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Including



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in Düsseldorf 03**

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COVER

In Düsseldorf, Michel Platini became the sixth UEFA president and the second Frenchman – and the second one to hail from the Lorraine region – to be elected to that position, the first having been the late Jacques Georges.

PHOTO: UEFA-pjwoods.ch

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Editorial

Looking ahead

For football fans in Europe, 2007 looks like a “gap year” – the year between the World Cup in Germany and EURO 2008, though someone who prefers club football does not experience the same lull, with the domestic league and cup competitions to follow and possibly the club's campaign in one of UEFA's competitions as well.

For the leaders of the national associations and of UEFA, there is no such thing as a quiet period either. This year, for example, UEFA's member associations first had the delicate task of deciding who UEFA's president would be for the next four years. Just a few months later, in April, it will be up to the UEFA Executive Committee to decide where EURO 2012 will take place.

2007 is also likely to be a crucial time in relations between European football and the European Union. It will also be decisive for the club licensing system, not to mention for the future of the UEFA club competitions, with the Executive Committee required to draw conclusions from the vast study that has been undertaken among all stakeholders.

On top of that, the marketing process for the next competition cycle will get under way, and numerous other activities will happen, such as the new-look Meridian Cup at the end of February, to name but one. So there will certainly be nothing calm about 2007, which, on the contrary, promises to be a more than busy year.

Most of the decisions on the agenda will steer European football in a certain direction for the next few years, which may seem paradoxical at a time when it is harder than ever to predict what the future holds.

However, it is only by looking ahead that we can stay in front and avert the risk of being overtaken.



Lars-Christer Olsson
Chief Executive

WE CARE ABOUT FOOTBALL



31st UEFA Congress in Düsseldorf

Michel Platini elected president



UEFA-pjwoods.ch

ON 25/26 JANUARY, THE 31ST ORDINARY UEFA CONGRESS TOOK PLACE IN DÜSSELDORF, THOUGH IT WAS RATHER MORE OF AN EXTRAORDINARY EVENT BY VIRTUE OF ITS DURATION – WITH THE FRIDAY SESSION LASTING FIVE AND A HALF HOURS – AND, MORE NOTABLY, BY THE MASSIVE MEDIA PRESENCE TRIGGERED BY THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, WITH NO FEWER THAN 280 MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES ON THE SPOT.

The delegates of UEFA's 52 member associations – which were all represented at the congress – were faced with the choice of either abiding by the principle that you should never change a winning team or of giving fresh impetus to the organisation by electing – for the first time in UEFA's history – a former top player as its president.

The close result showed just how difficult that choice was, with the outgoing president, Lennart Johansson (Sweden) obtaining 23 votes, against 27 (two ballot papers were invalid) in favour of Frenchman Michel Platini, who thus

becomes the sixth president of UEFA, following in the footsteps of Ebbe Schwartz (1954-62), Gustav Wiederkehr (1962-72), Artemio Franchi (1973-83), Jacques Georges (1984-90) and Lennart Johansson (1990-2007).

Platini, 51, joined the UEFA Executive Committee in 2002. The former brilliant player and one-time national team coach has also been serving as vice-president of the French Football Federation and a member of the FIFA Executive Committee. He also played a key role in the 1998 World Cup organising committee.

His first gesture after being elected UEFA president was to pay tribute to his predecessor, Lennart Johansson, by proposing to the congress that he be made honorary president of UEFA, a proposal that was accepted by resounding acclamation.

Three new members of the UEFA Executive Committee

As a new chapter in UEFA's history unfurls, the composition of its Executive Committee also has a slightly new look for the four years ahead. In the elections for six seats on the committee that followed the presidential elections, three new members were voted in: Mircea Sandu, Gilberto Madaíl and Grigoriy Surkis, the last two having been involved in the committee since 2004 as co-opted members.



The congress centre in Düsseldorf.



Guests from the other football confederations.



It took only one ballot to elect: Angel Maria Villar Llona (Spain), 42 votes; Senes Erzik (Turkey), 37 votes; Mircea Sandu (Romania), 32 votes; Joseph Mifsud (Malta), 28 votes; Gilberto Madaíl (Portugal), 27 votes; and Grigoriy Surkis (Ukraine), 27 votes.

The unlucky candidates were Frantisek Laurinec (Slovakia), 25 votes; outgoing members Eggert Magnusson (Iceland), 23 votes; and Giangiorgio Spiess (Switzerland), 20 votes; as well as Tomas Gea (Andorra), 12 votes.

Rakhat Aliyev (Kazakhstan), Vlatko Markovic (Croatia) and Liutauras Varanavicius (Lithuania) withdrew their candidatures.

It was also the job of the congress to complete the line-up of UEFA representatives on the FIFA Executive Committee. As UEFA president, Michel Platini automatically becomes a FIFA vice-president. The remaining vacant vice-president's seat went to the only candidate and present office-holder, Angel Maria Villar Llona, who was re-elected

by acclamation. In the same way, Franz Beckenbauer (Germany) was elected member of the FIFA Executive Committee, again as the sole candidate. One member's seat still has to be filled, that vacated by Michel Platini on becoming a FIFA vice-president. In accordance with the UEFA statutes, the UEFA Executive Committee will decide who will fill that seat.

Amendments to the statutes

Since the UEFA statutes are to undergo a total revision before the 2008 UEFA Congress in Kiev, at which they will be voted on, only a strict minimum of amendments were proposed to the congress in Düsseldorf, all of which met with the delegates' approval. The clauses in question concern articles 2, 3bis, 7, 9, 42, 50, 53 and 54, dealing, among other things, with the objectives of UEFA, relationships with the stakeholders in European football, the rights and obligations of member associations, the suspension of member associations, finan-

cial obligations, competition regulations and disciplinary measures. The main purpose of the amendments was to embed the club licensing system in the statutes; to make it possible to deny admission to a competition to any association or club directly or indirectly involved in any activity aimed at arranging or influencing the outcome of a match; to make it possible to withdraw a title or licence; to counter government and court interference; and to implement the recommendations of the Independent European Sport Review in terms of consultation. A definition of fair play has also been included.

Bigger European Championship final rounds?

The proposal of the Scottish FA, which was seconded by the football associations of the Republic of Ireland, Latvia and Sweden, to undertake a feasibility study regarding the expansion of the European Football Championship final round to 24 participants met with



THE NEW UEFA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. Seated, from left to right: Mathieu Sprengers, Geoffrey Thompson, Senes Erzik, Michel Platini, Per Ravn Omdal, Angel Maria Villar Llona, Lars-Christer Olsson. Standing: Mircea Sandu, Gilberto Madaíl, Grigoriy Surkis, Marios Lefkaritis, Viacheslav Koloskov, Joseph Mifsud, Gerhard Mayer-Vorfelder. Missing from the photo: Franco Carraro.

PHOTOS: UEFA-plwoods.ch

53rd UEFA member association

Some five years since the admission of Kazakhstan, UEFA welcomed another new member at the congress in Düsseldorf, the football association of Montenegro, which had been a provisional member since October, following the division of Serbia and Montenegro. UEFA membership was therefore a natural continuation for the Montenegrin association, headed by a former professional footballer, Dejan Savicevic, as it had previously been part of the old football association of Yugoslavia and then of the football association of Serbia and Montenegro, and fulfilled all the conditions for full UEFA membership, which takes effect on 1 July.



Lennart Johansson and Michel Platini greet Dejan Savicevic, president of the football association of Montenegro.

The congress, however, rejected the membership application of the Gibraltar Football Association, which had been admitted as a provisional member in December following a decision of the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS).

the approval of the vast majority of delegates. According to the proposal, enlarging the final round would promote the national associations by virtue of more of them qualifying. Several delegates recommended, however, that the matter should be given due reflection and that the proposal should be considered from the perspective of EURO 2016.

The congress also received a status report on the HatTrick programme and approved the second such programme, which will run from 2008 to 2012, and for which a budget of EUR 450 million is envisaged, corresponding to a 44% increase compared with the first programme.

Last but not least, the congress approved the report of the UEFA Executive Committee and Chief Executive, as well as the 2005/06 financial report and the budget for 2007/08.



A standing ovation for Lennart Johansson on being elected honorary president of UEFA.

Honours and awards

The UEFA Congress in Düsseldorf opened on the Thursday afternoon with addresses by the German minister of the interior, Wolfgang Schäuble, and the president of the German football association, Theo Zwanziger, as well as messages from the presidents of FIFA and UEFA, Joseph S. Blatter and Lennart Johansson.

The first part of the annual meeting of UEFA's member associations was devoted mainly to paying tribute to loyal servants of European football, notably Jean Fournet-Fayard (France), who was made an honorary member of UEFA. A former member of the UEFA Executive Committee who also spent nine years as president of the French Football Federation, Jean Fournet-Fayard also served for many years on UEFA's Club Competitions Committee. He was a familiar face at draws, about which he knows all the ins and outs, having prepared and conducted so many of them.

Jean Fournet-Fayard becomes UEFA's 14th honorary member, joining Gerhard Aigner, Hans Bangerter, Sandor Barcs, Egidius Braun, Des Casey, and the late Jacques Georges (honorary president), Jos. Coler, José Crahay, Artemio Franchi, Sir Bert Millichip, Sir Stanley Rous, Nikolay Ryashentsev and Lucien Schmidlin.

Gerhard Aigner, Hans Bangerter and Des Casey were present at the congress in Düsseldorf.

The following day, the list of honorary members grew when Lennart Johansson was given the status of honorary president.

Eight other awards were presented:

Ferenc Puskas (Hungary) was posthumously awarded the UEFA Order of Merit in emerald, while the Order of Merit in ruby was bestowed on the late Kazimierz Gorski (Poland) as well as Hans Reitingner (Austria) and Nikita Simonian (Russia).

Recipients of the Order of Merit in diamond were Jean Appietto (France), the late Giacinto Facchetti (Italy), Jozef Venglos (Slovakia) and Josep Lluís Vilaseca i Guasch (Spain).



Lennart Johansson congratulates Jean Fournet-Fayard on becoming an honorary member of UEFA.

Quotes from the congress

Germany's minister of the interior, **Wolfgang Schäuble**, recalled the fantastic atmosphere that reigned in Germany during last summer's World Cup finals. He also emphasised the role and importance of sport: *"In times of change, sport unites people. It also plays a role in fighting racism, facilitates integration and also teaches the rules of equality and fair play."*



He also stressed the need for sport to be autonomous and free, reassuring the audience that *"the German government will be guided by these principles during its presidency of the European Union."*

Theo Zwanziger, president of the German football association, was proud that the World Cup had helped Germany to change the rest of the world's perception of it. He also praised all the spouses who support their partners and allow them to fulfil their roles as leaders of national associations.



In his message, the FIFA president, **Joseph S. Blatter**, said: *"Football must speak with a single voice,"* adding that *"we need world solutions."* He also declared that *"sport belongs to everyone, and solutions for football have to come from within the game."*



Lennart Johansson stressed the importance of the national associations: *"They form the foundations of the football pyramid in Europe and the special link that unites football in our continent. It is clear to me,"* he added, *"that if the roots are not looked after, football will suffer at all other levels."*



Addressing the delegates before the elections, **Michel Platini** declared that *"football is a game before a product, a sport before a market, a show before a business."* He insisted that *"we are fortunate to hold something precious in our hands, and we must protect it, defend it and help it to flourish."*



The Executive Committee at its meeting in Düsseldorf the day before the congress.

First meeting of the year for the Executive Committee

The Executive Committee held its first meeting of the year in Düsseldorf on 24 January, the day before the opening of the XXXI Ordinary UEFA Congress.

With Lennart Johansson in the chair, the Executive Committee dealt as usual with a variety of current issues, including interference by the political authorities in more than one national association, something the committee firmly opposes. In contrast, the committee welcomed the creation of the European Professional Football Strategy Forum, whose first meeting took place in Nyon in January (a report will follow in a future issue). It was also pleased to note the success of the Top Executive Programme, which had been well received by the leaders of the national associations, for whom it had been designed.

The Executive Committee also hailed the development of grassroots football in accordance with the corresponding UEFA charter. Here it approved a star rating system, based on the criteria met by the signatory member associations. The criteria taken into consideration are the existence of grassroots structures, services and a grassroots football philosophy (one star), the number of social and disability sport programmes (two star), the number of participating players (three star), the number of girls (four star), and promotional events such as festivals designed to increase the number of participants (five star).

Among the pilot associations, England, Germany, the Netherlands, Nor-

way and Scotland were awarded the five-star rating, while Denmark received four stars. In addition, eight new national associations joined the charter, which they signed in Düsseldorf: Finland, Malta, Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland, Russia, Switzerland, Ukraine and Wales.

In other business, the Executive Committee approved the organisation of a competition between clubs from the three Baltic states. The participants will be the top four teams from each of the domestic leagues of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Approval was given on an experimental basis, and the situation will be reviewed after the first edition. The allocation of places for UEFA competitions will not be affected in any way by this competition but will continue to depend on domestic competitions.

The committee also agreed to increase from 22 to 23 the number of players on the squad list for the 2006/07 European Under-21 Championship final round. The list is to be submitted ten instead of the previous 15 days before the start of the competition. The coefficient rankings of the associations for the 2007-09 edition will also be drawn up to take account of the particular format of the current edition.

■ Immediately after the Congress, the Executive Committee held its first meeting in its new composition, with Michel Platini in the chair. He decided, however, to defer the appointment of the vice-presidents and treasurer until another meeting. The Committee accepted the request of the associations of Andorra and San Marino to enter a club for the UEFA Champions League qualifying stage. UEFA's new member association, Montenegro, will also be entitled to a place in the qualifiers.



The representatives of the new signatories to the UEFA grassroots charter.



It is not always easy to run a press conference.



BACKSTRAND/PAGETTY IMAGES



UEFA

Jamie Shea and Owen Hargreaves.

Media Managers Meet in Munich

Ready for everything

THE SUPERB NEW ARENA IN MUNICH WAS A PERFECT SETTING FOR THE 4TH UEFA CONFERENCE FOR MEDIA OFFICERS, HELD IN THE BAVARIAN CAPITAL JUST BEFORE CHRISTMAS, WITH FC BAYERN MÜNCHEN PRODUCING AN OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE AS THE 'HOME TEAM', CAPTAINED BY THE CLUB'S DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS, MARKUS HÖRWICK.

Markus is a familiar face to German TV viewers, but most of the media officers from 45 national associations and the leading club sides from the UEFA Champions League play a backstage role in stage-managing the 'media circus' and performing tasks that range from organising press conferences to making sure that the right players are in front of the right cameras at the right times for all the post-match TV interviews. They are the unseen 'kitchen staff' behind the menu that is served to the public. So much of the conference and the workshop preceding it for UEFA's own media officers was about ways of improving, developing and upgrading the multifarious aspects of work in the media backroom.

Not many supporters will have any idea about how much thought goes, for instance, into positioning TV cameras without 'killing' too many spectator seats; what is required to stage a successful press conference; how to offer a hundred or so photographers the best conditions for doing their job; or how many problems may have to be solved when it comes to setting up an effective 'mixed zone' where TV, radio and written press reporters can collect post-match comments from the players. The fact that the squad of media officers was training in the Arena from 8.30 a.m. until 10 p.m. offers some idea of how much work needs to be done and how much intensive effort was put into the conference. But it has to be said that the standards of hospitality offered by

FC Bayern and the Arena were so high that the participants thoroughly enjoyed the event, no matter how hard they were made to work.

With the aim of stimulating maximum exchanges of experience and ideas, media officers from UEFA, national associations and clubs were blended into eight teams, each of which went through a programme of eight 90-minute modules, some of which went to 'extra-time' and 'penalties'. Each working session focused on case studies, given that one of the fundamental requirements for a media officer is to react positively to the most adverse conditions.

For this reason, the final day was devoted to 'crisis management' and

various sessions that would probably have been extremely interesting for the average supporter. One of the guest speakers was Jamie Shea, NATO spokesman during the Balkan conflict. His 'memoirs' of how he dealt with the daily media briefings – media grillings might have been a more accurate description – provided a fascinating insight into the personal and organisational demands which have to be met when the global media are focused on a major news event.

The conference ended with a more football-specific session featuring the English FA's media director, Adrian Bevington, alongside a trio of FC Bayern personalities: Markus Hörwick, executive board chairman Karl-Heinz Rummenigge and English international midfielder Owen Hargreaves. They jointly reviewed a series of real and imaginary crisis situations and gave their views on how each of them should be handled in media terms. As one of the participants remarked, "Some people in other walks of life may have to deal with one or two crises during their entire working lives. But in football we have to be ready to deal with one every week!" It is to be hoped that this is an exaggeration, but the participants undoubtedly left Munich much better prepared for facing the worst...



An ideal work environment for the media managers.

UEFA



Liverpool will need the talent of Steven Gerrard if they want to topple title-holders Barcelona.

ELLIS/AP/GETTY IMAGES



Celtic have qualified for the knockout round for the first time.

PA/EMPICS



Having come up against Arsenal (Fredrik Ljungberg, No. 8) in the group matches, Porto (Paulo Assunção) now have to face another formidable London team, Chelsea.

UEFA Champions League Destination Olympia

ON 23 MAY, LESS THAN THREE YEARS AFTER STAGING THE OLYMPIC GAMES, ATHENS WILL HOST THE UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE FINAL. HOWEVER, THE ROAD TO GREECE IS STILL LONG AND TREACHEROUS FOR THE 16 SURVIVORS WHO WILL COMPETE IN WHAT PROMISES TO BE AN ENTHRALLING FIRST KNOCK-OUT ROUND (20/21 FEBRUARY AND 6/7 MARCH).

One of the last two winners of the UEFA Champions League will be missing from the quarter-final line-up. Liverpool, winners in 2005, and current holders

Barcelona will present a fascinating contrast in styles when they meet in the last 16. The precision, physical strength and counter-attacks of Rafael Benitez' men will come up against the sophisticated, all-attacking game played by the brilliant individuals who make up Frank Rijkaard's team. Liverpool had fewer problems than Barcelona in the group phase. However, the expected returns of Lionel Messi and goal machine Samuel Eto'o should add to the attacking potency of Ronaldinho's team-mates. Will the talented Steven Gerrard and acrobatic Peter Crouch have enough to stop the "blaugrana" in their tracks?

Trophies galore

Real Madrid and Bayern Munich have won 13 Champions' Cups/Champions League titles between them (9 for Madrid, 4 for Bayern). Deprived of a trophy for the past three seasons, the Spaniards have turned to Fabio Capello. By signing world champion Fabio Cannavaro and half-backs Emerson and Mahamadou Diarra, the Italian coach has placed particular emphasis on tightening the Madrid defence. Following the arrival of the ruthless Ruud van Nistelrooy,

Ronaldo has been confined to the bench without detriment to the club's fantastic striking potential. Bayern, on the back of two consecutive German league and cup doubles, have managed to remain frontrunners despite the loss of Michael Ballack to Chelsea. Led by the "eternal" Oliver Kahn (37), the team appears well-balanced and effective in all departments, even though Lukas Podolski, who joined from Cologne in the summer (and was one of the revelations of the World Cup), has not yet found his best form.

Opposite directions?

Celtic (one trophy) and AC Milan (six titles) are also both former winners of the competition. However, this is the first time the Glasgow club, untouchable at domestic level, has managed to qualify from the Champions League group phase. Coach Gordon Strachan is largely responsible for this success, supported by the pacy Kenny Miller, the uncompromising Thomas Gravesen and the free kicks of Shunsuke Nakamura. Milan, meanwhile, possibly knocked by the scandal in which they were embroiled in the summer (along with numerous other Italian clubs), have had a disappointing start to the season. Certain big-name players such as Paolo Maldini, Alessandro Costacurta, Cafu and Filippo Inzaghi are not as young as they used to be. However, there is so much talent in the "rossonero" squad that anything is possible.

Mourinho faces old friends

In the space of two years, José Mourinho led FC Porto to victory in the UEFA Cup and Champions League, a feat which resulted in his recruitment by Chelsea. After two Premier League titles, he has his heart set on winning the



Ruud van Nistelrooy is merciless in spearheading the Real Madrid attack.

GETTY IMAGES





A determined Zlatan Ibrahimovic playing for FC Internazionale.



BLUDENSTEIN/AR/GETTY IMAGES

PSV Eindhoven can count on some new strength, as provided by the likes of Peruvian Jefferson Farfan (right, up against Galatasaray defender Ohran Ak).



FLASH PRESS

Matthieu Chalmes (right) took a step in the right direction by helping Lille beat AC Milan (Yoann Gourcuff) in Italy.

Champions League, which will mean knocking out his former team in the last 16. The London side always generates an unusual sense of power, organisation and confidence. Yet there is considerable room for improvement, since Michael Ballack and Andriy Shevchenko, who joined in the summer, have yet to hit top form. Porto, now coached by Jesualdo Ferreira, are dominating the Portuguese title race. The way they move the ball around is always a sight to behold, while goalkeeper Helton has become the Brazilian national team's first choice. "Will-o'-the-wisp" Quaresma and the powerful Helder Postiga are dangerous when attacking their opponents' goal. But Mourinho is bound to know all about this...

History on their side

Over the last five years, FC Internazionale have won all three of their two-legged European ties with Valencia. This season's Milan team (twice winners of the Champions' Cup) seems confident of repeating these successes. The "nerazzurri" were able to draw on their large, technically gifted squad in order to achieve a new record number of consecutive Serie A victories. Even with Adriano out of form, Inter also managed to come back from two opening defeats in the Champions League. Valencia are not quite as consistent, but are still capable of playing some beautiful football. Their attacking duo of Fernando Morientes (top scorer in the first phase of the Champions League alongside Kaka and Didier Drogba) and David Villa is highly effective.

Inevitable opponents

Lille cannot complete a Champions League season without facing Manchester United. They met in the group phase in 2001 and 2005 and will face

each other again in the spring. Claude Puel's men have reached the last 16 for the first time, a fine reward for a club and a coach who, despite limited resources, are a model of consistency. With no real stars – although Mathieu Bodmer and Peter Odemwingie are excellent players – Lille's strength lies in their close-knit team mentality. Manchester United (with two Champions' Cup/Champions League titles under their belts) are regular qualifiers for the knock-out stages. Top of the English league, Alex Ferguson's team is profiting from the rapid progress of Cristiano Ronaldo and Wayne Rooney – who with Louis Saha form a formidable attacking trio – as well as an excellent season for "old stagers" Paul Scholes and Ryan Giggs.

Youth is king

Finalists last year, Arsenal will face 1988 winners PSV Eindhoven in a match in which youth will play a prominent part. Following the departure or retirement of Dennis Bergkamp, Robert Pires and Sol Campbell, even greater responsibility now lies on the shoulders of youngsters Cesc Fabregas, Johan Djourou, Philippe Senderos and Robin van Persie. Will it prove too much? The absence through injury of Thierry Henry may also explain the rather disappointing start to the season for the "Gunners". Meanwhile, PSV Eindhoven are used to losing their best players every season. This summer it was coach

Guus Hiddink who left, to be surprisingly replaced by Ronald Koeman. PSV are breaking away in the Dutch league thanks to an attacking style of football in which youngsters Farfan and Kone (the club's top scorers) are prominent. Midfielder Ismail Assaiti, who is only 18, is also beginning to come to the fore.

First meeting

The last 16 encounter between AS Roma and Olympique Lyonnais is the only tie between two clubs who have never won the Champions League. These teams, who both play an attacking game, have never faced each other in European competition. Roma – Champions' Cup finalists in 1984 but who have never reached the quarter-finals of the Champions League – are performing well in Serie A. Led by in-form Francesco Totti, they appear to be the only club capable of challenging Inter. Lyon, for their part, are having it all their own way in Ligue 1. With their sixth successive title apparently a formality, Juninho and his team-mates will be concentrating on the Champions League. The team plays virtually with its eyes closed and has no obvious weaknesses. It is therefore more than capable of progressing further than the quarter-finals, where the club has fallen in each of the last three seasons.

Emanuele Saraceno



Francesco Totti is crucial to the success of AS Roma.

GETTY IMAGES



An instructive discussion with UEFA's chief executive, Lars-Christer Olsson.



Ideas for the future of women's football.

2nd UEFA Elite Women's Coaches Forum

Exchange of ideas in Nyon

ON 13 DECEMBER, COACHES OF NATIONAL SENIOR AND YOUTH WOMEN'S TEAMS AND FROM WOMEN'S CLUB FOOTBALL

MET IN NYON TO EXCHANGE IDEAS, SUGGESTIONS AND EXPERIENCES.

"We want one voice!" said Andy Roxburgh, launching the event. UEFA's technical director urged the participants to use the forum to make new contacts, exchange opinions on current developments in women's football and, not least, to put forward proposals that could be submitted to the UEFA chief executive and Executive Committee.

Changes to UEFA women's tournaments

The participants welcomed the creation of the new European Under-17 Championship and hoped that the final round would quickly be enlarged to include eight teams. Karen Espelund, chair of the UEFA Women's

Football Committee, said that initial feedback would have to be sought first. In view of the encouraging number of associations that had entered the first edition (40), she thought that the format of the tournament would soon need to be adjusted.

Other matters for discussion included the number of rest days during youth tournaments and the growing number of injuries.

Vera Pauw, member of the UEFA Technical Study Group, described a new physical training programme recently introduced in the Netherlands. Players received a training plan, which included regular exercises at home. This had led to a fall in the number of injuries.

European Women's Championship: general satisfaction

As far as the senior competitions are concerned, the participants were happy with the changes to the European Women's Championship, particularly the expansion of the final round to 12 teams. Some national coaches, such as Michael Kåld (Finland), suggested improvements for the organisation of the final round in terms of hotels and training grounds, which should no longer be shared by more than one team.

The participants also discussed whether the UEFA Women's Cup final should be held at a neutral venue. The majority of the participants thought it was still too early for this. Czech national coach Dusan Zovinec thought that central and east European clubs needed support and that it would be good for the competition if it was not always the same teams competing for the title.

Coaching tools

Andy Roxburgh described several aids that could make a coach's life easier. The "Amisco Tracking System" was a computer programme that recorded statistical data during a match, making it possible, for example, to see how many kilometres a player covered, how often they touched the ball, what kind of passes they played, etc. Carolina Morace, Italian national coach at the 2005 European Championship finals in England, hailed the system as a useful – albeit expensive –



PHOTOS: UEFA-pjwoode.ch

A good-humoured discussion between Beatrice von Siebenthal (Switzerland), Anna Signeul (Scotland) and Silvia Neid (Germany).



Vera Pauw presented the fitness programme used in the Netherlands.

tool for analysing an opponent's tactics. Other aids included the UEFA extranet, where registered coaches – there are around 450 at present – could find technical reports, training exercises and various other articles, or the Tactfoot software, which could be used to demonstrate exercises on a computer screen. From April, uefa.com would also include a new "Training Ground" section, containing the e-learning modules, training ideas, videos and other useful bits and pieces.

Development activities

On the subject of player development, several participants described the current situation in their own countries. Many associations are trying to open up their academies to the most talented girls. France is one of the forerunners in this respect. National coach Elisabeth Loisel explained the French model, which involves cooperation between schools and clubs as well as the academies. The Swedish member of the Technical Study Group, Anna Signeul, thought that the growing number of participants meant that not just the associations but also the clubs – even at elite level – needed to become more professional: "We are generating interest, but we are failing to properly look after the people who are showing an interest".

As far as coaches were concerned, the lack of qualified coaches was considered to be a serious problem. In most associations, women are integrated into the men's coaching courses, which is a problem in an environment still dominated by men, particularly in the A and Pro licence training courses. Some associations now offer courses specifically for women. According to Silvia Neid, the new German national coach, it is very important to encourage players to train to be coaches while they are still playing. There are many benefits when talented youngsters are coached by former stars. "The players look up to you," said the former German international, who knows what she is talking about from her own experience.

Development plan

The forum was immediately followed by the draw for the group phase of the 2007-09 European Championship. The 16 teams eliminated in the qualifying round will have no competitive matches for two years. Karen Espelund announced that the associations concerned would receive support from experienced coaches, who would make themselves available to run courses or training modules in the respective countries. The forum participants welcomed this proposal.

The qualifying groups

30 teams will be taking part in the group matches between April 2007 and October 2008. Only the group winners qualify directly for the final round in Finland in 2009. The six group runners-up and the best four third-placed teams will have to contest play-offs to determine the five other finalists. Finland qualify automatically as host nation.



The draw was conducted by Karen Espelund, chairwoman of the Women's Football Committee, and Lars-Christer Olsson.

The draw on 13 December drew the 30 teams concerned into the following groups:

Group 1	Group 2
England	Sweden
Czech Republic	Italy
Spain	Hungary
Belarus	Republic of Ireland
Northern Ireland	Romania
Group 3	Group 4
France	Germany
Iceland	Netherlands
Serbia	Switzerland
Greece	Belgium
Slovenia	Wales
Group 5	Group 6
Denmark	Norway
Ukraine	Russia
Scotland	Poland
Portugal	Austria
Slovakia	Israel



The presidents of UEFA and the CAF sign the Meridian Charter in January 1997 in Lisbon.



Baba Sakho (far right) presents the trophy to the captains of the four European teams after Europe's victory in 2005. With him is Jim Boyce, chairman of the Youth & Amateur Football Committee.



Gines Meléndez, Inaki Saez and Juan Santisteban are in charge of coaching the European team.

Meridian Cup

A new direction for its tenth birthday

THIS EUROPEAN/AFRICAN EVENT, TO BE HELD IN BARCELONA FROM 26 FEBRUARY TO 1 MARCH, WILL HAVE A BRAND NEW LOOK, REFLECTING CHANGES MADE TO THE MERIDIAN PROJECT AS A WHOLE.

The Meridian Project is currently being overhauled for the first time, a decade after it was launched as a joint initiative between UEFA and CAF. The past achievements of the project are extremely encouraging in many different areas: improvements in terms of administration and organisation, as well as significant progress in the fields of coaching, refereeing, infrastructure and sports medicine.



As the flagship event of this well-established project, the Meridian Cup, the fifth edition of which will be contested in Catalonia at the end of February, also has a completely new format. Here we spotlight the changes and details of this intercontinental competition.

The event will no longer take the form of a tournament between the top eight Under-17 teams from Europe and Africa, but will involve the

most promising Under-18 players from both continents. Two teams will therefore face each other on 27 February and 1 March 2007 at the Estadi Mini Nou Camp in matches which will be just as exciting and probably more closely fought than in the past. The event will also provide a chance to discover a new generation of gifted footballers with their subtle dummies and amazing skills; in other words, a fascinating glimpse of how the future of world football is shaping up.

While the format has changed, the spirit of togetherness and friendship which defines the Meridian Cup remains in place. For example, as in the past, the players from both squads will stay at the same hotel, where they will be able to make new friends and enrich their personal development. Baba Sakho, who led the African delegation at the last edition of the competition, said concerning the Meridian programme as a whole: *"I have never witnessed any form of racism since the project was launched. On the contrary, it brings people together and helps them forge links with each other. However, it is important that this spirit is strengthened further, since racism is simply the fear of other cultures. If people are open-minded and ready to embrace others, racism will disappear."*

In order that the spectators can also play their part by supporting the players on both sides, they will each receive a bandana and a match programme. These souvenirs will be cherished by the thousands of Catalan school-children who have been invited to attend this great occasion.

Present on the field of play, fraternity and respect will also no doubt be apparent during the technical conference being organised in parallel. Bringing together one national youth team coach from each of the 52 UEFA and 53 CAF member associations, this inaugural conference will focus on the development of elite youth players and on various current trends. Theoretical content will be combined with observation of training sessions of the FC Barcelona youth team, visits to the stadium for the Meridian Cup matches and discussion forums.

In other words, the stage is set for a wonderful celebration and fruitful discussions, and all of this in the year when CAF is celebrating its golden jubilee!



Some exciting football is on the cards in Barcelona.

UEFA



Jim Boyce presented the fair play trophies to Gerard Piqué, captain of Spain's Under-19s (left) and Björn Kopplin, captain of Germany's Under-17s.

UEFA-pjwoods.ch



UEFA-pjwoods.ch



Report from Brussels

UEFA has made significant progress in its efforts to improve the EU's proposals for a new EU directive on audiovisual media services (formerly known as the 'TV without Frontiers' directive). On 13 December, the European Parliament voted on the document for the first time, and MEPs agreed on more than 150 amendments to the text proposed one year ago by the European Commission. European football will benefit from some of the changes.

For UEFA and its members, the most important part of the directive is Article 3b, which deals with short news reports on events of high public interest, including sporting fixtures. The Commission's original proposal read as follows:

1. "Member States shall ensure that, for the purposes of short news reports, broadcasters established in other Member States are not deprived of access on a fair, reasonable and non-discriminatory basis to events of high interest to the public which are transmitted by a broadcaster under their jurisdiction.
2. Short news reports may be chosen freely by the broadcasters from the transmitting broadcaster's signal with at least the identification of their source."

UEFA has argued since the beginning that Article 3b would be a case of bad regulation. At no point has the European Commission presented clear evidence of the need to regulate this area, and it has never explained how the public is in any way deprived of news. A clear majority of stakeholders, including many broadcasters and UEFA's coalition of sports federations, has

Competitions and other activities

Barcelona reach the final in Tokyo

THE CLUB WORLD CUP TOOK PLACE FOR THE THIRD TIME IN DECEMBER IN TOKYO, THE SECOND TIME IT HAD BEEN HELD THERE SINCE IT REPLACED THE EUROPEAN/SOUTH AMERICAN CUP.

FC Barcelona, who were representing Europe as UEFA Champions League title-holders, got off to a thundering start, beating America from Mexico 4-0 in the semi-finals on 14 December. The day before, SC Internacional de Porto Alegre from Brazil had had a less easy ride into the final, but still made it, to the detriment of Ahly from Egypt, who the Brazilian side beat 2-1.



Ronaldinho gives four opponents the slip in Barcelona's semi-final against America.

On 17 December, at the Yokohama stadium, the organisation and determination of the Brazilians managed to thwart every attempt of the Spanish team. Skilful on the counterattack, the South Americans bided their time before clinching the tie, with Adriano scoring the only goal of the match with less than ten minutes to go until the final whistle.

After FC São Paulo's victory last year, the trophy has returned to Brazil, making Porto Alegre the third Brazilian team to win it, Corinthians having won it in 2000, when the competition was played in Brazil in a different format.

Youth competition draws in Nyon

On 5 December, draws for the 2006/07 UEFA youth competitions were made at UEFA's headquarters in Nyon.

The men's and women's Under-19 Championships, as well as the (men's) European Under-17 Championship have reached their penultimate stage.

On the occasion of the draws, the fair play prizes for last year's competitions were presented to the captains of the winning teams, who also assisted with the draws. The prizes were won by Spain (Under-19s), France (Women's Under-19s) and Germany (Under-17s).

Under-19 elite round

Group 1: Hungary, Republic of Ireland, Germany, Bulgaria;

Group 2: Italy, Croatia, Sweden, Greece;

Group 3: England, Czech Republic, Russia, Netherlands;

Group 4: Scotland, Portugal, Turkey, Georgia;

Group 5: Spain, Norway, Iceland, Azerbaijan;

Group 6: Israel, France, Slovakia, Poland;

Group 7: Romania, Serbia, Switzerland, Denmark.

(Tournament hosts shown in bold.)

The tournaments will take place between 8 May and 6 June.

The seven group winners qualify for the final round in Austria from 16 to 27 July.

Spain are the reigning champions.

→ expressed its satisfaction with the current legal framework. At best, therefore, Article 3b would be unnecessary. At worst, it would create legal uncertainty, undermine existing arrangements, and threaten investment in sport.

After a long and hard-fought campaign, UEFA and 12 other sports federations have succeeded in



Ruth Hieronymi

encouraging MEPs to propose a number of small but important changes to the text. UEFA worked closely with Ruth Hieronymi, the German MEP in charge of the directive in the European Parliament.

The new changes to Article 3b state that short news reports should be:

- "without prejudice to existing contractual agreements between broadcasters and without undermining exclusive rights";
- used "exclusively for general news programmes";
- "without prejudice to the obligation of individual broadcasters to respect copyright legislation..."

A majority of MEPs agreed on all of these changes during the December vote in Strasbourg. The final text is by no means perfect, but it marks a real improvement on some of the earlier drafts that were in circulation.

The legislative process now moves to the Council of Ministers, where the 27 EU member states are represented. National culture ministers have been discussing the same text of the directive, including Article 3b, since the summer of 2006. They aim to reach their own agreement on the directive by May. At that point, it will be clear how far apart the positions of the European Parliament and Council are, and how much work remains to be done to agree on the final text of the directive.

In the first few weeks of 2007, the UEFA administration will be visiting key ministry officials in several member states and doing its utmost to improve the Council text so that European sports rights-holders are properly protected.



UEFA-plwoods.ch

The draws were made in the auditorium at UEFA's headquarters.

Under-17 elite round

Group 1: *Germany, Republic of Ireland, Greece, Scotland;*

Group 2: *Ukraine, Italy, Slovakia, Czech Republic;*

Group 3: *England, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Azerbaijan;*

Group 4: *Netherlands, Turkey, Wales, Belarus;*

Group 5: *France, Hungary, Norway, Finland;*

Group 6: *Portugal, Northern Ireland, Russia, Iceland;*

Group 7: *Spain, Poland, Switzerland, Sweden.*

The tournaments will take place between 21 and 31 March.

The seven group winners go through to the final round in Belgium from 2 to 13 May.

Russia are the reigning champions.

Women's Under-19 second qualifying round

Group 1: *England, Czech Republic, Austria, Ukraine;*

Group 2: *France, Republic of Ireland, Netherlands, Portugal;*

Group 3: *Germany, Scotland, Sweden, Hungary;*

Group 4: *Norway, Denmark, Belgium, Romania;*

Group 5: *Wales, Finland, Poland, Russia;*

Group 6: *Spain, Switzerland, Italy, Serbia.*

The tournaments will take place between 10 and 15 April.

The six group winners as well as the best runners-up (determined based on the results of the group runners-up against the respective group winners and



Susanne Erlandsson, vice-chairman of the Women's Football Committee, presents the fair play trophy to Caroline Pizzala, captain of France's women's Under-19 team.

third-placed teams) go through to the final round in Iceland from 18 to 29 July.

Germany are the reigning champions.

UEFA on show in Marseilles

As a partner of the Foot&Co football fair, UEFA was again present at the event held in Marseilles on 8, 9 and 10 December. In an area devoted entirely to the presentation of its activities, UEFA illustrated its commitment to the promotion and development of European football.

An exhibition gave the 21,000 visitors the opportunity to relive the 50 years of the European Champion Clubs' Cup and UEFA Champions League. The UEFA Champions League trophy was also on display.



The UEFA stand at the fair in Marseilles.

Alongside, the different actions taken by UEFA to combat doping and racism were also explained, as were its assistance programmes, its dialogue with the European Commission in favour of the specific development of sport, and its vision for football for the next decade.

A special area was devoted to UEFA's anti-doping programme. A video showing a doping test, leaflets, posters and other documents were distributed. Visitors were also invited to take part in an anti-doping quiz, an interactive game in which they could test their knowledge and win a prize.



Lennart Johansson signs the visitors' book.



Grigoriy Surkis, president of the Ukrainian FA, holds the symbolic key to the new headquarters.

New headquarters for the Ukrainian FA

Inauguration of the House of Football

29 NOVEMBER 2006 WAS THE DATE OF THE OFFICIAL INAUGURATION

BY THE UKRAINIAN FA (FFU) OF A HOUSE OF FOOTBALL WHICH FORMS PART OF THE FFU TRAINING COMPLEX NAMED AFTER VICTOR M. BANNIKOV.

The project has been realised with financial assistance from UEFA and FIFA under the HatTrick and Goal programmes respectively, as well as with domestic investments.

Attending the festivities on the occasion of the inauguration were the elite of Europe's footballing leadership, as represented top FIFA and UEFA officials and managers, as well as national politicians, public figures and former football celebrities. On a lovely autumn day, the FFU's new headquarters were inaugurated by highly esteemed guests such as the UEFA president, Lennart Johansson; the FIFA general secretary, Urs Linsi; UEFA Executive Committee member Michel Platini; and representatives of 32 UEFA member associations, mostly from eastern Europe.

Among those who also graced the event with their presence were top-ranking Ukrainian government officials, a spokesman for Ukraine's supreme council (parliament), the A and Under-21 national coaches, Oleg Blokhin and Oleksiy Mykhailychenko, as well as Valeriy Lobanovskyi's wife, Adelaida Pankratiyivna, and his daughter Svitlana.

Impressive architecture

All the guests were well impressed by the architecture of the building. The UEFA president stressed in particular that UEFA's operational principles lay in all of its members adopting best practices. *"We all can take the Ukrainian House of Football as an example,"* he told media representatives. And one can hardly doubt the sincerity of his words.

The House of Football is a five-storey, self-sufficient building equipped with a heating and air-conditioning system of its own. Up-to-date facing and building materials have been used for its construction. There are 250 work places in all. There are five express lifts, two of which command a panoramic view of the Olympic national sports complex.

The building features four conference halls with computer facilities, screens and overhead projectors, and two of the halls are also fitted out with state-of-the-art simultaneous interpreting equipment. All rooms and auditoriums in the building are equipped with ad and info data display systems.

Using its four satellite dishes, the television studio can concurrently make a

digital video recording from eight TV channels. The archived video information content totals two Tbytes. Each office can boast sets capable of picking up standard analogue and digital closed-circuit telecasts alike.

The computer and television networks were designed and installed by INCOM. The in-house digital mini-printing office can satisfy the FFU's needs in printing graphic art material. It is equipped with digital colour and black-and-white printing machines. In front of the building there is a fountain and a car park for 100 vehicles.

On the second floor are the offices of the FFU's six standing committees and five affiliated associations. In front of the panoramic lift, in the hall, is an FFU football museum with football artefacts, trophies, photos and a visitors' book. Also situated here is the main boardroom with 181 seats, a 16-seater meeting room, and the departments that take care of the vital activities and development of the FFU: Planning & Finance, Administration & Planning, Sports Event Management and FFU Infrastructure Development, as well as the International Affairs department, whose task is to maintain communication with UEFA and FIFA.

Valery Nikonenko



The new building has office space for 250 people.

AUSTRIA



Plenty of highlights for football fans in 2007!

The year before EURO 2008 is staged in Austria and Switzerland will be full of highlights for Austrian football enthusiasts. In December, the Austrian FA (ÖFB) announced some prestigious friendly matches in preparation for the event of the century. The national team coached by Josef Hickersberger will host Ghana, who reached the last 16 of the World Cup and include Chelsea superstar Mickael Essien, in Graz on 24 March, before facing World Cup finalists France in Paris a few days later. The Scottish "Tartan Army" will visit Vienna at the end of May, while Innsbruck's Tivoli stadium will host a match against Chelsea star Didier Drogba and his Côte d'Ivoire colleagues on 17 October. The red and whites will play a total of 12 matches in 2007. It remains to be seen whether further attractive opponents such as Germany and the Netherlands (both former European champions will play in Austria in early 2008) can be secured for additional friendlies.

The ÖFB has also strengthened its staff team in preparation for the European Championship. The new deputy general secretary, Reinhard Nachbagaer, former chairman of the Austrian Bundesliga, is a real expert. Another two qualified staff members, Stefan Illek and Claudia Pekar, have also been recruited to take responsibility for the ÖFB's communications relating to the various EURO 2008 themes from January 2007.

Incidentally, Austria will experience the excitement of a European Championship in 2007, since the European Under-19 Championship final round will be held in Linz, Steyr, Ried and Pasching from 16 to 27 July.

Peter Klinglmüller



Didier Drogba and his Côte d'Ivoire team-mates have a match lined up in Austria.

AZERBAIJAN



New year present for Azerbaijani football

The FA of Azerbaijan moved from the office it had been renting since summer 2004 to its brand-new headquarters during the first weekend of December.

UEFA and FIFA offered a great deal of support to the project and the leadership of the association is most grateful to both organisations for their generous assistance.

The association's new headquarters is a modern five-storey building. Every department has separate, comfortably furnished offices fully equipped with the latest information and telecommunication technologies, including a separate internet line for fast access. The rooms are large, light and air-conditioned. In short, the new building has everything that the FA of Azerbaijan needs for better efficiency, and is the best present it could have hoped for as it starts the new year.

Ravil Asadov



The new headquarters of the FA of Azerbaijan.

BELARUS



2006 closing ceremony

The Belarus FA has a good tradition of holding a ceremony to close the football season at the end of the year. At this great gathering, the best footballers, coaches, referees and others are rewarded.

The event is not, however, just a review of the past season and an awards ceremony. First of all, it is a football celebration for those who worked hard during the year for the welfare of our favourite sport; it is a friendly get-together where one-time rivals on the pitch can raise a glass of champagne and discuss problems as friends, or just joke, laugh and enjoy themselves.

It is a large-scale event that requires a similar level of organisation to put on a



Gennady Nevyglas, president of the Belarus FA, presents Lldia Hleb with the prize awarded to her son, Alexandr.

performance by a Belarusian pop star, specially prepared documentaries about football and a fabulous laser show, which delighted the audience and earned their enthusiastic applause.

As far as the awards go, Igor Kriushenko, coach of league champions BATE Borisov was named Belarusian coach of the year, while the best three footballers of Belarus were Alexandr Hleb (Arsenal FC, London), followed by Sergey Kornilenko (FC Dnipro, Ukraine) and Alexandr Kulchij (FC Tom, Russia).

Siarhei Novysh

BELGIUM



New general secretary appointed

A new general secretary was elected at the headquarters of the Belgian Football Association (URBSFA) on 22 December. The election was held to find a replacement for Jean-Paul Houben, who has decided to leave the URBSFA on 31 August. A profile had been drawn up for his successor and the successful candidate had to meet numerous criteria, including the need for charisma, to be a good communicator and, if possible, to know how the URBSFA functions and be able to develop good relations with UEFA and FIFA. A to-



Jean-Paul Houben (left) in discussion with his successor, Jean-Marie Philips.

tal of 15 applications were received before the deadline of 30 November and an initial selection process whittled these down to five candidates, who were finally separated in an Executive Committee vote in which Jean-Marie Philips came out on top. The current vice-chairman of UEFA's Professional Football Committee, director general of the Belgian professional

football league and fourth vice-president of the URBSFA, Philips is keen to serve the Belgian FA to the best of his abilities: *"The federation wants to develop its departments. I will particularly deal with those I know best: the legal and administrative departments."* His plans form part of the Strategic Committee's vision for the reform of the URBSFA.

His appointment is a crowning moment for this 62-year old trained lawyer, whose work for the Belgian professional football league has been widely commended. One of his main achievements was to conclude a contract that was highly lucrative by Belgian standards with the "Belgacom TV" channel, covering the rights to televise the Belgian first division from the 2005/06 season for a three-year period.

Jean-Marie Philips will work alongside the current general secretary, Jean-Paul Houben, from 1 April before officially replacing him on 1 September. Initially, he will act as general secretary of the URBSFA, but will later become its chief executive – following the pattern already set by UEFA – when the regulations have been amended as necessary.

Pierre Cornez



The historic general meeting of 21 December.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA



Constitution adopted

At an extraordinary general meeting held on 21 December at the Zetra Olympic hall in Sarajevo, the new constitution of the Football Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FF BHZ) was adopted, in conformity with FIFA and UEFA standards. The constitution came into force within eight days of its adoption. The entity federations (NS FBH and FS RS) have until 30 June to adapt their constitutions to the new FF BHZ constitution.

Out of 60 regular delegates for a FF BHZ general meeting, 54 were present, 35 from the NS FBH and 19 from the FF RS. All voted unanimously in favour of the constitution. Therefore, 21 December will go down as a very significant date for the development of football in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

"The new FF BHZ constitution will certainly contribute to better work in our football organisation and demonstrates the unity of our federation. On the basis of this constitution, we can rapidly improve our work and set obligations for all levels and committees within the FF BHZ."

I would like to thank FIFA and UEFA for understanding our problems in changing the constitution and for finding solutions with us. We overcame all our misunderstandings, and to the satisfaction of all of us in Bosnia and Herzegovina football, as well as our guests, not only did we manage to adopt a new FF BHZ constitution, but we also did so by 31 December 2006, which was the deadline set by UEFA and FIFA," said Milan Jelic, FF BHZ president.

FIFA expressed its satisfaction at a press conference after the extraordinary general meeting:

"By adopting this constitution, the FF BHZ leadership now has the legal framework for good and efficient work and therefore results. However, most importantly, the constitution also makes room for the development of football as a whole, and not only the national team. Now football will be closer to all levels of society and to people of all ages."

The UEFA delegation also expressed its satisfaction with the outcome: *"We have been working with your federation for ten years, and are really pleased that we brought our attitudes closer together and adopted this constitution. We have made a significant turning point by adopting this constitution, and turned another page in the development of football in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Therefore, today is a historic day for football in Bosnia and Herzegovina. There were many delays in getting the constitution completed, but now we can all take a sigh of relief, as we got there in the end and in time. The new constitution is a concrete, solid and permanent basis for building a stable organisation. Once we have developed the inner workings of the federation, then everything will be in place. UEFA and FIFA are there to help the FF BHZ in the future and to act like a family."*

After calling for applications for a new head coach for the national team, the FF BHZ executive board appointed Fuad Muzurovic (1945), who has already served in this capacity, having been the first ever head coach, from 1992 to 1998. His successors were Dzermaludin Musovic (1998-99), Faruk Hadzibegic (1999), Drago Miso Smajlovic (2000-01) and Blaz Sliskovic (2002-06).

Fuad Krvac

CROATIA



Third term for Vlatko Markovic

On 16 December, the Croatian Football Federation held an elective general meeting. The four-year report on the work of the executive committee and other bodies confirms that Croatian football has made significant progress in all areas. The number of clubs and players, especially youth women's and futsal club players, referees, coaches and football officials has increased. Major changes to the competition system have produced good results, especially the restructuring of the second division and separation of the third division into three groups. As a result, the competition system is now fully compatible. Stadium conditions, as well as training facilities, have been improved through the application of the club licensing regulations. In fruitful cooperation with UEFA, the football academy of the Croatian Football Federation is achieving good results. In addition to the many coaches who have qualified at amateur level, 65 coaches recently acquired the UEFA Pro coaching licence. The general meeting also paid special attention to the further development of grassroots football.

However, the crowning glory has been the results of the Croatian national "A" team. The rejuvenated "A" team, with a young new technical staff, led by head coach Slaven Bilic, performed excellently in their first EURO 2008 qualifying matches. We also have high hopes for the Under-19 team, which will play in the elite round mini-tournament of the European Under-19 Championship.

The president of the Croatian Football Federation, Vlatko Markovic, formerly an excellent player and international, a very successful coach and head coach, has be- →

→ come the longest serving president of the federation. After two terms already in office, he will be leading the Croatian Football Federation for a third four-year term. The applause from the floor was a sign of acknowledgment and appreciation for his successful management of the federation. Vlatko Marković's excellent leadership of the bid to co-host EURO 2012 with the Football Federation of Hungary is greatly appreciated. He has received unanimous support for this project from the Croatian parliament and government, the entire Croatian public and all those involved in this complex project. He is also active at UEFA and FIFA levels, as chairman of the UEFA Technical Development Committee and a member of the FIFA Goal Bureau.

We are certain that the new executive committee, consisting of 21 members headed by Vlatko Markovic, will accomplish high objectives in the further development of Croatian football.

Ante Pavlovic



Vlatko Markovic, president of the Croatian FA, addresses the meeting after his re-election.

FINLAND



Centenary year gets under way

The FA of Finland (SPL) began its centenary year as 2007 got under way, with celebrations planned throughout the year.

The first festivities were arranged by the Uusimaa district. All 12 SPL districts will hold their regional celebrations one after another. The regional events are characterised by rewarding local volunteers and club personnel with different commemorative badges. The flagship is the diamond badge for volunteers who have worked within the football family for at least 50 years. There is also a gold badge (25 years) and silver badge (10 years), as well as a regular badge for everyone with at least two years' experience.

The SPL's national main reception will be held in Helsinki on 19 May. On the same day in 1907, the SPL was founded around the corner from the building where the main reception will be taking place. The main international reception



Pecca Hämäläinen, president of the SPL, opens the centenary celebrations.

will take place on 18 September, also in Helsinki.

The centenary will also be commemorated by the issue of a special stamp in March, a UEFA grassroots seminar in April and a centenary book, which was released in mid-January. The Finnish Broadcasting Company (YLE) will also show a centenary documentary film at the time of the main national reception in May.

Sami Terävi

ENGLAND



Football to tackle social problems

England head coach Steve McClaren was given a glimpse of the work being done by FA Community Workers as part of The FA HatTrick Programme when he visited Foredyke Primary School in Hull in January.

Foredyke Primary School is one of the schools within the New Deal Community (NDC) in Hull, which is typical of many estates up and down the country and falls in the top two per cent of the index of multiple deprivation.

In March 2005, The FA secured £4.5 million partnership funding from the Government and UEFA to fund 19 new Community Football Workers as part of a three-year regeneration scheme, using football to tackle a wide range of social problems.

The role of the local football officers is to provide football opportunities for young people aged between seven and 16 as well as helping to develop leaders and coaches amongst adults within the community.

"Without the funding that The FA secured from UEFA and Government, I wouldn't be doing this job," said Graham Turner, who is an FA Community Worker from Hull.

"We're using football as a tool to get kids off the streets but also to get adults onto Level 1 coaching courses. Those adults can then help as volunteers so in future the project sustains itself."

GEORGIA



"New Year Without Drugs" tournament

A tournament under the slogan of "New Year Without Drugs" was organised by the Georgian Football Federation (GFF) and the fan club of the Georgian national team from 15 to 19 December. Seven companies helped finance the event, in which 12 amateur teams from 12 different organisations took part. The winners were the team from the Telliani Valley. The tournament received good media coverage both on television and in the press. It was also supported and covered by the GFF's official website at www.gff.ge.

At the end of the tournament, awards were made to the best player, goalkeeper and top scorer, who were also given membership of the Georgian national team fan club.



Back to school for Steve McClaren.

England coach McClaren was impressed by the work of The FA HatTrick programme and added: "Since I've been at The FA it's been amazing to learn just how much development work goes on at all levels of the game."

"Football has a unique opportunity to involve people from all backgrounds. As well as keeping you fit and healthy, you can make friends who could become friends for life."

The project is typical of The FA's football development work which sees £30 million a year invested into the grassroots of the game.

Nada Grkinic

The GFF is committed to the key aims of UEFA's HatTrick assistance programme. In commemoration of UEFA's golden jubilee, the federation received one million Swiss francs for the construction of 70 mini-pitches and 11 larger ones in different parts of the country. All the installations will be complete in summer 2007. In addition, one of the GFF's regional offices is already finished, while the other three will be ready soon.

Sandro Tsnobiladze

GERMANY



Integration officer appointed

The leadership of the German Football Association (DFB) has appointed 43-year old Gül Keskinler as the association's new integration officer, who joins the DFB executive committee in an advisory capacity, as well as the task force set up to combat violence, xenophobia and racism.

Istanbul-born Gül Keskinler, who moved to Germany in 1970, said after her appointment:

"This new responsibility is a great opportunity not only for me, but also for the DFB and for the social development that we want to promote together. The DFB has the potential to make a huge impact and to set an example for other groups in society."



After completing further studies in personnel and organisational development, she founded the agency "Interkulturelles KompetenzTeam" (Intercultural Skills Team) in Bergisch Gladbach in 2001.

Since then, she has been involved in various projects in Germany and abroad and, on the basis of her diverse experience, she was invited to the integration summit organised by Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel in July 2006. Since 2003, for example, Gül Keskinler has worked for the Hessian Ministry for the Interior and Sport under the sponsorship of Hessen's regional sports federation as project manager for the initiative entitled "Start – Sport überspringt kulturelle Hürden" (Start – sport clears cultural hurdles), which was awarded the Hessian integration prize in spring 2005.

One particular focus of her involvement in society and sport is support for female migrants. The proposal to appoint Gül Keskinler as the new DFB integration officer was also supported by the Turkish community in Germany.

Maximilian Geis

LATVIA



Players of the centenary announced

Latvia's footballers of the year 2006 were announced at a gala night on 22 December, at which the centenary of Latvian football was also celebrated. The best player of 2006 was Aleksandrs Kolinko (Rubin Kazan). The best 11 players of the whole century were also named, eight of them strikers. They are Eriks Petersons (Latvian international in the 1920s); Alfons Jegers, Georgs Smirnovs and Gunars Ulmanis (from the 1960s); Aleksandrs Starkovs and Jevgenijs Milevskis (1980s); and current players Aleksandrs Kolinko, Igrs Stepanovs, Vitalijs Astafjevs, Maris Verpakovskis and Marians Pahars.

Some of the words of congratulation from partners of the Latvian Football Federation (LFF) were very entertaining. Valdis Siksnis, president of the Latvian branch of the Nordea Bank Finland Plc, presented a telescope for looking into the future of Latvian football, while the speech of Juris Binde, president of Latvijas Mobilais Telefons (LMT), was interrupted by a scantily clad girl holding up a poster saying "LVL 450,000 secret sponsorship deal between LMT and LFF". Jurgis Ozolins, adidas manager for the Baltics, spoke of his company's great partnership with Latvian football and looked forward to a future built on the very successful past cooperation with the LFF.

On New Year's Eve, the Nordik publishing house released a commemorative book on "100 years of Latvian Football" ("Latvijas Futbolam 100"). It follows on from the book published in 2000 on the history of football in Latvia and covers events from 2000 until 2005, including EURO 2004, among other events. Naturally, a good part is devoted to the beginning of the centenary. The whole work is illustrated with unique photographs, autographs and other previously unpublished material. The comprehensive statistics section has been updated. However, Latvia's participation in EURO 2004 takes pride of place in the book, accompanied by colour photos.

2007 started with international striker Maris Verpakovskis making his debut for Spanish side Getafe and defender Kaspars Gorkss for Blackpool in England, while Andrejs Prohorenkovs, long-time partner of Maris Verpakovskis up front in the national



team, has gone to Racing in Spain for six months. The LFF also organised a 50th birthday party for head coach Juris Andrejevs on 16 January, attended by LFF officials, employees, media and club representatives and others wanting to congratulate him on his half-century.

Martins Hartmanis

LIECHTENSTEIN



New national coach

After Martin Andermatt left the Liechtenstein Football Association in mid-October after two and a half years' service, the LFV had to find his successor. The new national coach would also take on the role of technical director. Just before Christmas, the association's president, Reinhard Walser, presented new national coach, Hans-Peter Zaugg, to the media. "Zaugg was the man we wanted," said the president at the press conference.

"Bidu" Zaugg can look back on a successful career in which he has worked in various fields in and around football. His playing career began at Bümpliz Bern, before he represented the first team of Neuchâtel Xamax for five years in the Swiss national A league. After a further three years at B league club FC Bern, he was forced to retire prematurely because of injury.

He then coached various clubs and spent ten years as a coach for the Swiss Football Association. He also helped to develop the Swiss FA's youth strategy – the success of the Swiss youth teams in recent years speaks for itself. In 2001 he led Grasshoppers to the championship title and was named coach of the year in Switzerland. Zaugg's most recent post was as sporting director for Neuchâtel Xamax.

In January 2007, he began a three-year non-terminable contract with the LFV. The new national coach is being realistic when he says it will not be easy "to be successful and win a number of matches". He also spoke about medium- and long-term objectives. He would particularly like to raise the level of young players through more intensive youth coaching.

Judith Frommelt



Reinhard Walser presents Hans-Peter Zaugg with a Liechtenstein shirt.

LUXEMBOURG



Paul Philipp re-elected as president

A successful year for the Luxembourg FA ended with the first appearance of the women's national team in an official UEFA competition. The preliminary round mini-tournament hosted by Luxembourg in November in the European Women's Championship attracted a surprising amount of media attention in advance of the event, in which Luxembourg beat Malta and drew against Lithuania to finish second in the group behind Slovakia.

A month earlier, on 21 October, the 88th ordinary general meeting of the association was held in Esch/Alzette in conjunction with the centenary of Luxembourg's first football club, CS Fola Esch. The meeting saw Paul Philipp re-elected as president for a further four-year term.

Hosting the final round of the European Under-17 Championship from 3 to 14 May was definitely one of the



Luxembourg v Slovakia in one of the qualifying tournaments for the 2007-2009 European Women's Championship.

highlights of the association to date. Attracting over 20,000 spectators, the tournament, which ended in victory for Russia, was a superb advertisement for football.

We are also happy to report that agreement was reached with various district councils to construct 32 mini-pitches as part of UEFA's HatTrick programme. The programme can be classed as a great success, as many other districts have now taken the initiative to build mini-pitches in the near future.

Ahead of the association's centenary in 2008, its leaders are at any rate now well equipped to take on new challenges and to further boost the public image of the Luxembourg FA.

Joël Wolff

NORTHERN IRELAND



Success of the grassroots week

Sean Paul Murray, Grassroots Development Officer for North & East Belfast, recently received official recognition from UEFA for the 'most valuable grassroots football event in 2006'.

The evening soccer tournament took place in Belfast during the traditionally tense 'July Week' and was organised by Sean Paul Murray, Norman McNarry of the George Best Foundation and the local parish priest, Father Aidan Troy, with the aim of providing constructive and enjoyable activity for young people in the Ardoyne area of Belfast.

In partnership with the Ardoyne Marrowbone Community Empowerment Partnership and the North Belfast Interface Network, months of preparation and organisation went into the competition. This paid off when over 300 people of all ages turned up on the first evening to take part. There were three age groups (14-16, 16-18 and 18+) within the competition and a donation was made to the George Best Foundation from the registration fees.



Sean Paul Murray receives the UEFA award.

Sean Paul said:

"I was overjoyed with the huge success of the tournament. It was a very enjoyable evening for all involved. Being recognised by UEFA just goes to highlight the need for such a worthwhile event. It was an extremely worthwhile venture for all parties – football, the community, and the George Best Foundation – and I hope the success will continue for many more years to come."

This initiative attracted wide interest and very positive coverage from local press, TV and radio. Certainly the Ardoyne area, in general, enjoyed a more peaceful week than in previous years and it is to be hoped that the provision of alternative, enjoyable activity may have contributed to this.

Such was the success of this first competition that plans are already being made to repeat it next July, and hopefully for years to come. Great credit is due to Sean Paul and all those who put so much hard

MALTA



Fifty years of international football

24 February 1957 is a special day in the annals of Maltese football. It marks the international debut of the national team. The occasion was Malta's friendly match against Austria, played in front of a then record crowd of 17,421 Maltese supporters, who thronged the old Empire Stadium in Gzira to give their wholehearted backing to their team.

The narrow 3-2 home defeat for tiny Malta, which caused a stir in the world of

football in those days, is now part of the island's football folklore and a prominent chapter in the history of the Maltese game.

Half a century on and 283 international 'A' matches later – spanning ups and downs and culminating in Malta's 2-1 home victory over Hungary in a EURO 2008 qualifier last October – the Malta FA is commemorating the 50th anniversary of this special day with a programme of activities in February, principally during the first week of the month.

The top attraction is a friendly match between Malta and Austria, who will be on the island for a training camp. Many members of the Malta team in 1957 will be guests of honour in the crowd.

Other activities to mark this landmark anniversary are an exhibition on the development of football in Malta, the unveiling of a commemorative plaque, a competition for students and a reception to which all Maltese players forming part of the national team over the years have been invited. A commemorative booklet has also been published.

Indeed, since those days, and even as early as 107 years ago, when the Malta FA was founded, Maltese football administrators have striven to uphold Malta's name in the world of football.

In the words of the association's president, Joseph Mifsud, this has always been done with 'pride, dignity and honour'.

Alex Vella



Andre Schembri (right), who scored two goals against Hungary, with his grandfather, Savinu Schembri, who captained Malta in the 1950s, and Eric Schembri, another former Maltese international.

work into this project. Such positive co-operation among bodies such as Belfast City Council, the clergy, the George Best Foundation and local community groups is an example of the good work which can be achieved through the IFA's grassroots programme.

Caroline Menary

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND



Twelve clubs for the Premier Division

History was made recently when a motion to complete the transfer of control of national league football in Ireland to the Football Association of Ireland (FAI) was passed at an extraordinary general meeting of the association.

All the National League clubs came under the scrutiny of the Independent Assessment Group, which was chaired by former UEFA vice-president Des Casey. It selected the 12 clubs to be given positions in the top division, with the remaining ten forming the lower division.

The 22 clubs which took part in the process were ranked on the basis of points scored as a result of their achievements over the past five seasons on the pitch and how they measured up against specific criteria covering areas such as infrastructure, governance, strategic planning, finance, youth development and marketing.

The 12 clubs selected for the 2007 Premier Division are: Bohemians, Bray Wanderers, Cork City, Derry City, Drogheda United, Galway United, Longford Town, St Patrick's Athletic, Shamrock Rovers, Shelbourne, Sligo Rovers and UCD.

■ Former National League player and Professional Footballers Association of Ireland (PFAI) chief executive Fran Gavin has been appointed director of the eircom League of Ireland. The association has also recruited ex-Cork City, Limerick and Shamrock Rovers goalkeeper Noel Mooney for the new position of National Club Promotions Officer.

Fran Gavin has ambitions to see the eircom League of Ireland become a full-time professional set-up and is acutely aware from his role with the players' union that the league has numerous off-field problems to address. However, he feels that the recent changeover that places the league under the full control of the FAI can help eradicate those issues.

Noel Mooney has taken up the challenge of increasing attendances at National League matches. Last season, there were an average of 12,000 spectators going to matches, but the FAI is looking to increase that figure to 30,000 over the next few years.



The Setanta Cup was on show at the draw in Dublin.

■ The draw for this year's Setanta Sports Cup was made in Dublin recently and it has pitted 2005 winners Linfield and FAI Cup and League Cup holders Derry City together in the same group for the second successive year.

The Setanta Sports Cup is a club football competition featuring teams from both football associations on the island of Ireland. It was inaugurated in 2005 as a cross-border competition between clubs from the eircom League of Ireland in the Republic of Ireland and the Irish Premier League from Northern Ireland.

The competition features four teams from each league, namely the winners and runners-up of the respective leagues; the winners of the respective major cup competitions, the FAI Cup, and the Irish Cup; and the winners of the respective secondary cup competitions, the eircom League Cup and the Northern Ireland League Cup.

Speaking at the draw, the chief executive of Setanta Sports Ireland, Niall Cogley, announced that Setanta Sports has extended its sponsorship of the tournament. The current deal, which started in 2005, is worth EUR 1.6m over four years. The new deal will run from 2009 to 2012.

Fran Whearty

SLOVENIA



New corporate identity

After 13 years, the FA of Slovenia has revamped its corporate identity and the look of its national teams. The hope is that the new feel will help create more interest and both fan and corporate support as it will be the cornerstone of all future marketing campaigns.

The old visual identity existed only in horizontal configurations, which were not appropriate for a football environment, and the crest on the national team jerseys did not feature any national symbol. Therefore, the association's marketing department invited the design partners of the FA's sponsors to the pitch and got some very interesting proposals. As one of the main ideas was to present the

Slovenian association as young and ambitious, the expert committee led by Ranko Novak chose the somewhat innovative proposal of the Futura DDB agency.

The new logo, which is an open form, stylizes part of a ball, with the aim of presenting Slovenian football as dynamic on every level. The national team crest, which will be embroidered on official jerseys, also includes the Slovenian coat of arms, which makes a link between the players on the field and the fans, who prefer to use the Slovenian flag in the stands. Starting with this year's first friendly against Estonia, the Slovenian national team will play their matches in kits supplied by new technical sponsor Nike featuring the new crest, and Slovenian fans hope that the new look might contribute to better performances by the team in the remainder of the qualifying competition for EURO 2008.

Uros Stanic

SWEDEN



Big investment for the elite

Keeping up with international competition has proven increasingly difficult for the Swedish (men's) clubs over the past decade. Sweden has not been represented in the UEFA Champions League since the days of Helsingborg in 2000/01 and the UEFA Cup merits have not been much to write home about either lately. In the Allsvenskan league, an increased number of player imports is reducing the space for local talent.

In the end, this trend may threaten the as yet so successful national team. Swedish football is therefore now making a strong endeavour for its elite by investing some EUR 6.7 million over the coming four years, the heaviest investment ever made in a single footballing project nationally.

The venture comprises several parts, from measures to strengthen the clubs' activities, and the sharing of the elite experiences with more clubs, to new appointments. Twelve national coaching instructors (NCI) have been selected for coach education and support to regional coach and player education. The NCIs are the hub of this venture, also interacting with the 48 district instructors (two each in the FA's 24 districts, one for men's and one for women's football). Ten of the NCIs will therefore be based regionally, while two will have positions at the FA's headquarters. All 12 have prior coaching experience as well as education at top level and were picked from some 80 qualified applicants. Another integral part of this elite project is the reformed and expanded coach education system launched in January 2007.



Malin Moström has retired from international football.

Parallel to the elite project, Swedish football will also introduce a home-grown players' rule for the 2007 season, whereby at least seven of the 16 players on the team sheet (in the top divisions) must have been registered with a Swedish club for three years between the ages of 15 and 21 (irrespective of nationality).

Midfielder and women's national team skipper Malin Moström has announced her retirement from football at the age of 31. National team coach Thomas Dennerby will miss Moström's renowned deep raids and tremendous working capacity at this summer's World Cup finals:

"It is a big loss for women's football, the team and her club. She is a great model as a player with her attitude to preparation and enthusiastic style of play."

Moström has earned 113 caps (21 goals), won the UEFA Women's Cup with Umeå twice, and been runner-up with Sweden in both the 2001 European Women's Championship and the 2003 World Cup."

Thomas Saletog

SWITZERLAND



Fair play and anti-violence agreement

At the initiative of the president of the Swiss Football Association (SFV), Ralph Zloczower, all clubs affiliated to the SFV were asked to sign a "fair play and anti-violence agreement" at the beginning of this year.

Having noticed a decline in levels of respect and fairness on our football pitches in recent years, the SFV hopes to use every possible means to combat unfairness and violence in organised football. The SFV and the regional associations took the first steps in this direction years ago through initiatives such as the fair play competition, fair play trophy and "be tolerant" matches. However, it became clear that

these measures alone were not sufficient. A working group chaired by Technical Director Hansruedi Hasler therefore proposed additional preventive and repressive measures for grassroots football.

An immediate measure is the SFV's plan to conclude a "fair play and anti-violence agreement" with all clubs. Under the agreement, club officials are obliged to take action against any player, coach, official or spectator who flouts the fair play principle or acts in a violent manner.

Various other measures that were also suggested to the SFV directors will enter into force at the start of the 2007/08 season. These are mainly aimed at grassroots football. The most prominent proposals concern the consistent use of the pre- and post-match handshake, the appointment of fair play observers in each regional association, the organisation of match observation procedures, the summoning of players or club officials guilty of repeat offences and heavier punishments (point deductions) for serious misconduct.

Pierre Benoit



Fair play and respect for the opponent are taught from the very start.

TURKEY



Football villages

The Turkish Football Association (TFA) is creating football villages for children. Through this project, it plans to host children for a month at a time and help them further their education with the help of football.

Last month, Turkish national coach Fatih Terim and Gunduz Tekin Onay, head of research, planning, education and development with the TFA, visited the city of Van, close to the eastern border, and looked at two sites where villages are going to be built.

Each village will welcome 100 children from all over Turkey every month who will receive training from Turkish FA coaches.

The TFA's aim is to create an opportunity for children to share the same goal and receive education with the help of

football for a month. The project, which is fully supported by the community and the media, will certainly be an unforgettable experience for the children attending.

Ilker Ugur



Fatih Terim is working to create football villages.

WALES



Welsh Assembly Government/FAW

An excellent meeting took place in December between Alun Pugh, Minister for Culture, Welsh Language and Sport, and Jon Beynon, Senior Sport Policy Adviser, Welsh Assembly Government, Peter Rees, President of the FA of Wales (FAW), and David Collins, General Secretary of the FAW.

The meeting covered a wide range of topics, including the Independent European Sport Review, the Charleroi case, Wales hosting the UEFA Cup final at a future date, the FAW national training facility, Wales making a joint bid to host a future European Football Championship final round, Wrexham Racecourse Stadium and the Welsh Assembly review of football.

During the meeting, the FAW general secretary was able to inform the minister that the FAW council had ratified the new FAW Welsh language policy. The minister expressed his appreciation of this policy and also said that the FAW had made a very positive move forward by recognising the Welsh language, and welcomed the fact that the FAW would support staff in learning or improving their Welsh language skills.

After the meeting, the FAW secretary general said: *"This was an excellent meeting, with frank and open views expressed on both sides. It was very pleasing for both sides to see that we were in agreement on every subject. I am delighted to say that both sides recognise the support that each party makes to football in Wales. The Welsh Assembly Government and the Football Association of Wales will make every effort to continue this excellent dialogue for the benefit of Welsh football."*

David G. Collins



Communications

Birthdays – Calendar

Birthdays

Heinz-Herbert Kreh (Germany), who belongs to the circle of former UEFA committee members, celebrates his 70th birthday on 14 February, a milestone at which referee observer Georges Konrath (France) joins him the next day. Executive Committee member Eggert Magnusson (Iceland) turns 60 on 20 February, match delegate Yusuf Namoglu (Turkey) on the 8th, technical instructor Flemming Serritslev (Denmark) on the 18th, referee observer Manfred Amerell (Germany) on the 25th and fellow German Aron Schmidhuber on the 28th. Two other referee observers reach the half-century mark in February: Dani Koren (Israel) on the 10th and Asim Khudiyev (Azerbaijan) on the 22nd. Susanne Erlandsson (Sweden), vice-chairwoman of the Women's Football Committee, celebrates her 50th birthday on 15 February. Birthday greetings are also extended to:

- Volker Roth (Germany, 1.2)
- Karen Espelund (Norway, 1.2)
- Leonardus van der Kroft (Netherlands, 2.2)
- Trygve Bornø (Norway, 2.2)
- Mark Blackburne (England, 3.2)
- Agostinho Vieira Oliveira (Portugal, 5.2)
- Nikolaos Zamboglou (Cyprus, 5.2)
- Vaclav Krondl (Czech Republic, 5.2)
- Gabriel Weiss (Slovakia, 6.2)
- Erich Rutenmüller (Germany, 8.2)
- Fino Fini (Italy, 9.2)
- Donald McVicar (Scotland, 9.2)
- Danilo Filacchione (Italy, 9.2)
- Luc Rabat (France, 10.2)
- William McDougall (Scotland, 11.2)
- Borislav Mihaylov (Bulgaria, 12.2)
- Pierluigi Collina (Italy, 13.2)
- Marinus den Engelsman (Netherlands, 14.2)
- Dieter Pauly (Germany, 14.2)
- Manuel Lopez Fernandez (Spain, 14.2)
- Peter Bonde (Denmark, 14.2)
- John McBeth (Scotland, 15.2)
- Athanassios Machairas (Greece, 15.2)
- Katriina Elovirta (Finland, 15.2)
- Svitlana Shkil (Ukraine, 15.2)
- Adalbert Kassai (Romania, 16.2)
- Jozef Venglos (Slovakia, 18.2)
- Borislav Alexandrov (Bulgaria, 18.2)

- Patrick Kelly (Republic of Ireland, 18.2)
- Pertti Alaja (Finland, 18.2)
- Anders Frisk (Sweden, 18.2)
- Janis Mezeckis (Latvia, 19.2)
- Lars Arnesson (Sweden, 20.2)
- João F. De Magalhães Marques (Portugal, 20.2)
- Ralph M. Zloczower (Switzerland, 21.2)
- Fernando Gomes (Portugal, 21.2)
- Holger Hieronymus (Germany, 22.2)
- Vladimir Sajin (Slovenia, 22.2)
- Maarten Fontein (Netherlands, 23.2)
- Peter Jones (England, 24.2)
- Miroslav Radoman (Serbia, 25.2)
- Egidius Braun (Germany, 27.2)
- Allan Hansen (Denmark, 27.2)
- Xavier Lebray (France, 27.2)
- Dino Zoff (Italy, 28.2)
- John Beattie (England, 28.2)

Upcoming events

Meetings

5-6.2.2007, Nyon

European Club Forum

5-9.2.2007, Rome

Referee courses

13.2.2007, Stockholm

Draw for the qualifying round of the 2007-09 European Under-21 Championship

19.2.2007, Nyon

Draws for the first qualifying rounds of the 2007/08 European Women's Under-19 and Under-17 Championships

22.2.2007, Nyon

Women's Football Committee

26.2-1.3.2007, Barcelona

UEFA/CAF Meridian Conference and Cup

Competitions

14-15.2.2007

UEFA Cup: round of 32 (first legs)

20-21.2.2007

UEFA Champions League: first knockout round (first legs)

22.2.2007

UEFA Cup: round of 32 (return legs)

Notices

- On 16 December, the general meeting of the Croatian FA re-elected Vlatko Markovic as its president for a further four-year term.
- Dusan Tittel has resigned as general secretary of the Slovakian FA.
- The Azerbaijani FA has moved to: 2208 Nobel prospekti 1025 Baku – Azerbaijan
- The Cypriot FA has also moved. Its new address is: 10 Achaion Street 2413 Engomi – Nicosia – Cyprus
- The Ukrainian FA can now be contacted at: 7-A Laboratornyi provulok, P.O. Box 293 03150 Kiev – Ukraine
Tel.: +380 44 521 0521 – Fax: +380 44 521 0550

Match agents

The Licensed UEFA Match Agents Panel has granted a licence to:

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It has also renewed the licence of Paul Montmartin (France) until 21 December 2014. Sunday Adepegba (England) has, however, surrendered his licence.

New publications

Taktik und Analyse im Fussball

Roland Loy had three aims in mind when he wrote these two volumes, published by Cwalina in Hamburg: to develop and analyse an observation system for the systematic registration of individual and team tactical performance in offensive and defensive football; to identify tactical performance factors in football; and to identify the differences between teams at different levels or from different leagues in terms of tactical performance. (Feldhaus Verlag GmbH & Co. KG, Postfach 730240, 22122 Hamburg, Germany. www.feldhaus-verlag.de)

Rapport annuel 2005/2006

The annual report of the Swiss FA for last season, containing technical, financial and disciplinary details, as well as competition results.

WE CARE ABOUT FOOTBALL



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