimum preparation of top teams.

Apart from that, the new centre will have all the necessary facilities for technical, medical and administrative staff, plus audio-visual facilities appropriate to a modern conference hall. A spa area, with resources for physiotherapy, recuperation and treatment, will include a sauna, swimming pools, Jacuzzis and a gymnasium.

The centre will boast four football pitches (natural and artificial turf), including one with a 1400-seat stand and artificial lighting. The media will have all the necessary means for covering live events or conducting research for in-depth publications on football.

A comfortable and functional hotel with more than 130 beds will comprise two sections, one for professional teams, the other for non-professional football.

Close to the main entrance of the "Casa das Selecções/Casa do Futebol" will be a public area with a restaurant, two tennis courts and a sports hall. The academy will also be a source of income, with the possibility of hiring it to foreign teams and companies being mooted. "This is one of the most important and ambitious projects ever implemented in Portuguese football. It is a further contribution from the FPF board and myself towards the development of Portuguese football. We want this to be the gathering point for all national teams, students, the general public and other members of the football family," said Gilberto Madail.

"It's very interesting to see such a great work developing from nothing. We'll do everything in our power to make sure there are no delays and we can all soon be proud of the "Casa das Selecções/Casa do Futebol", added Ângelo Brou.

Onofre Costa

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND



Progress on and off the pitch

The Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism, John O'Donoghue TD, has unveiled the design for the new Lansdowne Road Stadium, which is a joint venture between the Football Association of Ireland (FAI), the Irish Rugby Football Union (IRFU) and the Irish Government. The design, which was created by international stadium architects HOK Sport Architecture working with Ireland's Scott Tallon Walker, is for a 50,000 all-seater stadium.

The new design evolved over a four-month period, during which the design team met with many of the different stakeholder groups involved in and impacted by the stadium. The resultant design, which is on four levels for three sides, sweeps down to one level at the north end to minimise the impact on those residents living in closest proximity to the stadium. The design also makes considerable use of both

RUSSIA



Artificial pitches for children

The Football Union of Russia constructed 76 mini-pitches in 2004/05 under the UEFA HatTrick programme, with one mini-pitch for each of the country's regional football federations.

At its meeting on 26 April, the Russian FA executive committee approved the "Give Children a Stadium" national investment project for the 2005-2012



period. Fifteen standard-size artificial football pitches have been built and opened this year under the project, which is run jointly with the "National Football Academy" fund. Between 40 and 60 pitches are due to be built every year up to 2012 in different regions of Russia.

The Russian FA is also set to continue the construction of artificial mini-pitches in 2006, with two new programmes about to be launched. The first is to build standard stadiums with an artificial playing surface for schools, while the second involves the construction of mini-stadiums for kindergartens, also with artificial turf.



Russia aims to increase the number of mini-pitches.

The construction of artificial pitches in different regions, as described above, will help to develop football across the country, with more youngsters already being attracted to the sport and the pitches providing a valuable resource for the amateur game as a whole.

Dmitri Sevastianov

SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO



Back on the centre stage

After eight years in the shadows, the Serbo-Montenegrin national team will play in next year's World Cup finals in Germany. It will be their tenth appearance in the finals, albeit under a different name, representing Serbia and Montenegro as they do nowadays. "Plavi", as the national team are affectionately known, first played in the World Cup finals as the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (1930), then as the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (1950, 1954, 1958, 1962, 1974, 1982 and 1990), and subsequently as the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (1998).

But names are not important. What counts is the fact that Serbia and Montenegro found the strength to bounce back from defeat in their last EURO 2004 qualifier (losing 2-1 to Azerbaijan on 11 June 2003) to go on to top World Cup Group 7 without losing a single match and conceding only one goal in ten matches (against Spain in Madrid), despite coming up against some

strong opposition along the way, like Spain and Belgium. Such performances have restored the fans' faith in their national team, which means a lot.

In the last qualifying match, Serbia and Montenegro beat neighbours Bosnia and Herzegovina 1-0 at the Crvena Zvezda stadium in Belgrade on 12 October. The only goal of the match was scored by Mateja Kezman, his fourth in four successive official games.

Though Kezman was the individual hero of that particular night, credit for the team's collective success is down to the head coach, Ilija Petkovic, who has led the team superbly and completely turned around a national team that lacked collective morale and in which individuals came first.

Petkovic and national-team captain Savo Milosevic can now boast that they have not lost any World Cup match to date! Petkovic has led the team into 11 matches (one for the 2002 World Cup and ten for the next) and come away with seven victories and four draws (goal difference of 18:1). Milosevic has done even better. He has played 27 matches (25 qualifiers for the 1998, 2002 and 2006 World Cups, and two in the final round in France in 1998). His record currently stands at 20 victories and seven draws, with a goal difference of 76:12. With Petkovic and Milosevic, Serbia and Montenegro are much stronger, as the statistics go to prove.

After the win against Bosnia and Herzegovina, some 50,000 fans crowded into Belgrade's Trg Republike square. The players and staff arrived an hour later and a great celebration was had by all. "Welcome to the land of basketball", everybody had said the day before. But they had changed their tune by that night and were singing "Germany here we come!"

Aleksandar Boskovic

Serbia and Montenegro before their final match against Bosnia and Herzegovina.



SLOVENIA



Raising awareness about cancer

"Heads Up", an initiative of the Slovenian players' union, SPINS, in cooperation with the institute of oncology and other cancer patient associations, has been launched in an attempt to raise awareness



Footballers doing their bit in the fight against cancer.

about cancer and to raise funds to help cancer patients in Slovenia. The project was launched on 12 October, the day Slovenia met Scotland in the World Cup qualifiers, with the full cooperation of the Slovenian FA and Slovenian professional football clubs. The project will continue until the end of the year in top division games in ten different cities in Slovenia. The campaign will consist of news conferences, giant screens, workshops and information stands. On match days, a brochure shaped like a football and signed by top Slovenian players, will be distributed to fans, and the players on the field will wear white T-shirts printed with

distributed to fans, and the players on the field will wear white T-shirts printed with



the campaign logo. The campaign's front man is Jaka Jakopic, a former player with NK Domzale. Jakopic has overcome cancer and has now started playing professional football once again in the Slovenian second division (with NK Factor). SPINS and its players want to fight the misconceptions associated with cancer and cancer patients. Therefore, the campaign logo says "Heads Up!" and the slogan is "Cancer. Look it in the eyes and win too". When you get cancer, life is not over. You are still a person who needs help and friends more than ever. SPINS wants to focus on prevention, especially among sportsmen and men in general, as, statistically, disease in men is discovered six months later than in women. Cancer can happen to anyone.

Matjaz Krajnik

SWEDEN



Åtvidabergs FF are back

A classic Swedish club is set for a remarkable comeback on the European scene next season.

In the early 1970s Åtvidabergs FF, a club from a minor industrial community supported by the local Facit factory, left their mark on top European football, having built an outstanding team with an



A headed goal from Toni Kuivasto (Djurgården) in the final of the Swedish Cup.

attractive attacking style and capturing two league titles and two domestic cup victories. On top of that, the 1974 Swedish World Cup team was built around seven of the club's players.

Åtvidaberg made five appearances in European competitions, reaching the quarter-finals twice (European Cup in 1974/75 and European Cup Winners' Cup in 1971/72). In 1973/74 ÅFF defeated Bayern Munich 3-1 at home, thereby taking the European champions-to-be that season into a penalty shoot-out. During that period, top clubs scouting for talent would find their way to the small village in the woods, which numbers less than 8,000 inhabitants

today. Eventually the golden era had to end, with the likes of Edström, Sandberg and Torstensson leaving for the big leagues. Åtvidaberg were relegated from the Allsvenskan in 1982 and dropped down the league system before re-establishing themselves as a consistent second-division club over the last five seasons.

What happened at Åtvidaberg this year is nothing short of miraculous. The club went all the way to the final of the Swedish Cup against league champions Djurgården. Since the latter had already secured their passage to the UEFA Champions League qualifiers next season, Åtvidaberg were immediately awarded a place in the 2006/07 UEFA Cup - ahead of the domestic final which Djurgården won 2-0. An interesting footnote is that the successful clubs Åtvidaberg and Djurgården established a joint project for the development of talented players last year.

The Swedish entrants in the UEFA competitions in 2006/07 will be Djurgårdens IF (Champions League), league runners-up IFK Göteborg (UEFA Cup), cup runners-up Åtvidabergs FF (UEFA Cup) and third-place club in the league Kalmar FF (Intertoto Cup). Gefle IF were the winners of the national fair play competition this season.

The 2006/07 UEFA Women's Cup will see the return of former European club champions Umeå IK after a year's absence. Umeå had the chance to claim the double but lost out in the cup final against Djurgården/Ålvsjö.

Thomas Saletog

TURKEY



New cup format

European Under-17 champions Turkey team finished fourth in the U-17 World Championship in Peru. The Turkish side were really unlucky in the semi-finals, losing to Brazil by a close 4-3 margin. In the match for third place and bronze medal, the Netherlands got the better of the team which had beaten them in the European Under-17 Championship final in Italy in May, beating Turkey 2-1.

On a brighter note, Nuri Sahin and Tevfik Köse received awards for their exceptional performances in the championship. As a result, Nuri Sahin, who plays for Borussia Dortmund, has made his first appearance for the senior national team, playing for four minutes of the friendly match against Germany and even scoring Turkey's second goal.

In other news, the Turkish FA has launched a new sponsorship deal with IDDAA, the official betting company in Turkey. The deal also consists of a bet fair agreement. If a match is thought to be manipulated, IDDAA will close the betting

on the match. IDDAA will also report excessive bets on matches to the TFA.

Finally, this season's Turkish Cup has got under way with a new format. The competition, which will be broadcast on a pay-TV channel, involves 20 teams divided into four groups of five teams. The teams in each group will play each other just once, after which the group-winners and runners-up go through to the quarter-finals. The Turkish FA has changed the cup format in order to create a more profitable competition for the clubs and the football economy.

Ilker Ugur

UKRAINE



Aiming high in coach education

On 8 November, the first group of Ukrainian coaches aspiring to obtain the national stage I coaching certificate and the UEFA Pro diploma started their course at the licensing centre of the Football Federation of Ukraine (FFU). The group includes



Top Ukrainian sports officials.

national-team coaches Oleg Blokhin, Andriy Bal and Semen Altman (Chernomoret's Odesa), as well as leading club coaches Yevgen Kucherevskiy, Viacheslav Groznyi (Metalurg FC, Zaporizhzhia), Anatoliy Konkov (Inter FC, Baku), Viktor Prokopenko (Shakhtar FC, Donetsk), Pavlo Yakovenko (Khimki FC, Russia), Oleg Protasov (Steaua Bucharest), Gennady Lytovchenko (FC Khar'kiv) and Oleg Luzhnyi (Arsenal), among others. At the same time, a group of coaches from professional teams (Ukrainian top league, league I and league II) recently obtained their national stage I certificates and UEFA A diplomas.

At the end of September, at a seminar/conference organised by the Ukrainian national Olympic committee, Grygoriy Surkis, president of the FFU, made a proposal to the NOC and the ministry of youth and sports for the construction of an Olympic sports complex. The project has already been approved by the FFU, and Mr Surkis is certain that unless such facilities are provided in the near future, it will be practically impossible to hold major international sports tournaments in Ukraine.

Valeriy Nykonenko

Communications

Birthdays – Calendar

Birthdays

Yevgeniy Shuntov (Belarus), member of the Youth & Amateur Football Committee, celebrates his 70th birthday on 29 December. On 8 December, Michel D'Hooghe (Belgium), European member of the FIFA Executive Committee, turns 60, as do Agneta Björck (Sweden), member of the Referee Instructors Panel, on the 28th and Horst Brummeier (Austria), member of the Referee Observers Panel on the 31st. Sulejman Starova (Albania), member of the Assistance Programmes Committee, reaches the half-century mark on 12 December. UEFA also extends birthday greetings to:

- Wolfgang Wassmund (Germany, 1.12)
- Juan Antonio Fernandez Marin (Spain, 3.12)
- Gunter A. Pilz (Germany, 5.12)
- Alan Hodson (England, 5.12)
- Maurizio Montironi (San Marino, 5.12)
- Leszek Rylski (Poland, 6.12)
- Miklos Nagy (Hungary, 6.12)
- Franco Carraro (Italy, 6.12)
- Andreas Akkelides (Cyprus, 7.12)
- Andrea Manzella (Italy, 8.12)
- George E. Douglas (Scotland, 8.12)
- Wolfgang Riedel (Germany, 9.12)
- Les Reed (England, 9.12)
- Rakhat Aliyev (Kazakhstan, 10.12)
- Claus Rode Jensen (Denmark, 11.12)
- Kaj Natri (Finland, 13.12)
- Gilberto Madaíl (Portugal, 14.12)
- Allan Simonsen (Faroe Islands, 15.12)
- Noel White (England, 16.12)
- Karel Vertongen (Belgium, 17.12)
- Hansruedi Hasler (Switzerland, 18.12)
- Rainer Koch (Germany, 18.12)
- Ivan Nemeckay (Slovakia, 18.12)
- Torleif Sigurdsson (Faroe Islands, 23.12)
- Tommy Theorin (Sweden, 25.12)
- Guy Goethals (Belgium, 26.12)
- Gennaro Mazzei (Italy, 27.12)
- Dusan Tittel (Slovakia, 27.12)
- Paul Evans (Wales, 27.12)

- Bernard Carrel (Switzerland, 28.12)
- Gordon Taylor (England, 28.12)
- Martial Saugy (Switzerland, 28.12)
- Einar Halle (Norway, 29.12)
- Berti Vogts (Germany, 30.12)
- Wolfgang Thierriichter (Austria, 30.12)
- Mehmet Aydin Torunoglu (Turkey, 30.12)
- Jean Fournet-Fayard (France, 31.12)
- Eugeniusz Kolator (Poland, 31.12)
- David Findlay (Scotland, 31.12)

Upcoming events

MEETINGS

1.12.2005, Limassol

Draws for the qualifying rounds of the 2006/07 European Under-17 and Under-19 Championships

9.12.2005, Leipzig

Draw for the 2006 World Cup finals

12.12.2005, Nyon

Club Competitions Committee

15.12.2005, Nyon

Executive Committee

16.12.2005, Nyon

Draws for the first knock-out stage of the UEFA Champions League and the rounds of 32 and 16 of the UEFA Cup

COMPETITIONS

1.12.2005

UEFA Cup: group matches (matchday 4)

6-7.12.2005

UEFA Champions League: group matches (matchday 6)

11-18.12.2005, Japan

Club World Championship

14-15.12.2005

UEFA Cup: group matches (match day 5)

New publication

ANUARUL FOTBALULUI ROMÂNESC

The Romanian FA and its history and statistics committee have just published the ninth volume of the Romanian football almanac, covering the years from 2000 to 2005. This 600-page work contains the results and league tables of the top Romanian divisions for each of the seasons concerned, as well as the results of the Romanian Cup and Super Cup. Youth and women's football are also included, as are national-team and international competition results. The first division section also contains a list of players with details of their top division careers.



Communications

■ The fifth ordinary congress of the Bulgarian Football Union elected Borislav Mihaylov as the association's new president.

■ Pavel Mokry has been elected president of the Czech FA.

■ The FA of FYR Macedonia has re-elected Haralampie Hadzi-Risteski as its president for a further four-year term.

■ The Football Association of Ireland has a new phone number: + 353 1 70 37 500.

■ **The UEFA Administration in Nyon has new contact numbers. The new main phone and fax numbers are:**

+41 848 00 27 27
(switchboard)

+41 848 01 27 27 (fax)

The new media desk number is:

+41 848 04 27 27

Match agents

Johannes Korevaar (Netherlands) has decided to give up his UEFA match agent's licence.

WE CARE ABOUT FOOTBALL



Official publication of the
**Union des associations
européennes de football**

Communications and Public Affairs Division

Editor André Vieli

Produced by Atema Communication SA, CH-1196 Gland

Printed by Cavin SA, CH-1422 Grandson

Editorial deadline: 17 November 2005

The views expressed in signed articles are not necessarily the official views of UEFA.

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