

Including



**UEFA Champions  
League pits  
north against  
south** **03**

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**Everything  
still to play for  
in the UEFA  
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**FC Barcelona  
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## COVER

The paths of VfB Stuttgart and Unirea Urziceni separated after they met in the UEFA Champions League in December, with the Germans moving on to the next stage in the UEFA Champions League, while the Romanians cross into the UEFA Europa League.

Photo: Grimm/Bongarts/Getty Images

# Message of the General Secretary

Photos: UEFA/Woods

## Creating history together...

On 7 February, the UEFA EURO 2012 qualifying draw takes place in Warsaw. The 51 participating national associations will go into six seeding pots, determined by the UEFA coefficient ranking system.

The only two associations not in the draw are Poland and Ukraine, who, as the host nations, have qualified automatically.

With the whole of the European football family taking part in this festive occasion, it provides a clear and heartening affirmation of the game's undiminished vitality.

The qualifying competition promises to be a fiercely contested affair, with 51 teams battling it out for 14 places in the finals, where they will join the two host nations. As European champions, Spain will have the honour of being the first team drawn from pot number one.

By entrusting the organisation of the European Championship finals to two countries from central-eastern Europe, UEFA is writing a new chapter in the history of this internationally renowned event. The qualifying draw in Warsaw represents the first official page in this chapter, but it is, in fact, the culmination of a long period of preparations behind the scenes.

Last December saw the public unveiling of the EURO 2012 logo, a multi-coloured floral motif which symbolises the shared roots of the two host nations and their determination to present Europe and the rest of the world with a magnificent celebration of football. There is every reason to believe that it will be just that.

We hope that the seeds we have planted in these two countries will continue to spread and grow long after the last ball of EURO 2012 has been kicked. This unique tournament will have a lasting, positive legacy for the development of the two host nations and their football, not to mention for the European football family as a whole.

Our task is to ensure that this exciting new chapter takes its place in the history books and, even more importantly, in people's minds. But before we can write history, we have to make it!

**Gianni Infantino**  
UEFA General Secretary

# UEFA Champions League

## North v South: let battle commence!



Despite the best efforts of Internazionale Milano, Lionel Messi and FC Barcelona continue to defend their UEFA Champions League title, which the Italian team are also hoping to lay claim to again after 45 years.

Empics Sport

**RARELY HAS A DRAW PRODUCED QUITE SO MANY NORTH V SOUTH ENCOUNTERS, WITH ALMOST ALL THE PAIRINGS IN THE UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE ROUND OF 16 FALLING WITHIN THIS CATEGORY. AS WAS THE CASE LAST YEAR, MATCHES BETWEEN ITALIAN AND ENGLISH CLUBS TOP THE BILL.**

The confrontation between Inter Milan and Chelsea promises to be especially fiery. The proud José Mourinho must be secretly dreaming about knocking his former club out of this most prestigious competition. Inter have dominated the Italian championship for the past four seasons, but have failed to live up to their ambitions on the international stage, falling in the round of 16 three times out of four and reaching just one quarter-final. Their two most recent victors were both English clubs (Manchester United and Liverpool) and the Italians are hoping that it will be third time lucky. However, Chelsea are hardly



the ideal opponents for a club seeking to wipe out the memory of repeated failures. Under the leadership of Carlo Ancelotti, who will certainly not be disappointed with a return to the Giuseppe Meazza in such circumstances, the Stamford Bridge club are also leading their national championship, despite a loss of form in December. They boast the best defence in England and, in Didier Drogba, have a world-class striker in their ranks. Unable to impose themselves in recent years, Inter will be hoping that Cameroonian Samuel Eto'o and Argentinean Diego Milito can maintain the excellent form they have been showing so far this season.

### Decline or revival?

Clubs which have touched the holy grail of European trophies find it hard to cope with subsequent failures. Despite being English champions and runners-up in last season's Champions League, Manchester United appear to have lost some of their magic. They have particularly struggled to replace Cristiano Ronaldo following his departure to Madrid. Knocked out of the FA Cup, Alex Ferguson's men are clearly seeking a new identity, but they should not be feeling sorry for themselves, since they remain in the running to win most of the trophies they are competing for at both national and European levels. Star man Wayne Rooney is enjoying a particularly prosperous season, with 15 goals to his name at the turn of the year.

AC Milan are also dreaming of reviving past glories, but do they really have the means to do so? Some think not. The team coached



AC Milan (Ronaldinho) and Real Madrid (Diarra and Van Nistelrooy) have made it through to the knockout stages again.

Getty Images



Yoann Gourcuff scores against Bayern Munich – Gironde de Bordeaux made a strong impression in their group matches, but the Germans also have some aces up their sleeves.

Yoann Gourcuff scores against Bayern Munich – Gironde de Bordeaux made a strong impression in their group matches, but the Germans also have some aces up their sleeves.

by Leonardo are making progress, but already sit a long way behind Inter in the league table. Faced with such a fearsome opponent as Manchester United, their task is a tricky one. However, Ronaldinho's return to form and the consistency of their outstanding midfielder, Andrea Pirlo, are giving the Milanese hope, although they remain the outsiders.

### Stuttgart: nothing to lose

Current holders FC Barcelona should, on the face of it, have little to fear when they face VfB Stuttgart. In the group phase, the Catalans made life rather awkward for themselves and did

not secure qualification until their final match. With the elusive Lionel Messi in attack, Pep Guardiola's team are capable of scoring at any moment and their command of the game is unequalled. Stuttgart managed to reach the round of 16 in spite of serious internal problems which led to the dismissal of coach Markus Babbel and the appointment of Swiss Christian Gross in his place. Although the Wurttemberg club's main priority this spring will be to retain their place in the Bundesliga, they will have nothing to lose when they come up against the best club side in the world. The team-mates of the whimsical Jens Lehmann will make sure they

enjoy the occasion, even if it appears highly unlikely that their European adventure will go any further.

### Real Madrid champing at the bit

Spain's other giants, Real Madrid, do not enjoy living in the shadow of their great Catalan rivals. The signings made by Florentino Perez since he returned as president clearly demonstrate the ambitions of the "Merengue". Although an abundance of goods does no harm, as an old proverb suggests, coach Manuel Pellegrini's task is not an easy one, such is the Cornelian nature of the decisions he has to make. Comprehensively beaten by Barcelona at this stage of last season's competition, Olympique Lyonnais, who also lost their French league dominance to Bordeaux, appear to have little chance of causing an upset against such formidable opponents. Kaka and Cristiano Ronaldo have never hidden their ambition to win the ultimate European accolade with Real Madrid.

Porto, who were outstripped by Sporting Braga and Benfica in the first half of the Portuguese season, will doubtless be keen to regain some prestige in the Champions League, from which Jesualdo Ferreira's team were narrowly eliminated by Manchester United last season. Once again, an English team are blocking the way for the two-time former winners of the competition. Back to their best in England, Arsenal will nevertheless face a more difficult challenge than in the group phase. Without Robin van Persie, Arsène Wenger will need to be able to count on some key players who are at the top of their game. His team's success will certainly

Olympique Lyonnais (Cris, No. 3) are struggling in their domestic championship but are through to the knockout stages of the UEFA Champions League, as are Fiorentina.



Cristian Rodríguez (left) of Porto and Branislav Ivanovic of Chelsea – the Portuguese are advancing discreetly, while Chelsea are still seeking their first UEFA Champions League trophy.

Empics Sport

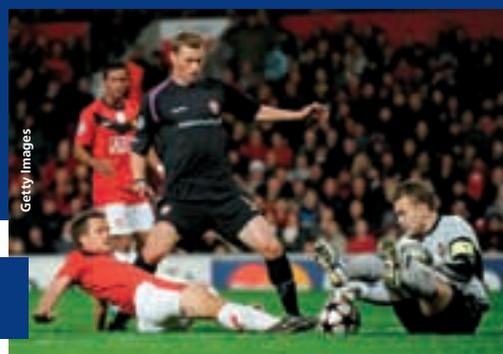


Getty Images



Getty Images

The two qualified teams from Group H: Arsenal (Theo Walcott, in blue) and Olympiacos (Raul Bravo)



Getty Images

CSKA Moscow in action against Manchester United (Michael Owen) – both teams are through to the next round.

depend heavily on the performances of Cesc Fabregas in midfield and Andrei Arshavin in attack.

### Bayern Munich back on an even keel

In the running to win their national championship, Bayern Munich put up a brave fight to win their place in the last 16 by beating Juventus in their own Stadio Olimpico. It was a victory that immediately raised the level of the Bavarian side's performances after a chaotic start to the season under coach Louis van Gaal. With the departure of Luca Toni to AS Roma, the Dutchman solved one of the problems that was undermining his team, while Franck Ribéry resumed training in January. The Bavarians appear to have the wherewithal to beat Fiorentina, who performed superbly in the group phase but who will need Romanian Adrian Mutu and Alberto Gilardino to be at their best in attack if they are to reach the quarter-finals.

### Bordeaux inexperienced but favourites

Despite their inexperience in the Champions League, Bordeaux will start as favourites against Olympiacos. Laurent Blanc's players were impressive in group A, winning all their matches except one, when they drew against Juventus in Turin. With a solid, well-organised defence, the hard-working Yoann Gourcuff and the clever Moroccan Chamakh (coveted by several major European clubs) in attack, the Girondins, who are running away with their national championship, represent daunting opponents for the Greeks. However, coached by Brazilian Zico, Olympiacos can count on a

myriad of talented South American players and a handful of Greek internationals, including Vassilis Torosidis. Moreover, the returning Congolese striker Tresor LuaLua will be a welcome addition.

Finally, CSKA Moscow and Sevilla will be delighted that the draw did not pit them against an unbeatable opponent, if such a team exists. At first glance, their encounter appears fairly well balanced. The Russians will be relying particularly on their playmaker, Milos Krasic, who scored four goals in the group phase and was elected Serbian player of the year. Sevilla's main threat is likely to come from Brazilian international Luis Fabiano, although he is returning from injury, and Argentinean Diego Perotti, whose contract has been extended until 2015 – a vote of confidence if ever there was one!

André Winckler

## An extended calendar

For the first time, the round of 16 will be played on eight different evenings spread over four different weeks, according to the following programme:

**16 Feb. (first leg) – 10 March (ret. leg)**  
*AC Milan-Manchester United*  
*FC Olympique Lyonnais-Real Madrid CF*

**17 Feb. (first leg) – 9 March (ret. leg)**  
*FC Porto-Arsenal FC*  
*FC Bayern München-ACF Fiorentina*

**23 Feb. (first leg) – 17 March (ret. leg)**  
*VfB Stuttgart-FC Barcelona*  
*Olympiacos FC-FC Girondins de Bordeaux*

**24 Feb. (first leg) – 16 March (ret. leg)**  
*PFC CSKA Moskva-Sevilla FC*  
*FC Internazionale Milano-Chelsea FC*



A determined Aleksandr Hleb of Stuttgart (left) and Luis Fabiano of Sevilla – both clubs made it through the group stage.

Getty Images



Debrecen (Peter Czvitkovics, in white) benefited from the new format.



Empics Sport

Standard de Liège celebrate scoring against Arsenal.



# UEFA Champions League news

## A new formula for success

**THE NEW UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE QUALIFICATION SYSTEM OFFERS MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE LEAGUE CHAMPIONS OF THE 'SMALLER' NATIONS, WHO ARE NOW BETTER REPRESENTED IN THE GROUP STAGE.**

The Champions League reforms endorsed by Michel Platini have come into force for the first time this season. Under the new qualification system, 22 clubs, including the current holders, progress directly to the group stage; previously it was just 16. The 22 clubs comprise three teams from each of the three nations with the best UEFA coefficients, two teams from the countries

ranked 4 to 6, and one from each of the leagues ranked 7 to 12. For example, Unirea, the current Romanian champions, and Belgian champions Standard de Liège qualified directly for the group stage.

The other ten teams in the group stage are decided via two qualification paths, one for champions and one for non-champions, with the two groups unable to meet each other in qualifying. The champions of the countries



ranked 48 to 53 in the UEFA coefficient system enter the first qualifying round.

The winners are joined in the second round by the champions from countries 16 to 47, and in the third round by the champions from countries

13 to 15. The winners of this third round then compete in play-offs for the five places in the group stage available via this champions path. VCS Debrecen, the champions of Hungary (ranked 26) faced Kalmar FF (Sweden), Levadia Tallinn (Estonia) and Levski Sofia (Bulgaria); FC Zürich, the champions of Switzerland

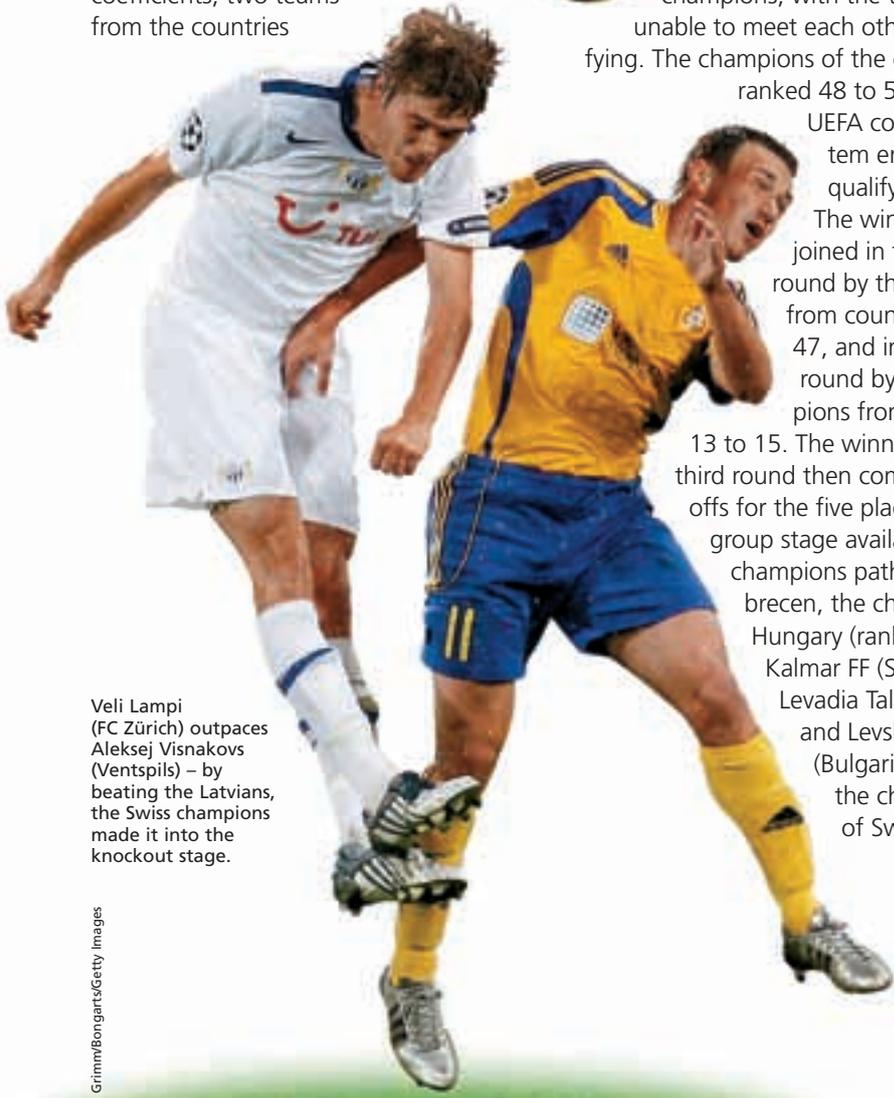
(ranked 16) knocked out NK Maribor (Slovenia) and then FK Ventspils (Latvia).

In the non-champions path, the third-placed team from country 6 and the second-placed teams from countries 7 to 15 enter the competition in the third qualifying round. The winners are then joined in the play-off round by the fourth-placed teams from countries 1 to 3 and the third-placed teams from countries 4 to 5. Five teams qualify for the group stage via this route. The losing teams in the third qualifying round enter the play-offs for the UEFA Europa League, while the losing teams in the Champions League play-offs go directly into the Europa League group stage.

### A blessing

The new system has been well received within the game. "Thank you, Michel Platini," says Bernard Challandes, the coach of FC Zürich. The sentiment is echoed by the club's president, Ancillo Canepa: "The new system has been a blessing for us. It is in the spirit of fair play and makes the Champions League more attractive. We are the only champions in our group, which also includes Real Madrid, AC Milan and Olympique de Marseille."

FC Zürich played their three home games in front of capacity crowds of 24,000. Such was the interest, they could have sold 200,000 tickets. "Without the Champions League we would have recorded an operating loss of CHF 3 million this year; instead we have made a profit of around 2 million. This will give us medium-term financial stability," explains Ancillo Canepa. "It would take us ten years to achieve that at domestic level. And the Champions League has also helped us raise our international profile."



Veli Lampi (FC Zürich) outpaces Aleksei Visnakovs (Ventspils) – by beating the Latvians, the Swiss champions made it into the knockout stage.

Grimm/Bongarts/Getty Images



Pablo Brandan scores for Unirea Urziceni against Rangers. The Romanians gained valuable experience in the UEFA Champions League.

Getty Images

Ancillo Canepa emphasises the sporting benefits of the new system: *“By facing teams like Real Madrid and AC Milan, our players are gaining experience at a higher level. They have to play at a higher tempo, maintain their rhythm and demonstrate greater mental resilience. For the moment, we haven’t managed to reap the benefits of the experience gained in our domestic championship, as the players aren’t used to the double demands of playing in Europe and at home, but we will benefit in the medium term.”*

In the qualifying matches, champion clubs now only meet fellow champion clubs, as was the case of Hibernians and Mogren in the first qualifying round.



D. Aquilina

### A fairy tale

Debrecen shared a group with Liverpool, Lyon and Fiorentina. Club spokesperson, Judit Balla, testifies to the enthusiasm with which the Hungarian champions embraced the challenge: *“We used to watch the Champions League on TV, but now we’re actually playing in it. It’s a fantastic achievement, and one we’re really proud of. What’s more, we’ve earned a substantial amount of money, which is really useful.”* Obviously, Debrecen were up against more seasoned opponents, but they didn’t disappoint themselves. Since their own stadium did not conform to Champions League requirements, they had to play their home matches in Budapest, 220km from Debrecen. Nonetheless, the whole experience was like a fairy tale for the Hungarian club. *“We played some good matches,”* adds Judit Balla. *“We didn’t really have much luck on our side, but we learnt a lot from playing against these big clubs. Our goal now is to retain the Hungarian title and qualify again for this magnificent competition.”*

Judit Balla is also keen to highlight an act of generosity by their Italian opponents, ACF Fiorentina: *“They laid on a free meal and programmes for our supporters. That was a really nice touch and the highlight for us...”*

### Financial stability

Narcis Raducan, the Unirea sporting director, underlines the advantage of the new system for clubs from eastern Europe, who are generally unable to compete financially with the big teams: *“It’s a very constructive approach. It allows the*

*eastern European clubs to showcase their talent and their merits at a higher level, despite the financial gulf. We hope to be regular participants and achieve some good results, though we know it will be very difficult for us to reach the same level as the top ten European teams.”* Narcis Raducan goes on to list the benefits for Unirea of qualifying for the Champions League: *“The organisation*

*of the competition is very detailed, very precise and it guarantees us financial stability. It has also helped our players to mature on the pitch. They have learned to raise their game to try to get results. Moreover, the fact that we’re not a high-profile club worked to our advantage, as our opponents didn’t know anything about us.”*

Pascale Pierard

## Increased chances

Pierre François, the general director of Standard de Liège, is enthusiastic both about the increased opportunity for direct qualification and the possibility of facing an opponent with a similar ranking in the qualifying stage: *“It increases our chances of making it into the group stage, which is a wonderful stage,”* he explains.

However, for some clubs, the new system also creates a dilemma: should they sign new players who will give them a better chance of qualifying, or should they safeguard their financial stability? The Belgian club’s management has never previously mortgaged its financial position for the sake of progress in Europe. *“We won’t be changing our policy at Standard. For a long time now, the concept of financial fair play has been integral to our approach. The wage bill has never exceeded 45% of our total budgetary spend.”*

The Standard director is keen to highlight a further point: *“I’m delighted by the changes, but I’d like them to go a bit further, allowing clubs to complete transfers after the qualifying rounds and the play-offs. If we meet a big team in the third round, we will obviously want to field our strongest line-up, including players who may be on the shopping lists of other clubs. If they play, they are effectively depriving themselves of further participation in the Champions League with another team. Authorising transfers – obviously not between clubs that could face each other in qualifying – would help smaller clubs to keep hold of talented players without blocking their exit if the clubs don’t make it through to the group stage. It would also help the smaller clubs who don’t qualify to make up in part for missing Champions League revenue.”*



Photo News

Pierre François, managing director of Standard de Liège

P.P.



Fernando Torres of Liverpool attempts to break free from Gianluca Comotto of Fiorentina in one of the group stage matches. However, the English side did not manage to qualify for the knockout stages and continue their European season in the UEFA Europa League.



Rys/Bongarts/Getty Images

Beaten at home by Bayern Munich, Juventus will be one of the main attractions of the knockout stages of the UEFA Europa League.



# UEFA Europa League

## A wide-open competition

**THE ROUND OF 32 OF THE UEFA EUROPA LEAGUE, WHICH HAS REPLACED THE UEFA CUP, COMPRISES THE TOP TWO TEAMS FROM EACH GROUP IN THE PREVIOUS ROUND AND THE EIGHT THIRD-PLACED TEAMS FROM THE UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE GROUP STAGE. SOME FASCINATING ENCOUNTERS LIE AHEAD IN A COMPETITION THAT COULD HARDLY BE MORE OPEN.**



Both disappointed and in search of redemption, the teams that dropped out of the Champions League will have their work cut out as they try

to impose themselves on opponents who showed in the Europa League group phase that they had the wind in their sails. Two of the big guns who were eliminated from the Champions League, Liverpool and Juventus, are particularly keen to put things right. The Reds are struggling in their domestic championship, where they have been

left behind by the other title contenders. It might be argued that Rafa Benitez's men have no option but to succeed against the Romanians of Unirea Urziceni, who also began the season in the Champions League.

### Prestigious duels

Juventus, meanwhile, find themselves in a similar situation. They have some ground to make up on their rivals in the Italian championship and Buffon, Cannavaro, Trézéguet et al will be doing their utmost to reassure their supporters against Ajax Amsterdam. Although the

Dutch side are currently living in the shadows of Twente and PSV Eindhoven, they are still a force to be reckoned with. In particular, they can call on Uruguayan striker Luis Suarez, top goalscorer in the Netherlands, who is being courted by numerous clubs.

Drawn in one of the toughest groups, Atlético Madrid also had to bid farewell to the Champions League, although they still boast an outstanding squad, including the impressive strike force of South American duo Forlan and Agüero. However, Galatasaray, coached by a certain Frank Rijkaard, will be doing their Spanish opponents no favours. AS Roma are also among the favourites. Although the team from the Italian capital have not always been convincing this season, with the genial Francesco Totti in their ranks they remain capable of achieving success, especially as Luca Toni, on loan from Bayern Munich, will be doing everything possible to impress national coach Marcello Lippi in the run-up to the World Cup in South Africa. However, beating the Greeks of Panathinaikos, who dominated the first half of their domestic championship, will be no easy task.

Valencia, who remain one of Spain's top clubs despite the unquestionable supremacy of the two Spanish giants, are also capable of doing well in this competition and Club Brugge will have to be at their very best if they are to trouble the team coached by Unay Emery.

### Strong German representation

German clubs who, along with those from Spain, have the strongest numerical representation in this season's UEFA Europa League, certainly have every intention of playing a prominent role. Wolfsburg, current German champions, should be able to overcome the "yellow submarine" of Villarreal, who have been on something of a downward spiral this season. Hertha



Getty Images

Atlético Madrid are blocked by a wall of Chelsea players – the Spanish side will be hoping to do better against Galatasaray.



FC Salzburg (Nikola Pokrivac, centre) had a flawless run in the UEFA Europa League group stage.

Empics Sport

Andrea Barzagli in action against Manchester United – Wolfsburg are pursuing their European season in the UEFA Europa League.

Pollex/Bongarts/Getty Images

Shakhtar Donetsk (red and black) and Club Brugge have qualified for the UEFA Europa League knockout stages.

Photo News

Berlin's task against Benfica, who are neck and neck with Sporting Braga in the chase for the Portuguese title, appears a tough one. Rooted to the bottom of their domestic league, it is easy to imagine that the Berlin side will be aiming first and foremost to hold on to their place in the Bundesliga. The other two German teams in the competition will face Dutch opponents. Werder Bremen will come up against the current leaders of the Dutch championship, FC Twente, with their Costarican striker Bryan Ruiz. However, Thomas Schaaf's team of internationals appear to be strong favourites. A similar scenario applies in the pairing of SV Hamburg and PSV Eindhoven. Bruno Labbadia's men are performing very well this season and are expected to progress.

It is certainly hard not to take seriously the threat posed by Shakhtar Donetsk, winners of the last UEFA Cup, who are keen to repeat their feat this year. The Ukrainian club have recently recruited the promising young Brazilian, Alex Teixeira, from Vasco da Gama, a signing that speaks volumes about their ambitions. However, their clash with Fulham FC will be no walk in the park. Roy Hodgson's London-based team are enjoying a remarkable season in the English championship (they have beaten Manchester United and Liverpool, among others) and will be a tough proposition at Craven Cottage.

### Impressive Austrians

What can be said about FC Salzburg, who wowed everyone in the group phase with a 100% record? As sparkling as the energy drink that sponsors them, the Austrians will start favourites and look likely to pose insurmountable problems for Standard de Liège, even though the Belgian side

were certainly no walkovers during the Champions League group stage.

The Russians of Rubin Kazan, who almost caused a sensation in their Champions League group, notably winning at Camp Nou, must also be considered serious contenders. Hapoel Tel Aviv will need to play all their aces if they are to harbour any hope of progressing to the next round.

Although their domestic form has been rather mixed, Everton and Sporting Lisbon appear very well matched, as do Lille and Fenerbahce. Although they are a long way behind Bordeaux, the team from northern France are in the chasing pack, while Christoph Daum's team are neck and

neck with Galatasaray in Turkey. Didier Deschamps's Olympique de Marseille will certainly not approach their round of 32 match against Copenhagen lightly, especially as their chances of progressing appear good. As for Anderlecht, leaders of the Belgian championship, they will be trying to regain some prestige for Belgian football, which is somewhat in the doldrums, when they face the Basques of Athletic Bilbao, who always provide formidable opposition.

Predicting which two teams will meet in the final at the Hamburg Arena on 12 May is a virtually impossible task. And so much the better!

*André Winckler*



Christian Noboa (16) and Rubin Kazan gave FC Barcelona (Pedro) a hard time.

Empics Sport

## Calendar

Matches will be played on 18 February at 19.00 or 21.05 (first legs) and at the same times on 25 February (return legs), except for the matches between Everton and Sporting Lisbon (16 February) and SL Benfica and Hertha Berlin (23 February).



Lionel Messi (centre) and Pedro – who scored the equaliser in the final – scored four of Barcelona's five goals.

# Club World Cup in Abu Dhabi

## Barcelona complete their magic hexagon

**"THE FUTURE LOOKS BLACK," JOSEP GUARDIOLA ANNOUNCED IN ABU DHABI ON 19 DECEMBER.**

**"ANOTHER CLUB MAY EQUAL WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED, BUT I DOUBT THAT WE WILL EVER REPEAT IT. I JUST HOPE THAT, IN FORTHCOMING SEASONS, PEOPLE DON'T KEEP MAKING COMPARISONS."**

Despite his realism, the FC Barcelona coach couldn't fight back the tears after his team had come back to beat Estudiantes de La Plata 2-1 in extra time, to allow the Catalan club to win the intercontinental competition for the first time and to set a new record by building, in a single year, a magic hexagon of trophies comprising the Spanish league, cup and super cup titles, the UEFA Champions League victory in Rome, the UEFA Super Cup win in Monaco and, finally, the FIFA Club World Cup in Abu Dhabi. The nearest approximation to Barça's achievement dates back to 1972, when Johan Cruyff's AFC Ajax made a clean sweep of five trophies before the existence of the Dutch super cup which now bears Cruyff's name.

One of the players also added a fairy tale to the annals of football. Little

more than a year ago, 'Pedrito' was a tricky little winger in Barça's B team. He has rapidly lost the diminutive and the name of Pedro Rodríguez Ledesma went into the record books when, after Lionel Messi had come off the bench to put Barcelona 2-1 up in the semi-final against Atlante FC, he clipped the ball into the Mexican team's net to clinch a 3-1 win. It made him the first player to score in six domestic and international competitions in a single season.

After Estudiantes had resolutely defended a 1-0 lead until the 89th minute of the final between the champions of Europe and South America, it was Pedro who popped up unmarked to head a looping equaliser into the Argentine net and force extra time. Messi jubilantly scored the winner by

meeting a cross from the right with his chest – or, rather, as he commented afterwards, *"I struck the ball with the club's coat-of-arms and with my heart."* The 2-1 victory meant that Josep Guardiola's side had twice come from behind to complete a hat-trick of European victories.

Pedro and Messi would be the first to insist that Barça's six-fold success was down to collective rather than individual efforts. The team's other goal had been scored by Sergio Busquets, son of Carlos, the guardian of the Barcelona net during the 1990s. The goalscorers were three of eight players who had come through the Catalan club's youth academy. And this was no accident derived from a run of injuries. There were also eight on the pitch in Rome and eight in Monaco, underlining that, even though FC Barcelona have recruited at top level, talent has been developed rather than bought and the foundations of success were laid at home. The six titles represent a reward for youth development and loyalty to a playing philosophy – and the players seem to have no intention of resting on their huge stack of 2009 laurels. They left the Zayed stadium wearing T-shirts featuring six stars and the legend *"Tot guanyat, tot per guanyar"* (Everything won. Everything to win).

Only time will tell if anyone can equal FC Barcelona's achievement. In the meantime, it's only fair to add a few more decibels to the congratulatory chorus. Felicitats!



Photo: FIFA/Getty Images



The UEFA Executive Committee meeting in Madeira.

UEFA-Woods



## News from Brussels

The new treaty on European Union, the Treaty of Lisbon, entered into force on 1 December. For the first time, it includes a provision giving the EU institutions competence in the area of sport and recognising the specificity of sport.

According to Article 165 of the new treaty, the EU "shall contribute to the promotion of European sporting issues, while taking account of the specific nature of sport, its structures based on voluntary activity and its social and educational function." It goes on to specify that "Union action shall be aimed at (...) developing the European dimension in sport, by promoting fairness and openness in sporting competitions and cooperation between bodies responsible for sports, and by protecting the physical and moral integrity of sportsmen and sportswomen, especially the youngest sportsmen and sportswomen."

This article reproduces word for word the proposal contained in the unsuccessful EU constitution project which was rejected in 2005. It is also in line with the Declaration of Nice of 2000, which called on the EU to take account of "the social, educational and cultural functions inherent in sport and making it special, in order that the code of ethics and the solidarity essential to the preservation of its social role may be respected and nurtured."

The main purpose of Article 165 of the Treaty of Lisbon is not to give the sports movement more legal stability or autonomy, but to give the EU some form of legislative competence in the area of sport. In the years ahead, we should therefore see initia-

# Meetings and other activities

## UEFA Events SA is born

**THE MOST EAGERLY ANTICIPATED ITEM ON THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE'S AGENDA IN FUNCHAL ON 10 AND 11 DECEMBER WAS, WITHOUT DOUBT, THE APPOINTMENT OF THE EURO 2012 HOST CITIES (CF. UEFADIRECT NO. 93), ALTHOUGH MANY OTHER SUBJECTS WERE DISCUSSED DURING THIS LENGTHY MEETING ON THE ISLAND OF MADEIRA.**

Following the decision taken in Nyon at the previous meeting in September, the creation of a new company to help UEFA fulfil its responsibilities was finalised in Funchal, where the Executive Committee chose the name of the new company so that it could be legally established on 15 December.

UEFA Events SA, fully owned by UEFA, will be led by David Taylor, chief

executive, who proposed a business plan for the company and presented its structure. It will consist of three divisions: Sales and Marketing, Events and Operations, and Technology and Media. UEFA Events SA will be based in the administrative building currently being built opposite the House of European Football.

The next UEFA Congress, to be held in Tel Aviv on 25 March, was also

## EURO 2012 DRAW IN WARSAW

The qualifying draw for EURO 2012 will take place at the Palace of Culture and Science in Warsaw at 12.00 CET on Sunday 7 February.

The 51 teams that will participate in the qualifying matches have been split into six pots (cf. uefa.com) on the basis of their position in the UEFA national team coefficient rankings, which are calculated according to their results in the 2006 World Cup qualifying competition and final tournament, the 2008 European Championship qualifying competition and final tournament, and the 2010 World Cup qualifying competition.

The qualifying phase will involve six groups of six teams and three groups of five.

Michel Platini and the presidents of the two hosts: Grzegorz Lato (Poland, right) and Grigoriy Surkis (Ukraine) at the logo launch in Kiev.



Supinsky/AP/Getty Images

→ tives emerge based on the promotion of physical activity, the teaching of sport, equality, the fight against doping and the promotion of sport among people with disabilities and learning difficulties.

Far from defining any kind of framework for a "sporting exception" at community level, Article 165 is, at most, an indicator of the action the EU intends to take. It also excludes any harmonisation of national legislation by the EU.

With the grounds for action laid, the relevant members of the EU Council of Ministers will meet in an official sports configuration. Aside from the European Commission (author of the White Paper on Sport [cf. *uefadirect* Nos 64 and 65]) and the European Parliament (under whose aegis the Belet [cf. *uefadirect* No. 59] and *Mavrommatis* [cf. *uefadirect* No. 75] reports were adopted), the member states should therefore also be more inclined to take the initiative in matters relating to sport at a European level.



among the themes discussed by the Executive Committee, which approved the agenda and programme for this general meeting of delegates of the member associations, along with the Report of the UEFA President and Executive Committee, which will be presented to the Congress. Amendments to the UEFA Statutes will also be proposed, particularly in order to strengthen the autonomy of the member associations and to update certain provisions.

It was decided that the 2011 UEFA Congress would be held on 22 March.

### Convention and charter

The Executive Committee also heard reports on various committee meetings and gave its views on the questions submitted by these committees. For example, it thought that the variation in the strength of the teams competing in the European Women's Under-17 Championship was still too

great to justify increasing the number of final round participants from the current four.

However, it did agree to admit the associations of Kazakhstan and Moldova to the UEFA Coaching Convention at pro level. The number of pro level members is now 42, with another ten associations at A level and one at B.

Regarding the Grassroots Charter, the Executive Committee approved the admission of six new members at basic one-star level, namely the associations of Estonia, Hungary, Israel, Luxembourg, Poland and Serbia. The Georgian association moved up to two stars, that of the Republic of Ireland to three stars and those of Iceland, Liechtenstein and Sweden to four stars. Associations can obtain up to six stars, which are awarded in accordance with criteria linked to the promotion and growth of grassroots football, participant numbers, and attention to social aspects, sport for disabled people and women's participation.

A total of 47 national associations are currently signatories to the Grassroots Charter.

### Creation of a team sports' association

Devoted primarily to questions linked to EURO 2012, the second day of the meeting also included an update on the case brought to light by the German police concerning match-fixing and illegal betting, which involves nine European countries. The Executive Committee once again reiterated its firm intention to apply a zero tolerance policy to match-fixing and cheating, and to do everything possible, with the civil authorities, to eradicate this scourge.

The Executive Committee was also informed of the founding, in Nyon on 8 December, of the European Team Sports association (ETS), which includes, as well as UEFA, FIBA Europe (basketball), the EHF (handball), the IIHF (ice hockey), FIRA-AER (rugby) and the CEV (volleyball). The association aims to promote, develop and represent the interests of European team sports and to increase information exchange between its members.



## Passing the baton

The beginning of the new year marked a change within the UEFA administration, with finance director Hanspeter Jenni passing the baton to Josef Koller, who had been controller since 2002.

Having joined UEFA in 1990 and looked after its finances ever since, Hanspeter Jenni wished to take a step back while continuing to enable UEFA to benefit from his vast experience. On 1 January, he became UEFA's "asset manager" and now heads a group of advisers charged with managing UEFA's assets. This is no easy task, bearing in mind that the amount of interest earned by UEFA last year was several times higher than the organisation's entire turnover when Hanspeter first joined!



Grigoriy Surkis presents the fair play prize in the 2008/09 European Under-17 Championship to Germany's captain, Reinhold Yabo.

UEFA-Woods



Slobodan Medojevic, captain of the Serbian team that won the fair play trophy in the European Under-19 Championship, lent a hand with the draw for the qualifying round of the next competition.

UEFA-Woods

# Draws for the UEFA youth competitions

**IN DECEMBER, THE HOUSE OF EUROPEAN FOOTBALL IN NYON WELCOMED REPRESENTATIVES OF UEFA'S MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS FOR THE DRAWS FOR THE 2009/10 AND 2010/11 EUROPEAN UNDER-19 AND UNDER-17 CHAMPIONSHIPS IN BOTH THE MEN'S AND WOMEN'S CATEGORIES.**

The first to be drawn out of the hat, on 7 and 8 December, were the men's Under-17 and Under-19 qualifying round ties for the 2010/11 competitions and the elite round ties for the current 2009/10 season.

The first day was devoted to the 2010/11 season. The men's Under-17 and Under-19 championships share the same format and the same number of participants, with 52 associations in the starting blocks for each qualifying competition. The respective host associations of the final tournaments – Serbia (U17) and Romania (U19) – qualify automatically for the final rounds.

The draws for the qualifying rounds were conducted by the chairman of the Youth and Amateur Football Committee and member of the UEFA Executive Committee, Grigoriy Surkis. The 52 teams were drawn into 13 groups of 4. The matches will be played in the form of mini-tournaments this coming autumn, with the top two from each group and the two best third-placed teams going through to the elite round, which will be played in seven groups of four and from which the group winners will qualify for the final round.



The draw for the qualifying round of the **2010/11** European Under-17 Championship produced the following group formations:

- Group 1:** Greece, **Croatia**, Bulgaria, Israel
- Group 2:** Austria, Germany, Bosnia-Herzegovina, **Estonia**
- Group 3:** Poland, England, **Georgia**, Sweden
- Group 4:** Norway, Republic of Ireland, Albania, **Malta**

**Group 5:** **Portugal**, Northern Ireland, Azerbaijan, Montenegro

**Group 6:** Romania, **Belarus**, Kazakhstan, Liechtenstein

**Group 7:** Czech Republic, Turkey, **Iceland**, Armenia

**Group 8:** Belgium, Wales, **Lithuania**, Denmark

**Group 9:** France, Italy, Slovenia, **Cyprus**

**Group 10:** Slovakia, **Hungary**, Faroe Islands, Andorra

**Group 11:** Ukraine, Netherlands, **San Marino**, Latvia

**Group 12:** Switzerland, Scotland, **Luxembourg**, FYR Macedonia

**Group 13:** Russia, **Spain**, Finland, Moldova.

**Mini-tournament hosts in bold.**



For the U19s, the qualifying groups are as follows:

**Group 1:** Turkey, Iceland, **Wales**, Kazakhstan

**Group 2:** Scotland, Norway, Liechtenstein, **Estonia**

**Group 3:** Greece, **Portugal**, Georgia, Azerbaijan

**Group 4:** Russia, Ukraine, **Sweden**, Denmark

**Group 5:** Belarus, Czech Republic, **Bosnia-Herzegovina**, FYR Macedonia

**Group 6:** **Hungary**, Poland, Moldova, Finland

**Group 7:** Italy, Croatia, **Latvia**, Faroe Islands

**Group 8:** **Belgium**, England, Cyprus, Albania

**Group 9:** Netherlands, Slovakia, **Slovenia**, Malta

**Group 10:** Republic of Ireland, Serbia, Luxembourg, **Bulgaria**

**Group 11:** Spain, Israel, **Lithuania**, Armenia

**Group 12:** France, **Austria**, San Marino, Montenegro

**Group 13:** **Germany**, Switzerland, Andorra, Northern Ireland.

**Mini-tournament hosts in bold.**

## 2009/10 elite rounds

The next day it was the turn of the draws for the elite rounds of the current season, for which the 28 teams still in contention in each competition were drawn into seven groups of four. The group winners will qualify for the final rounds, which will take place from 18 to 30 May in Liechtenstein as far as the Under-17s are concerned, and from 18 to 30 July in France in the case of the Under-19s. The host countries qualify automatically.

### European Under-17 Championship

**Group 1:** **Czech Republic**, Netherlands, Georgia, Ukraine

**Group 2:** Portugal, Croatia, Romania, **Bosnia-Herzegovina**

**Group 3:** Austria, Republic of Ireland, Finland, **Greece**

**Group 4:** Spain, Poland, **Northern Ireland**, Belgium

**Group 5:** **France**, Wales, Turkey, Norway

**Group 6:** Hungary, **Switzerland**, Germany, Serbia

**Group 7:** **England**, Slovakia, Sweden, Malta.

**Mini-tournament hosts in bold.**

### European Under-19 Championship

**Group 1:** **Croatia**, Scotland, Belgium, Montenegro

**Group 2:** Portugal, **Hungary**, Romania, Greece

**Group 3:** England, **Ukraine**, Republic of Ireland, Bosnia-Herzegovina

**Group 4:** Norway, **Turkey**, Spain, Azerbaijan

**Group 5:** Italy, **Russia**, Czech Republic, Northern Ireland

**Group 6:** **Netherlands**, Germany, Slovakia, Poland

**Group 7:** Serbia, Switzerland, Denmark, **Austria**.

**Mini-tournament hosts in bold.**



Marion Torrent, captain of the French U17s, receives the 2008/09 fair play prize from Jim Boyce.



Fannidis Fridriksdottir, captain of Iceland, winners of the Women's U19 fair play trophy, assists Jim Boyce with the draw.

## Women's youth competitions

On 15 and 16 December, Jim Boyce, first vice-chairman of the Youth and Amateur Football Committee, conducted the draws for the first qualifying rounds in the 2010/11 European Women's Under-17 and Under-19 Championships.



At Under-17 level, 41 have entered the race. Germany, the titleholders, have a bye for the first qualifying round, which left 40 teams to be drawn into ten groups of four, with the following result:

- Group 1:** Finland, Norway, Kazakhstan, Serbia
  - Group 2:** Czech Republic, Republic of Ireland, FYR Macedonia, **Northern Ireland**
  - Group 3:** Denmark, **Hungary**, Moldova, Slovenia
  - Group 4:** Spain, **Netherlands**, Georgia, Belarus
  - Group 5:** Italy, Iceland, **Bulgaria**, Lithuania
  - Group 6:** **Belgium**, England, Armenia, Turkey
  - Group 7:** Scotland, Ukraine, Romania, **Austria**
  - Group 8:** Sweden, **France**, Croatia, Israel
  - Group 9:** Switzerland, Poland, **Latvia**, Estonia
  - Group 10:** Wales, **Russia**, Faroe Islands, Greece.
- Mini-tournament hosts in bold.**

The mini-tournaments are scheduled for this coming autumn. For the second qualifying round, the group winners, the five best runners-up and Germany will be drawn into four groups of four, from which the winners will go through to the final round in Nyon in June 2011.



There are 46 teams in contention for the 2010/11 European Women's Under-19 Championship, including Italy, who qualify automatically for the final round as host nation, and Germany, who have a bye for the first round and will therefore join the competition in the second round. The 11 groups for the first qualifying round are as follows:

- Group 1:** England, Finland, **Moldova**, Armenia
  - Group 2:** Azerbaijan, Belgium, Estonia, **Lithuania**
  - Group 3:** Denmark, Spain, Greece, **Bosnia-Herzegovina**
  - Group 4:** Austria, **Hungary**, Portugal, Latvia
  - Group 5:** Switzerland, Poland, **FYR Macedonia**, Kazakhstan
  - Group 6:** Wales, France, Georgia, **Slovenia**
  - Group 7:** **Norway**, Netherlands, Belarus, Faroe Islands
  - Group 8:** Scotland, **Sweden**, Serbia, Slovakia
  - Group 9:** Romania, **Czech Republic**, Turkey, Northern Ireland
  - Group 10:** Iceland, Ukraine, **Bulgaria**, Israel
  - Group 11:** Republic of Ireland, Russia, Cyprus, **Croatia**.
- Mini-tournament hosts in bold.**

The mini-tournaments will take place this coming September. The top two from each group, the best third-placed team and Germany will contest the second round.

On 16 December, the draws were made for the second qualifying rounds in the current women's youth competitions.

- The teams remaining in the Under-17 competition will be contesting their matches in the following groups in April:
  - Group 1:** England, Netherlands, Serbia, **Italy**

- Group 2:** Switzerland, **Spain**, Belgium, Denmark
  - Group 3:** Sweden, Republic of Ireland, Poland, **Ukraine**
  - Group 4:** **Austria**, Norway, Germany, Finland.
- Mini-tournament hosts in bold.**

The group winners will then travel to Nyon for the semi-finals on 22 June and the final on 26 June, which will determine which three European teams will take part in the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup in Trinidad and Tobago this coming September.

At Under-19 level, the following groups were drawn for the second round:

- Group 1:** Republic of Ireland, **Sweden**, England, Turkey
  - Group 2:** France, **Hungary**, Switzerland, Austria
  - Group 3:** Germany, Norway, Poland, **Serbia**
  - Group 4:** Spain, **Russia**, Iceland, Czech Republic
  - Group 5:** Denmark, **Netherlands**, Scotland, Finland
  - Group 6:** Italy, **Belgium**, Azerbaijan, Bosnia-Herzegovina.
- Mini-tournament hosts in bold.**

The group winners and the best runner-up will join the host nation, FYR Macedonia, at the final round from 24 May to 5 June this year.

## Maurice Burlaz trophy presented

On the occasion of the UEFA youth competition draws, the German Football Association (DFB) received the Maurice Burlaz trophy that it won for having obtained the best results in the men's youth competitions from 2007 to 2009 (see *uefadirect* No. 91). Grigoriy Surkis (centre), chairman of the Youth and Amateur Football Committee, presented the trophy to Hans-Dieter Drewitz, vice-president of the DFB, and Matthias Sammer, the DFB's technical director.



**AZERBAIJAN**



**Visit to children's home**

December was a very busy month for the Association of Football Federations of Azerbaijan (AFFA), which believes that doing good things should become a habit. At the beginning of December, AFFA officials visited the republican children's home in Shuvalan district on the occasion of Gurban Bayram (Thanksgiving- Offering Day). Sixty boys and girls aged 6 to 18 were delighted to receive presents – balls, sportswear and other gifts. The children and teaching staff were very glad to receive these guests at their home on this special day.

In other news, together with the disability football federation and sponsorship from UK

**Azerbaijan**  
The children at the centre were thrilled to receive such distinguished visitors.

Sport, the AFFA organised a futsal tournament involving five teams on 3 December, the International Day of Disabled Persons. The players were very happy to participate in the tournament because it helped them to start believing in themselves and to feel that they are not alone with their problems. The tournament gave them the opportunity to play football and make new friends.

Meanwhile, AFFA officials and Azerbaijan national team players Kamran Aghayev, Vagif Javadov and Ruslan Abishov paid a visit to a youth centre. It was the third time that AFFA officials had been to see the youngsters. After taking a look at the display of photos taken during previous AFFA visits in 2007 and 2008, the AFFA general secretary, Elkhan



Mammadov, wished the children all the best for 31 December, the day of solidarity of Azerbaijanis throughout the world, and for New Year's Day. The director of the centre, Imran Mammadov, thanked the AFFA for its attention and care. The children were very excited to see the players; they asked them a lot of interesting questions and were happy when the footballers gave them autographs. Before leaving, the AFFA presented the children with sportswear and balls. ■

*Mikayil Narimanoglu*

**BELARUS**



**Distribution of awards**

On 23 December, the Belarus Football Federation (ABFF) held its annual end-of-season ceremony to bring the 2009 football season to a close. The best players received awards in different categories.

Once again, the players of BATE Borisov who won the title in November swept up the statuettes. The best goalkeeper award went to Sergey Veremko (just like last year), Igor Shitov was named best defender and Dmitry Likhtarovich was voted best midfielder. The best player of the national championship award also went to a BATE player, Sergey Krivets.

The best striker award went to a Brazilian player of FC Gomel, Maicon Kalijuri.

Victor Goncharenko, who led BATE Borisov to another consecutive title, was voted coach of the year.

The footballer of the year award went to Alexandr Kulchy, the Belarus international who plays for Russian club Rostov. This year, Alexandr became the most capped player of the national team (82 appearances), having broken the record of 80 caps held until now by Sergey Gurenko. Alexandr received 765 points from the 453 journalists, referees and football

**Belarus**  
Gennady Nivyglas, president of the Belarusian FA, presents Alexandr Kulchy with the player of the year award.



**Belgium**  
A party atmosphere at Belgian football grounds

**BELGIUM**



**Encouraging start for winter football**

The world of Belgian football has experienced a real first this season, caused by a reform of the first division championship, known as the Jupiler Pro League. With a system of play-offs introduced and the number of matchdays increased, our teams continued to play over the Christmas and New Year period.

Before the season got under way, scepticism about the changes was rife and many pointed out that although year-end matchdays in Britain were very popular, this was down to the country's passion for football and the fans' unparalleled attachment to their clubs.

Of course, Belgian football cannot claim such widespread devotion and it is doubtless true that many Belgians are more attracted by holidays abroad than ice-cold stadiums as the year draws to a close. However, and despite the doubts voiced, winter football in Belgium has got off to an encouraging start and is popular with the fans. Although spectator numbers were down slightly, the drop was not as dramatic as predicted by the alarmists.

Naturally, not everything about the experiment has been a success and there is room for improvement, for example in the state of the pitches. Like many other countries, Belgium was covered in snow and, as some stadiums do not have heated pitches, they were barely fit for use. Also, although there was a good, festive atmosphere in the stadiums, this should be built on so that winter matches become a high point that spectators look forward to in the season.

So, there is progress to be made in some areas, but on the whole the reform – if not a masterstroke – already looks promising. ■

*Pierre Cornez*

experts who cast their votes. Yuri Zhevnov, national team goalkeeper, finished second (526) and Timofei Kalachev (353), national team midfielder, came in third. Timofei Kalachev also received a special prize 'for football talent and dedication while playing for Belarus'. The polls were organised by the ABFF with the football newspaper *Vsyo o footbale* (All about football).

Several other awards were presented at the ceremony:

- Best female player of the year: Anna Tatarinova (Zhilstroï, Kharkov, Ukraine)
- Best futsal player: Vadim Lushkovski (Dorozhnik, Minsk)
- Best beach football player: Ruslan Pernai (Passat-Plast, Minsk)
- Best referees: Andrey Zhukov, Vyacheslav Bykov, Vitaly Maliutin
- A special prize also went to the national visually impaired futsal team, who this year added the European champions' title to their vast collection of awards.

The ceremony was held under the banner of the 20th anniversary of the ABFF. In his opening speech, Gennady Nivyglas, ABFF president, recalled that 20 years ago, on 20 December 1989, a conference in Minsk had approved the statutes of the Football Federation of the Belarussian Soviet Socialist Republic. At that moment, the federation became independent and entitled to become a member of FIFA and UEFA in its own right, which it did in 1992 and 1993 respectively. ■

*Yulia Zenkovich*

## BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA



### Edin Dzeko player of the year

After losing to Portugal in the play-offs for the 2010 World Cup, our head coach, Miroslav Blazevic, resigned. The Football Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina immediately set about finding a replacement, and just before the end of the year, the executive board decided unanimously to appoint Bosnian football legend Safet Susic as the new national coach. Susic will lead the national team through the EURO 2012 qualifying campaign.

Born in 1955, he started his career with FK Krivajica from Zavidovici, then moved to FK Sarajevo, where he became one of the best and most popular players, not only in the club's history but in the whole of the former Yugoslavia. He subsequently continued his playing career with Paris Saint-Germain. At national level, he



F. Kravac

made 54 appearances for the national team of Yugoslavia and scored 21 goals. Safet Susic was voted Bosnia-Herzegovina's golden player for UEFA's golden jubilee.

He started his coaching career in 1994 in Cannes, and later coached several teams from Turkey as well as Saudi team El Hilal.

Sarajevo hosted the gala to honour the best players, coaches and clubs of 2009. In a tough contest in the best player category, VfL Wolfsburg's striker and German champion Edin Dzeko took the honours, having also become a national idol in 2009. Two months ago, Dzeko was announced as a UNICEF ambassador, the first person from Bosnia-Herzegovina to receive this honour.

Dzeko was the second best scorer in the Bundesliga last season with 26 goals, two less than his team-mate Graffite. In the UEFA Champions

## Bosnia-Herzegovina

Edin Dzeko, player of the year for 2009

League he played six matches and scored four goals. For the Bosnia-Herzegovina national team he played all 12 World Cup qualifying and play-off matches and was the best scorer of the national team with nine goals, finishing joint second in the overall goal tally with England's Wayne Rooney, one goal behind the top scorer, Theofanis Gekas of Greece.

"I'm honoured to receive this award, especially because it comes from my home town. It has been a very successful season, both for my club and the national team. Many are to thank for this success, starting with my team-mates at the club and national team and not forgetting my coaches and the very big support of the fans and my family," Dzeko said.

The best coach of 2009 was Miroslav Blazevic and among the other winners were: Amer Osmanagic, best domestic league player (FK Velez); Abdulah Ibrakovic, best domestic coach (Velez); Juan Manuel Varea (Argentina, who plays for NK Siroki Brijeg), best foreign player in Bosnia-Herzegovina; Muhamed Alaim (FK Sarajevo), best goalkeeper; Siroki Brijeg, best organised premier league club, and Rusmir Mrkovic, best referee. For the first time, an award was made for 'immeasurable contribution to the development of football' in Bosnia-Herzegovina, which was bestowed on former national team captain Sergej Barbarez. ■

Fuad Kravac

## BULGARIA



### Anti-racism day

The Bulgarian Football Union (BFU) chose the final day of the Bulgarian championship before Christmas as the 'Day Against Racism'. As a loyal partner of UEFA praised for its leadership role in the campaign to rid football of racism and intolerance, the BFU placed the whole football weekend under the slogan 'United Against Racism'. The president of the BFU, Borislav Mihailov, made an official announcement to all the professional clubs in Bulgaria about the campaign. "It is our duty to do everything possible to achieve our final goal of building a resource and campaign base to sustain long-term anti-discrimination activities in Bulgarian football," he said.

All of the last round of championship matches in 2009 started with a special call by the team captains for fair play and against racism and discrimination, stressing that what mattered was skill, not skin colour. The stadiums all around the country were decorated with 'Say No to Racism' posters and the

three referee escorts wore 'Unite Against Racism' T-shirts, while the match-ball carrier at each game wore a 'Respect' T-shirt. Team captains wore blue and yellow 'Unite Against Racism'-branded armbands. ■

Pavel Kolev



**Bulgaria**  
Before kick-off, the captains read out a declaration against racism.

## CROATIA



### Youth football kicks off the new year

This year's programme of special activities begins with youth camps in Umag, in the Istra region.

The programme is very demanding because of the participation of study groups from the football associations of Finland, Poland and the Republic of Ireland within the scope of the UEFA Study Group Scheme (with focus on elite youth football).

We are bringing together our best young players in the U15 to U18 age ranges. All the camps are led by instructors, the coaches of the youth teams, in association with the football academy of the Croatian Football Federation (CFF).

The work of our most successful clubs will also be presented, as will the information system covering the needs of the clubs and the CFF.

We are delighted that UEFA has placed its trust in us once again by designating us as hosts of an elite round mini-tournament in the European Under-19 Championship. We will welcome the Under-19 teams of Scotland, Belgium and Montenegro.

Especially pleasing is the series of wins achieved by our Under-21 national team, which has put us at the top of our European championship qualifying group.

There are definitely a few highly talented players in this new crop and we are confident

**Croatia**  
A mark of great esteem for Stanko Hautz

that our Under-21 team can maintain their high position and qualify for the Olympics for the first time.

The end of last year brought us a great deal of satisfaction, as several awards of the highest order were bestowed on CFF officials.

Our general secretary, Zorislav Srebric, has been awarded the Franjo Bucar national prize for 2009, the highest recognition given by the republic of Croatia for major contributions to the development of Croatian sport.

The highest honour of the Croatian Olympic Committee (COC), the Matija Ljubek trophy, has been awarded to Stanko Hautz, who has been working in Croatian football for 50 years. He was a longstanding member of the CFF executive board and president of the regulation committee. Currently president of the CFF's court of arbitration and a member of the COC's arbitration council, he is the greatest authority on sporting regulations. He has also served as judge of the supreme court of the republic of Croatia.

Much to our delight, the COC's fair play trophy has been awarded to the young footballer Marko Raso, who plays for first division team NK Zadar. ■

Ante Pavlovic



HMS

## CYPRUS



**Cyprus**  
Angelos Anastasiades, national coach

### Football party for youth players

The big football party for youth players has started. On 20 December, 4,300 young players aged between 7 and 12 from 144 teams embarked on this year's domestic grassroots championship.

In accordance with the competition regulations, all the teams were placed into groups and the finals will take place in May.

The declared aim of the Cyprus Football Association for this youth championship is to give more young players the opportunity to play football.

Also in December, we had a seminar for the grassroots diploma. The seminar was attended by 36 candidates, including the national team captain, Ioannis Okkas.

In anticipation of the draw for the EURO 2012 qualifying competition, our national team will start its preparations by hosting international friendly matches on 3 March and 19 May.

These preparations continue under the leadership of Angelos Anastasiades, whose contract as national head coach was recently renewed for another two years. ■

*Kyriakos Giorgallis*

## CZECH REPUBLIC



### Mini-pitches springing up like mushrooms

The Czech Republic's 62nd artificial mini-pitch has been officially inaugurated in the small village of Bolatice in the region of Northern Moravia.

This important event for the local community, which has a population of 5,000, was attended by a delegation from the Czech Football Association, including its first vice-president, Dalibor Kucera.

Due to its climatic conditions, the Czech Republic is a country where it pays off to invest in artificial pitches. More than 60 artificial



**Czech Republic**  
The new mini-pitch in Bolatice

mini-pitches, spread evenly across all 14 of the country's regions, have been created as part of this project. Local authorities and clubs contribute to the construction costs, with further funding from the UEFA grassroots programme and the ministry for schools, youth and sport.

"This is a significant project which enables large numbers of youngsters to play football on high-quality pitches as a matter of course," said Otakar Mestek, director of the Czech FA's amateur football department. ■

*Jaroslav Kolár*

## ENGLAND



### Beckham gives hope to African youngsters

England international midfielder David Beckham gave his support to The Football Association's international charity partner Coaching for Hope (CfH) when he visited one of its projects in the Khaylitsha township in Cape Town in December.

CfH's programmes use football to create better futures for young people in West and Southern Africa and Beckham, who was in South Africa to take part in the FIFA 2010 World Cup draw, went to the Ikhusi P.P. School in Khaylitsha, where a CfH session involving HIV awareness techniques was held.

Beckham was taken on a tour of the facility by CfH young leader Michael, before joining more than 30 youngsters for a question and answer session and kicking off a specially arranged tournament.

"It's amazing to visit a project like this and see the effect football has on young people,"

said the England midfielder. "Football has the power to change lives and these youngsters are able to learn valuable lessons through their love of the game.

"I feel privileged to have met these children and despite the fact we come from different backgrounds we share a love for the game of football."

He added: "AIDS is a very real problem in places like Khaylitsha and football must ensure it does whatever it can to help educate young people of its dangers and make a difference."

CfH has been supported by The FA and its international development programme since 2005. By organising training courses with professionals from English clubs, CfH trains local football coaches and youth workers in Africa to recognised

**England**  
David Beckham on a humanitarian visit in Cape Town



FA standards, helping them gain skills to educate and enable youngsters in their communities to address such issues as HIV and AIDS and substance abuse.

"It has been inspiring visiting this Coaching for Hope session," added The FA's chairman, David Triesman.

"Watching the boundless energy and promise of these young people has been an amazing experience. Football has a power to inspire change. I am in awe of the coaches here who have the ability to make a difference to the future of these children." ■

*Nada Hook*

## FAROE ISLANDS



### First Faroese woman with European football contract

On 22 January, 18-year-old Mona Breckmann left for Germany to play for Karlsruher SC. She is the first female football player from the Faroe Islands to sign a contract with a football club on the European mainland.

Only one female player has previously signed with a foreign club: Randi Wardum, the Faroese national goalkeeper, who had a contract with Valur in Iceland for a while some years ago.

Despite her young age, Mona Breckmann is already an established striker with the Faroe Islands women's national team. She played her first international match on 25 October 2008, and two days later scored

a hat-trick in the Faroe Islands' 6-2 victory against Luxemburg in a UEFA mini-tournament.

The national coach, Álvur Hansen, says about her skills: *"Mona is a strong forward. She is quick, strong with a good kick. But most importantly, she has the right attitude to the sport. Mona is a role model for other*



Faroe Islands  
Mona Breckmann

## GERMANY



### DFB awarded sustainability prize

For its "outstanding youth work", the installation of 1,000 mini-pitches throughout the country, financed to the tune of EUR 25 million, and its key contribution to integration, the German Football Association (DFB) was awarded the 2009 German sustainability prize at the end of last year.

Theo Zwanziger, president of the DFB, accepted the award with the association's director of sport, Matthias Sammer. *"No association promotes youth more than the DFB and none does it more successfully. All of Germany's youth teams are European champions. The DFB assumes its obligation as an organisation serving the public good and makes an important contribution to integration,"* said former swimming star Franziska van Almsick, presenting the award.

*"Our recipe for success couldn't be easier. We let children do what they love to do: play football. In training and in matches, they are all equal. That is the strength of the game,"* the DFB president said. *"We can do better still if we train our youth leaders and coaches even more. We're working on that. It's the only way to take society further forward."* ■

Stephan Brause

France  
Guingamp won the Coupe de France in 2009.



*Faroese football players.* Hansen has no doubt that it would be a huge advantage for his national team if more players were to get signed up by foreign clubs.

Mona Breckmann got her contact with the German club following a trip with the Faroese women's Under-19 team, when scouts for Karlsruher SC spotted her talent.

After a trial in Karlsruher, Mona was offered a contract – initially for six months.

Mona used to play for Argja Bóltfelag, whose women's team finished the 2009 season as league runners-up and cup winners.

Karlsruher's women's team play in the third division in Germany. ■

Ingi Samuelsen

## FRANCE



### Coupe de France

With 7,317 clubs registered, the 2009/10 Coupe de France attracted a new record number of participants and exceeded the 7,000 milestone for the second year in a row. The competition has proved more than ever to be the most popular in French football. Never before has it attracted so many players, spectators and TV viewers. All the signs were good for the Coupe de France as the competition, which was launched in 1917, entered its 93rd edition. Plenty has already been said and written about the "legend" and "magic" of the competition, which have been established over time as impressive feats and unforgettable finals have made the Charles Simon trophy the most coveted in French football. The Coupe de France has become an object and subject of passion, no matter which angle it is viewed from.

The Coupe de France enjoys a virtually spotless public image and is recognised as having numerous virtues: authenticity, human and emotional dimensions, the ability to mobilise people and bring them together, promoting



#### Israel

Avi Luzon and Theo Zwanziger display the memorandum of understanding.

they will give lectures and practical study courses to local coaches. The DFB will also invite IFA representatives to Germany to observe its talent promotion system.

At the request of the IFA, the DFB will send referee instructors to Israel to give lectures and practical study courses to local referees.

The two football associations have also agreed to organise international friendly matches between their national youth teams on an annual basis.

For the chairman of the IFA, Avi Luzon, *"The understanding on which we are signing will be an important step for the development of Israeli football. I am sure that our coaches, referees, footballers and scouts will benefit from this collaboration"*.

Theo Zwanziger, the DFB's president, said: *"We are here not only to tutor but also to learn, and we can learn a lot from the IFA. The basis for the memorandum is the assistance we can give Israeli football."* ■

Nimrod Suzin

## ISRAEL



### Memorandum of understanding with the German FA

The Israel Football Association (IFA) and the German Football Association (DFB) have signed a memorandum of understanding concerning a collaboration between the two associations.

The MoU has been signed by Avi Luzon, chairman of the IFA, and Theo Zwanziger, president of the DFB.

The associations decided to intensify their partnership, focusing on the areas of coach, referee and player development.

The DFB will invite Israeli coaches to participate in a coaching course in Germany and will also send coach instructors to Israel where

## SWITZERLAND



### General secretary Alex Miescher takes office

The new general secretary of the Swiss Football Association (SFV), 41-year-old Alex Miescher, took up his new post at the beginning of December, succeeding Peter Gilliéron, who has been elected as SFV president. Gilliéron had been general secretary since 1993 before being chosen to replace the retired Ralph Zloczower.

Before joining the SFV, Miescher worked as a military pilot and personal assistant to the commander of the Swiss air force. The general staff wing commander will also continue his military service in the coming years as commander of the Sion airbase. A qualified economist, he speaks French and English as well as German, his mother tongue. He is married and has two children.

Switzerland  
Alex Miescher,  
the new  
general  
secretary of  
the Swiss FA



His previous experience of sport is in swimming rather than football. Miescher was the Swiss Swimming Federation's director of swimming from 2006 to 2009. As a swimmer himself, he was national crawl sprint champion five times, national team captain between 1990 and 1993, European Championship finalist and World Championship participant.

*"I want to use enthusiasm and assertiveness to nurture the grass roots. Grassroots and elite sport must, again and again, recognise that they need each other. I am very excited about getting to know the global football family and am proud to be part of it!"*

Pierre Benoit

## UKRAINE



### Renovated Metalist Stadium opens up in Kharkiv

The new 41,000-capacity Metalist Stadium has opened its doors to the home club, FC Metalist Kharkiv, making it the second arena in Ukraine to be primed for EURO 2012 action.

Metalist's owner, Olexander Yaroslavskiy, who will also coordinate Kharkiv's preparations for the tournament, was the chief benefactor behind the refurbishment, which included the installation of a new pitch, an undersoil heating system, an LED scoreboard, the first spidercam in Ukraine and an improved roof structure. The capacity of the stadium has increased from 30,000 to 41,307 seats, including more than 800 places for media representatives, 438 seats for VIP guests and 106 for disabled fans.

FC Metalist have continued to play at the venue during the construction work, the completion of which was marked by the grand opening on 5 December. A series of unique roof-support structures at the stadium have earned it the nickname "The Spider Arena". Meanwhile, the designers of the reconstruction project have been nominated for the state award in architecture. And the stadium itself has been nominated for the UEFA elite category.

The president of the Football Federation of Ukraine, Grigoriy Surkis, was in attendance along with fellow dignitaries such as Ukraine's president, Viktor Yushchenko, and the prime minister, Yulia Tymoshenko. "Kharkiv is second after Donetsk in Ukraine to get an arena which will be hosting EURO 2012 matches," said Surkis. "Thanks to concerted efforts from local business and authorities, Kharkiv citizens will see EURO 2012 matches live."

*"Our Metalist is a unique construction as we didn't copy any other stadium in the world – although we did carefully study the best practices in European football,"* highlighted Olexander Yaroslavskiy. "And I am especially proud of the fact that this new stadium is the result of work by local architects and construction companies. Now we are going to develop the surrounding infrastructure to make it look modern and really European."

Bogdan Buga

## WALES



### New Chief Executive

The Football Association of Wales is delighted to announce the appointment of a new chief executive, Jonathan Ford.

Ford, 39, has extensive marketing experience from years spent with MTV and radio station Atlantic 252 and, since 2000, with Coca-Cola. During that time he project-managed Coca-Cola's marketing strategy for EURO 2004 as well as campaigns for EURO 2000, the 2002 World Cup finals, the 2002 Commonwealth Games and the 2003 Rugby World Cup.

Jonathan took over in January from the outgoing secretary general, David Collins, who had served the association since 1995. We also take the opportunity to wish David a very happy retirement and to thank him for all his efforts over the last 15 years.

Ceri Stennett

Wales  
David Collins



Wales  
Jonathan Ford



*"It's been a long road but now we have finally begun. At last we will have a modern, world-class arena for our national team,"* said the president of the Swedish FA, Lars-Åke Lagrell.

The Swedbank Arena will be the crown jewel of Arenastaden, a completely new district of the city of Solna. Stockholm's tallest hotel, Scandinavia's biggest shopping mall, offices for 10,000 people and 2,000 apartments will make this a vibrant and unique part of Solna. The construction work is scheduled for completion in 2012.

The Swedish FA has also announced the sale of the old national arena, the Råsunda stadium, to constructors Peab/Fabege for 490 million Swedish crowns. Ownership will change when the Swedbank Arena is finished, and the final price depend on permits to build homes and offices on the Råsunda site in the future.

Andreas Nilsson

### Ukraine

The Metalist Stadium is ready for EURO 2012.



the qualities of amateur football, the local touch, etc. The competition fires the imagination, invites players to excel themselves and compete on an equal footing, provides opportunities for everyone and fills stadiums with a cumulative total of more than 577,000 spectators (from the round of 64 to the final).

This enthusiasm is inevitably shared by the media. The spectacle provided by televised Coupe de France matches is profitable in the literal (advertising) as well as the figurative sense (TV ratings), attracting a combined total of over 32 million viewers, to the great satisfaction of the competition's two official broadcasters, France Télévisions and Eurosport.

Last season's competition produced an extraordinary scenario, with an all-Breton final in which Ligue 2 side Guingamp beat Stade Rennais FC 2-1 in front of a record crowd of more than 80,000 spectators at the Stade de France. A new chapter in the story will be written on 1 May, when the successor to the Côtés-d'Armor club will be crowned. ■

*Matthieu Brelle-Andrade*

## MALTA



### A year of activity in all sectors

During 2009, the Malta Football Association (MFA) continued working intensively in all sectors – technical, administrative and infrastructural – while also honouring its obligations towards the international football bodies.

It was a year brimful with ordinary and extraordinary work. Regular council meetings, meetings of the executive and administrative committees, as well as those of several boards, combined with continued work on different projects and activities at the technical centre – all were aimed at improving the game in various spheres.



D. Aquilina

Meanwhile, the organisation by the association of the domestic competitions at every level and the commitments of the Maltese national teams kept matches going almost throughout the year.

The facilities at the Ta' Qali national complex continued to be enhanced so that the players, spectators and media could enjoy better surroundings.

**Latvia**  
Janis Skredelis receives his award from the president of Latvia, Valdis Zatlers.



## LATVIA

### Janis Skredelis receives presidential award

Janis Skredelis, head of the Latvian Football Federation's competition department and ex-manager of the famous football club Daugava Riga, celebrated his 70th birthday on 29 December and shortly before received a Latvian presidential award from the president of Latvia, Valdis Zatlers.

Mr Skredelis received Latvia's highest individual award, the 'Order of Three Stars' for his lifetime contribution to the development of Latvian football.

On 29 December, many former and current Latvian football playing legends, coaches



and Latvian sports authorities visited Mr Skredelis at the Latvian Football Federation. In honour of his birthday, a special friendly match was organised between Latvian internationals and star players of the 1990s, including Mihails Zemlinskis, Aleksandrs Isakovs and Olegs Blagonadezdins, and a team of Daugava Riga players from the 1980s, managed by Janis Skredelis and including, among other well-known former players, Sergejs Vichovskis, Jurijs Andrejevs and Igor Stepanovs. The younger generation won the match 3-2. ■

*Media Department*



FMF

## MOLDOVA



### Gala for laureates of Moldovan football

Alexandru Epureanu, the midfielder of FC Dinamo Moscow, received the 2009 player of the year award at the laureates' gala held in December in front of an audience of 1,500. It is a traditional celebration when the FA of Moldova recognises the outstanding football personalities of the year.

At the gala, other awards were presented for the best coach (Leonid Kuchuk, FC Sheriff

**Moldova**  
Pavel Cebanu, president of the Moldovan FA, speaking at the awards ceremony

Tiraspol), best referee (Veaceslav Banari), best futsal player (Ruslan Istrati, Tornado Chisinau), best female player (Alina Birca, Roma Puhaceni), best beach football player (Sergiu Canter, Real Succes Hirtopul Mare) and best football-tennis player (Tudor Virilan, CFT Truseni).

The ceremony continued by honouring the best goalkeeper of the national championship (Stanislav Namasco, FC Sheriff), best defender (Vazha Tarkhnishvili, FC Sheriff), best midfielder (Alexandru Onica, FC Dacia Chisinau), best forward (Gheorghe Ovseannicov, FC Olimpia Balti) and best goalscorer (Oleg Andronic, FC Zimbru Chisinau).

FC Sheriff received the team of the year award, while FC Iskra-Stali Ribnita took the 2009 fair play award.

Other awards from UEFA and the FA of Moldova went to FC Narubai Ribnita (most valuable grassroots football event), the deaf national team of Moldova (best disabled football event), CS Real-Succes Chisinau (best youth football event), CS Gloria Edinet (best women's football event), the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency in Moldova (development of grassroots football) and, finally, Evgheni Pavlov-Bubis (development of beach football). ■

*Press office*

**Malta**  
Grassroots football goes hand in hand with fair play in Malta too.

Work on the grassroots centre started during the year, while improvements to facilities of clubs and associations – also with UEFA's assistance – proceeded smoothly, with this project already yielding the desired results.

Looking back over 2009, we can conclude that it was another remarkable year in the association's pursuit of its objectives to bring about a better future for the game. ■

*Alex Vella*

Northern Ireland  
Thornhill College, winners in the U18 category



## NORTHERN IRELAND

### School indoor tournament

The third Dale Farm National Indoor Finals took place at the Valley Leisure Centre, with 18 schools battling it out for the prestigious title of Dale Farm Indoor Champion. The finals bring together the winners from the seven regional qualifiers in three age groups: Year 8/9 (under 13), Year 10/11 (under 15) and Year 12+ (under 18).

In the Year 12+ section, Carrickfergus Grammar, Oakgrove Integrated College, Our Lady and St Patrick's College, and Thornhill College proved to be the strongest teams, with all four securing a place in the semi-finals. Oakgrove then beat Carrick on penalties to book their place in the final, where they met Thornhill.

In a tense final, both teams had several chances to grab the winning goal, but seconds from the final whistle it was Thornhill's

Laura Nicholas who managed to latch on to a loose ball before smashing it into the net to secure the title with a 1-0 win.

The defending champions, St Cecilia's College, were joined by Carrick Grammar, Holy Cross and Lismore Comprehensive in the Year 10/11 semi-finals. Carrick narrowly defeated Holy Cross 2-1, while in a dramatic match between St Cecilia's and Lismore, the game was forced to penalties after it ended 3-3 at full time, with St Cecilia's going through to the final. The final score was 5-2 to St Cecilia's.

In the final, Carrick took an early lead through Rebecca Craig and looked to be heading for victory until Celine Curtis scored a late equaliser, forcing the game to be decided on penalty kicks. In a nail-biting penalty shoot-out in which the first three penalty



takers all missed their shots, it was Holly Robinson who kept her nerve and scored the penalty to secure a 2-1 win for Carrick.

Enniskillen Collegiate, St Mary's High (Lurgan), St Cecilia's College and Holy Cross all made it to the Year 8/9 semi-finals. St Mary's narrowly beat Enniskillen 2-1, and following a 1-1 draw in the other game, penalty kicks were required to determine the other finalist, with St Cecilia's booking their place in the final. The final score was 3-1 to St Cecilia's. In an exciting final, St Mary's dramatically snatched the winning goal moments before the final whistle, courtesy of a shot from close range by Chloe Lavery. The final score was 1-0 to St Mary's. ■

Sara Booth

## REPUBLIC OF IRELAND



### Special youth programme

The technical director of the Football Association of Ireland (FAI), Packie Bonner, was on hand recently to award certificates to participants in the FÁS/FAI youth soccer training course. The training programme, which is based in Dublin, facilitates both male and female participants, with 75 players in total taking part.

Among this year's graduates were several League of Ireland players, including Michael Daly (Drogheda United), Dean Marshall (Sligo Rovers), Enda Stevens (Shamrock Rovers) and Ryan McEvoy (Bohemians).

The FÁS/FAI joint initiative has had a number of substantial success stories in a relatively short period of time. Among the past pupils in the course are Kevin Long, now with English Premier League side Burnley, and former Galway star Jay O'Shea, who is with Birmingham City.

Republic of Ireland  
League of Ireland players receiving their diplomas



The FÁS/FAI youth soccer training courses provide a unique blend of educational and football development for talented young footballers in Ireland who are currently unemployed. The programme gives footballers who have left school and are interested in developing a potential career in football or the sports and leisure industry an opportunity to enhance both their football skills and education level.

Of those who graduated last season, 7 have played at international level and 19 in the League of Ireland.

An attractive feature of the FÁS/FAI programme is the emphasis placed on the educational development of the students. The education programme coordinates and delivers this aspect of the programme, which consists of theory and practical sessions in the areas of health, fitness, business and IT.

Students are prepared for FETAC (the Further Education and Training Awards Council) qualifications in health and fitness, and if a certain standard of performance is achieved during this phase, students then prepare for the ITEC (Irish Training and Education Centre) gym instructor diploma. Qualifications such as these allow students to secure full or part-time employment in fitness centres, teach their own classes on a freelance basis or work as fitness consultants to teams.

The football aspects of the programme are looked after by qualified FAI coaches. The three to four hours' coaching a day, which is expert and progressive, is supplemented by a fitness programme that would be equivalent to full-time training. Weekly matches and regular gym work are also part of the programme. The course participants will also take part in Kick Start 1 and 2, the first two steps on the way to becoming a qualified coach. ■

Eoghan Rice



Sweden  
Princess Victoria cuts the first turf.

## SWEDEN



### Royal first cut for new national arena

On 7 December HRH Crown Princess Victoria did the ceremonial cutting of the first turf for the Swedbank Arena and Arenastaden. Construction of Sweden's new national football arena is now officially under way, although preparatory ground works were carried out throughout the autumn.

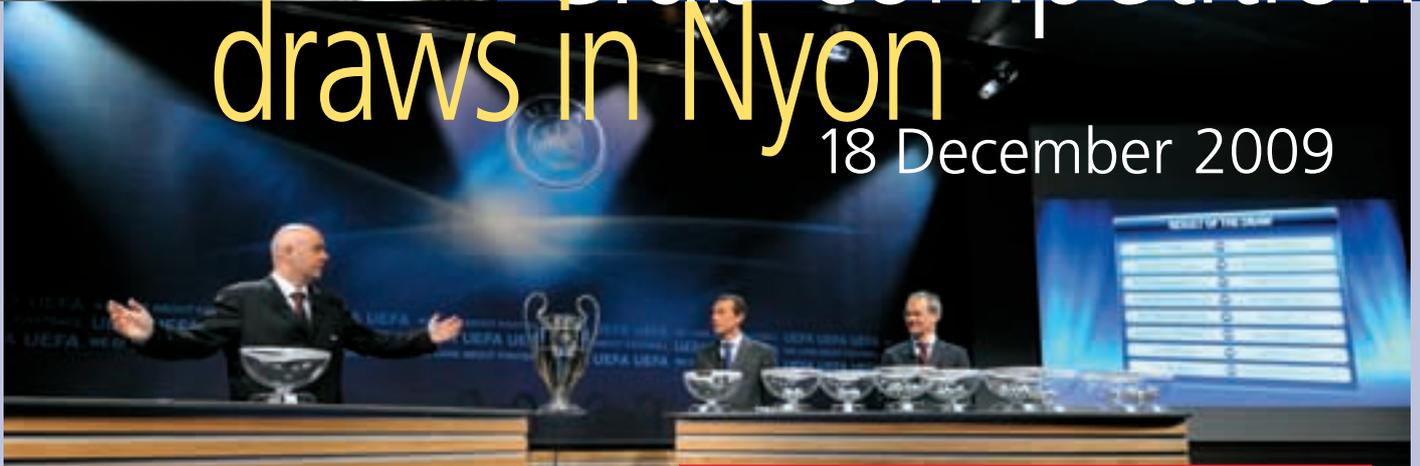
The Swedbank Arena will be home to the national team as well as the Swedish FA. It will accommodate 50,000 spectators for football and, with a retractable roof, it will function as a modern multipurpose complex for major events all year round.

"This is an amazing day for Swedish football. We took the first initiative in July 2003.



# Club competition draws in Nyon

18 December 2009



Photos: UEFA-Woods

# Communications

## Birthdays – Calendar

### Birthdays

Zorislav Srebric (Croatia), member of the National Team Competitions Committee, celebrates his 70th birthday on 28 February. Technical instructor Luc Rabat (France) is 60 on 10 February and Xavier Lebray (France), member of the Appeals Body, reaches the same milestone on 27 February. On 13 February, Pierluigi Collina (Italy), member of the Referees Committee, turns 50, as does John Beattie (England), member of the Stadium Construction and Management Panel, on 28 February.

UEFA also extends birthday greetings this month to:

- Volker Roth (Germany, 1.2)
- Karen Espelund (Norway, 1.2)
- Kyros Vassaras (Greece, 1.2)
- Leonardus van der Kroft (Netherlands, 2.2)
- Trygve Børnø (Norway, 2.2)
- Mark Blackburn (England, 3.2)
- Renata Tomasova (Slovakia, 3.2)
- Jelena Oblakovic-Babic (Serbia, 3.2)
- Vaclav Krondl (Czech Republic, 5.2)
- Gabriel Weiss (Slovakia, 6.2)
- Erich Rutenmüller (Germany, 8.2)
- Yusuf Namoglu (Turkey, 8.2)
- Alexander Slutski (Belarus, 8.2)
- Fino Fini (Italy, 9.2)
- Donald McVicar (Scotland, 9.2)
- Danilo Filacchione (Italy, 9.2)
- Zoran Lakovic (Serbia, 9.2)
- Tomislav Karadzic (Serbia, 10.2)
- Dani Koren (Israel, 10.2)
- William McDougall (Scotland, 11.2)
- Henadz Niavyhlas (Belarus, 11.2)
- Annelie Larsson (Sweden, 11.2)
- Borislav Mihailov (Bulgaria, 12.2)
- Oleksandr Bandurko (Ukraine, 13.2)
- Dieter Pauly (Germany, 14.2)
- Marinus den Engelsman (Netherlands, 14.2)
- Manuel Lopez Fernandez (Spain, 14.2)
- Thomas Weyhing (Germany, 14.2)
- Livio Bazzoli (Italy, 14.2)
- Peter Bonde (Denmark, 14.2)
- Juan Carlos Miralles (Andorra, 14.2)
- John McBeth (Scotland, 15.2)
- Susanne Erlandsson (Sweden, 15.2)
- Leif Sundell (Sweden, 15.2)
- Katriina Elovirta (Finland, 15.2)
- Svitlana Shkil (Ukraine, 15.2)
- Orkhan Huseynzade (Azerbaijan, 15.2)
- Adalbert Kassai (Romania, 16.2)
- Gudrun Inga Sivertsen (Iceland, 17.2)
- Jozef Venglos (Slovakia, 18.2)
- Flemming Serritslev (Denmark, 18.2)
- Patrick Kelly (Republic of Ireland, 18.2)
- Pertti Alaja (Finland, 18.2)
- Antonello Valentini (Italy, 18.2)
- Janis Mezeckis (Latvia, 19.2)
- Lars Arnesson (Sweden, 20.2)
- Eggert Magnusson (Iceland, 20.2)
- Edward Potok (Poland, 20.2)
- João F. De Magalhães Marques (Portugal, 20.2)
- Ralph Zloczower (Switzerland, 21.2)
- Fernando Gomes (Portugal, 21.2)
- Holger Hieronymus (Germany, 22.2)
- Vladimir Sajin (Slovenia, 22.2)
- Asim Khudiyev (Azerbaijan, 22.2)
- Ana Caetano (Portugal, 22.2)
- Maarten Fonteijn (Netherlands, 23.2)
- Peter Jones (England, 24.2)
- Janos Ring (Hungary, 24.2)
- Oleg Harlamov (Estonia, 24.2)
- Juan Padron Morales (Spain, 25.2)
- Manfred Amerell (Germany, 25.2)
- Miroslav Radoman (Serbia, 25.2)
- Alberto Lopez Moreno (Spain, 25.2)
- Jens Erik Magnussen (Faroe Islands, 26.2)
- Egidius Braun (Germany, 27.2)
- Allan Hansen (Denmark, 27.2)
- Aron Schmidhuber (Germany, 28.2)

### Forthcoming events

#### Meetings

**31.1-5.2.2010, Malta**

Referees course

**3.2.2010, Valletta, Malta**

Referees Committee

**7.2.2010, Warsaw**

2010-12 European Championship qualifying draw

**9.2.2010, Stockholm**

Medical Committee

**9-11.2.2010, Stockholm**

5th UEFA Medical Symposium

**10.2.2010, Nyon**

Stadium and Security Committee  
Club Competitions Committee

**11.2.2010, Nyon**

Futsal and Beach Soccer Committee  
Women's Football Committee

**12.2.2010, Nyon**

Youth and Amateur Football Committee  
Draw for the preliminary and intermediate rounds of the 2010/11 UEFA Regions' Cup  
Development and Technical Assistance Committee

**15.2.2010, Nyon**

EURO 2016 bid handover ceremony

#### Competitions

**16/17 and 23/24.2.2010**

UEFA Champions League: round of 16 (first legs)

**18.2.2010**

UEFA Europa League: round of 32 (first legs)

**25.2.2010**

UEFA Europa League: round of 32 (return legs)

### Notices

■ On 1 January, Jasmin Bakovic took over as acting general secretary of the Football Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

■ On 11 January, Jonathan Ford took up office as chief executive of the Football Association of Wales.

### Match agents

New UEFA match agent licences have been granted to:

**Daniel Neuber**

90 Minuten & Mehr  
Gartenstrasse 8, 41363 Jüchen, Germany  
Tel.: +49 2164 950 493  
daniel.neuber@90minutenundmehr.de

**Dieter Thomaseth**

Studio Legale  
Piazza Vittoria 47, 39100 Bolzano, Italy  
Tel.: +39 0471 262 385, dieter@thomaseth.com

The licence of **Rudolf Schnippe** (Germany) has been revoked.

### New publications

#### ANUARUL FOTBALULUI ROMÂNESC 2005-2009

Under the supervision of the chairman of its history and statistics committee, Dan Cristea, the Romanian Football Federation has published the tenth volume in its collection on the domestic competitions and the Romanian national teams, from the A team to the youth, women's and futsal teams. The book is full of statistical details, for example on players in the top division, and constitutes a valuable record of a period during which the Bucharest clubs' dominance of the domestic championship was seriously challenged.

#### FOOTBALL – GUIDE 2009 Français & International

Sophie Guillet and François Laforge are the authors of this guide published by De Vecchi, which contains, among other details, all the results of all top division championships and all French cup competitions since 1904.

It also contains lists and statistics on all the players who played in the 2008/09 Ligue 1 championship, as well as information about international competitions and, under the heading of "Le football pratique", about the history of football and key dates, the

Laws of the Game and various other subjects, such as technical matters, tactics, media, supporter clubs and games.

The guide includes a supplement containing all the dates for the 2009/10 season and a detailed review of the 2008/09 season at both national and international levels, including EURO 2008.

(Editions De Vecchi, 22 rue Huyghens, 75014 Paris, France – www.de-vecchi.fr – EUR 16)

WE CARE ABOUT FOOTBALL



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

**Chief editor:** André Vieli

**Produced by** Atema Communication SA, CH-1196 Gland;  
CO Créations, CH-1262 Eysins (News from member associations)

**Printed by** Artgraphic Cavin SA, CH-1422 Grandson

**Editorial deadline:** 8 January 2010

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

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