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Curtain-raiser  
to EURO 2012  
in Warsaw

**03**

Spain remain  
European futsal  
champions

**06**

Referee courses  
in Malta

**15**



# Message of the president

## Destination number 31

Since its earliest days, UEFA has chosen to vary the destinations of its congresses, visiting the countries of each of its member associations in turn. Since 1955, 30 cities have thus hosted the general meeting of European football's governing body. The most common destinations have been big capital cities such as Rome, London and Paris, but others include cultural centres such as Dubrovnik and Dresden, and tourist hotspots such as Cascais and Limassol.

From a purely operational perspective, it would, of course, be easier to bring together the delegates of the member associations in the same place each year. But moving from one city to another has its own advantages: it enables the host associations to contribute actively to one of UEFA's biggest events and gives them an opportunity to demonstrate their organisational expertise, while raising their country's profile and prestige among the delegates of the other associations. For the delegates, these roaming congresses offer enriching cultural experiences, as well as opportunities to see the other associations at work.

Moving from one city to another also reflects the dynamic character of European football, ever ready to rise to new challenges and adapt to constant changes. It is also a means of reinforcing the unity of our confederation, by reminding our members that they all have a role to play and are all equally important to the smooth running of the organisation.

I look forward to joining the representatives of our associations in Tel Aviv, the 31st stop on the UEFA congress circuit.



**Michel Platini**  
UEFA President

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### COVER

The curtain was raised on the 2010–12 European Football Championship on 7 February in Warsaw with the draw to determine the nine qualifying groups.

Photo: UEFA-Woods

# The curtain rises in Poland

## ...after a lot of backstage work



UEFA/Woods

**IT'S 12.45 ON SUNDAY, 7 FEBRUARY 2010. AT THE QUALIFYING ROUND DRAW  
IN THE PALACE OF CULTURE AND SCIENCE IN WARSAW, THE CURTAIN HAS JUST  
COME DOWN. BUT IT HAS JUST BEEN RAISED ON EURO 2012.**

The spectacular 45-minute ceremony screened by 70 TV networks and watched by millions all over Europe heralded the first major event attached to the competition. And it was a major event. Preparations initiated in March 2009 gained momentum when the venue in Warsaw was confirmed a month later. The backstage teams from UEFA and Poland met at five site visits to push the project steadily towards completion, while the UEFA team assigned to the event gradually increased from 5 to nigh on 100.

These preparations illustrate that the qualifying draw is one of the truly big dates in the UEFA calendar – not least because it involves all



53 member associations. As it represents such a rare gathering of the football family, it's a tradition to stage a dinner on the eve of the draw, which added a further dimension to the Warsaw logistics. All in all, some 600 guests were divided into various target groups, rooms were booked at four hotels in the city, a massive transport project was implemented, and accreditation procedures were designed to cope with 1,083 people divided into nine different categories. One such category was 'volunteers' – the people who make the big events tick. In Warsaw, over 600 applied for places in the squad and 163 were selected for a variety of crucial backstage roles.

### A lot of sub-events

As for the draw hall itself, work on the design of the stage had begun in July 2009 but couldn't be completed until after the official unveiling of the EURO 2012 logo in December. The ceremony was the first public outing for the final tournament branding, so it was logical to invite commercial and broadcast partners to sample the look and feel of it during a sponsor information session on the Saturday afternoon – one of many sub-events pegged to the draw. Warsaw provided a first opportunity to see the strikingly colourful branding at work on a series of products ranging from backdrops and TV graphics to placemats and welcome bags.

By Saturday, back-up services were fully operational. Welcome desks had been set up at Warsaw airport and the four hotels, the accreditation centre was in top gear, security and medical services were up and running,



A meeting of the commercial partners  
A special textile was used for the country names.

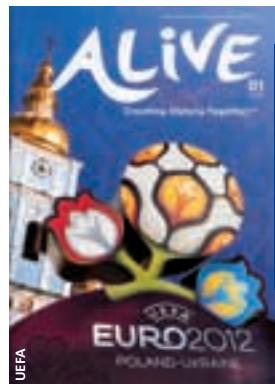


G. Turner

hospitality areas were being set up and equipped, and all the behind-the-scenes operations, such as catering for the volunteers, were also up to speed. This all added up to a grandiose operation.

### **Big challenges**

Grandiose might also be a good adjective to apply to the Palace of Culture and Science as well. To give the enormous monument a EURO 2012 feel, the signage teams had been at work since the previous Monday. The media dimensions of the event were highlighted by the two compounds for high-definition TV broadcast trucks and satellite uplinks – one inside the massive structure and the other amid the heaps of snow outside. The dimensions of the building had thrown up challenges that the viewing public would never dream of. For example, the kilometres of cabling from the broadcast compound to the draw hall had to be minutely plotted and woven like skeins of wool to avoid them disrupting normal life in parts of the building which were unaffected by the big draw. As at EURO 2008, UEFA Media Technologies were in charge of producing the TV signal – this time in conjunction with Polish network TVP. In the gallery just up the stairs from the draw hall, a spectacular interview area had been constructed for 70 rights-holding TV and radio stations, 72 non-rights holders, 46 photographers and 166 written-press and website reporters.



The first issue of Alive, the official EURO 2012 newsletter published in English, Polish and Ukrainian, was distributed in Warsaw.

### **Two rehearsals**

In the auditorium, serious preparations for the draw ceremony began early on the Saturday morning. In a small backstage room, the names of the 51 national associations going into the draw were carefully rolled up and inserted into the plastic balls. This time, instead of paper, a special textile material was used so that, when the name was displayed to the audience and the cameras, it didn't appear creased and crumpled. Three complete sets had to be compiled – one for the draw itself and one for each of the two rehearsals scheduled for the Saturday.

At the first, lighting levels were scrupulously tested; it was decided that the trophy was better positioned on one side of the stage rather than the other; the departure of the AudioFeels group (as impressive in rehearsal as during the ceremony itself) from the stage through the audience was slightly reorganised;

it was felt that the pots could be better positioned on the two tables; presenters Masha Yefrosinina and Piotr Sobczynski looked slightly different from their Sunday lunchtime versions (but equally relaxed) in their winter street clothes; and, in the dummy draw, there was laughter when England and Scotland were drawn together in Group F.

### **Tournament ambassadors**

Michel Platini, one of a handful of spectators at the first rehearsal, braved the sub-zero temperatures to record his welcome message on the steps of the palace and, in the afternoon, faced dozens of reporters and 19 TV cameras in the press conference room. In the meantime, he had found the time to watch the second rehearsal, at which, instead of TV personnel with huge name tags on strings round their necks, the genuine tournament ambassadors were on stage to help UEFA's general secretary, Gianni Infantino, with the draw. This time, Zbigniew Boniek, Andrzej Szarmach, Oleg Blokhin and Andriy Shevchenko raised a laugh by drawing France and the Republic of Ireland into the same group. By early evening, the ceremony looked good enough for efforts to concentrate on helping the guests to enjoy the traditional dinner in the impressive Polytechnika building.

But there were few late nights. At 06.30 on the Sunday morning,



The cameras are levelled at the stage.



The UEFA president, Michel Platini, recording his welcome message



UEFA-Woods

The tournament ambassadors, Ukraine's Andriy Shevchenko and Oleg Blokhin and Poland's Andrzej Szarmach and Zbigniew Boniek, helped to conduct the draw.



UEFA-Woods

The position of the trophy on stage was a matter of much deliberation.

GROUP A	GROUP B	GROUP C
Germany	Russia	Italy
Turkey	Slovakia	Serbia
Austria	Republic of Ireland	Northern Ireland
Belgium	FYR Macedonia	Slovenia
Kazakhstan	Armenia	Estonia
Azerbaijan	Andorra	Faroe Islands
GROUP D	GROUP E	GROUP F
France	Netherlands	Croatia
Romania	Sweden	Greece
Bosnia-Herzegovina	Finland	Israel
Belarus	Hungary	Latvia
Albania	Moldova	Georgia
Luxembourg	San Marino	Malta
GROUP G	GROUP H	GROUP I
England	Portugal	Spain
Switzerland	Denmark	Czech Republic
Bulgaria	Norway	Scotland
Wales	Cyprus	Lithuania
Montenegro	Iceland	Liechtenstein

The group winners and best runners-up qualify automatically for the final round; the other eight runners-up will contest play-offs for the remaining four places at EURO 2012.

stewards, volunteers and medical staff were being briefed. By that time – bearing in mind that the Polish prime minister, Donald Tusk, was among the big names involved – tight security was in place. By 08.00 the huge media centre and broadcast compound were open. Staff were checking the nine meeting

rooms where administrators of the teams in each group could sit down after the draw to thrash out fixture lists and logistics. Waitresses, beautifully dressed in traditional Polish style, worked with caterers to bring the hospitality areas to life and welcome visitors into a custom-built area where

the eight host cities displayed what they will be able to offer to the fans in just over two years' time.

#### Press conference

In the draw hall, UEFA's team of media officers marked out positions for photographers and rehearsed all the frantic post-draw manoeuvring aimed at getting the coaches on stage for group photos immediately after they had discovered their opponents and then moving them upstairs to place them in front of the right cameras, microphones and reporters at the right time. At 10.00, the TV commentators got together in the press conference room to run a fine-tooth comb through the ceremony running order, to check access routes between commentary and interview positions, and to pass on their requests for post-ceremony interviews.

By this time, the big names were arriving. Joachim Löw and Berti Vogts were saying hello, unaware that they would be drawn into the same group. The same applied to Bert van Marwijk and Erwin Koeman. And, as the guests made their way into the auditorium, Giovanni Trapattoni was busy greeting coaches who had once been his players. At 11.45, everybody had somehow been persuaded to take their seats and, spot on 12.00, the first-night nerves were finally calmed as the show got under way. The rest, as they say, is history...



UMET was in charge of producing the images.



Fabio Capello answers journalists' questions in the mixed zone.

UEFA-Woods



The third-place play-off between the Czech Republic (Martin Dlouhy, in red) and Azerbaijan (Felipe) Sportsfile



Michel Platini presents Spain with their winners' medals. Sportsfile



# European Futsal Championship in Hungary

## Spain make it five in five-a-side



**SPAIN'S VICTORY OVER PORTUGAL ON 30 JANUARY IN THE HUNGARIAN CITY OF DEBRECEN GAVE THEM THEIR FOURTH GOLD MEDAL IN THE SIX OFFICIAL CHAMPIONSHIPS THAT HAVE BEEN DISPUTED TO DATE. BUT THEIR TRIUMPH IN THE FIRST EUROPEAN TOURNAMENT TO BE PLAYED UNDER UEFA AUSPICES IN 1996 GIVES THEM LEGITIMATE CLAIMS TO HAVE SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED THEIR POKER HAND IN THE INDOOR GAME.**

Although the final outcome may have been familiar, Hungary 2010 represented a radically different event compared with previous editions. It was the first final tournament to feature 12 teams, with the opening phase conducted in four groups of three.

The results in Hungary provided some compelling evidence. Azerbaijan – one of the newcomers – emerged as the dark horses of the tournament: after they had been beaten by Portugal in the penalty shoot-out which decided their semi-final, they lost the third-place match to the Czech Republic, who, by going home with bronze medals, recorded their best ever performance in a final tournament. Prior to the knock-out stages, the revolutionary format had been endorsed by final matchdays in which no fixtures were meaningless

and, on the contrary, had turned out to be highly competitive.

### Other novelties

For the first time, the final tournament was staged in two cities – Budapest and Debrecen – more than 200km apart. This measure took futsal out into the country and the Hungarian association was rewarded by attendance figures which averaged out at over 2,800 per game – a significant increase on the 2007 finals played at venues of lesser capacity.

Talking about the hosts, the contribution made by the Hungarian national association warrants a round of applause. The tournament was impeccably organised and laid benchmarks in several areas – not least the levels of entertainment offered to spectators before matches, during the half-time break

and even during the 60-second timeouts. These spectators, along with the viewing public which tuned into the matches screened by Eurosport, were also witnesses to another ground-breaking feature – the black playing surface adorned with a centre circle in the form of the tournament logo.

### Highlights

The new format (four groups of three followed by quarter- and semi-finals) meant that 20 matches were played at Hungary 2010. So these pages don't set out to provide reports on all of them, but just to mention some highlights.

Czech Republic v Hungary in Group A, for example. Both had been soundly beaten by Azerbaijan in their opening matches, leaving them to battle for second place in the final game. The hosts, with a more favourable goal difference, required only a draw. With only 15 minutes remaining, they were doing substantially better than that. They were 4-0 up. Tomas Neumann's team hit back – 5 times in 13 minutes – but the worm turned again, with Zsolt Gyurcsanyi scoring, with 39 seconds remaining, the equaliser that earned the home fans the prospect of a quarter-final place. Before the cheering subsided, that hope was dashed, with Marek Kopecky giving the Czechs a 6-5 advantage 19 seconds before the end!

This may have been the most striking example of brinkmanship but it was by no means the only one.

In the second Group D fixture, Portugal seemed to be cruising after



Sportsfile



Italy's Saad Assis (in blue) up against Marek Kopecky of the Czech Republic in the quarter-finals.

taking an early 2-0 lead against a Belarus side which had been hammered 9-1 by Spain on the opening day. But the debutants fought back with 4 goals in 15 minutes, which left the Portuguese less than 9 minutes from an early exit. Back from the brink they came, to go 5-4 up with 69 seconds on the clock... only to concede an equaliser from the double-penalty mark just a second from the final whistle.

This draw meant that the Belarus squad stayed in Debrecen for another couple of days on the outside chance that the Portuguese would lose to Spain by eight goals or more. When Orlando Duarte's side fell 5-1 behind midway through the second half, the Belarus contingent behind the Spanish goal became quite lively... only for Portugal to play out a 6-1 defeat which sent them into the competition's record books as the only side to have qualified from a group phase with one point.

That wasn't all. A day earlier, the Russian team which had beaten the Slovenians 5-1 in their opening game, appeared to be cruising when they took a 2-0 lead early in the second half against Serbia and maintained it until just over ten minutes from time. But the Serbs back came with four goals in six minutes. Although the Russians deployed a flying goalkeeper, their only reward was a 4-3 defeat. Spain and Russia, instead of respecting the pun-



Russia's Pavel Chistopolov is cornered by two Spaniards in their goalless quarter-final.

Sportsfile



The quarter-final between Azerbaijan and Ukraine also went to a penalty shoot-out.

G. Baricca

dits' prediction that they would play the final, were to meet in the last eight.

It was at this stage that brinkmanship was taken a step further. Of the six knockout matches played during the run-up to the Hungary 2010 final, four went to penalty shoot-outs.

The first two decreed unexpected exits for Italy (champions in 2003) and Ukraine (silver medallists in 2001 and 2003). The Italians – solid winners against Belgium and Ukraine – could do no better than 3-3 against the Czechs and went home unbeaten. The Ukrainians, after an identical scoreline, suffered a shoot-out defeat against Azerbaijan. On the following day, there was even more drama in the shoot-out which followed a tense, goalless stalemate between the Russians and Spaniards.

After hammering the ninth penalty over the head of Russian keeper Sergii Zuev, Spain's captain, Javi Rodríguez, wheeled away to celebrate with his team-mates – only to realise that the match officials had disallowed his 'winning goal'. When the shoot-out resumed, the disconcerted Spaniards were not favourites to win. But it spoke volumes for their experience and their ability to manage critical moments that they converted three more spot kicks before Luís Amado, once again a key performer between the posts, made the winning save.

The odd one out in the quarter-finals was a 5-1 win over Serbia which suggested that the Portuguese had,

in psychological and sporting terms, successfully come back from the group-phase brink. And, in the semi-final, they twice came from behind against a talented Azerbaijani side which was led by Brazilian coach Alesio and whose dressing room was rich in naturalised Brazilian accents.

The Czechs, in one of the few games which respected the form book, had valiantly restricted Spain to an 8-1 scoreline in the other semi-final. "Their futsal is of a far higher level than ours," the Czech coach, Tomas Neumann, admitted.

The result set up an all-Iberian final which was disputed with all the tensions of a local derby and which respected the tournament norm of having a sting in the tail. After Carlos Ortiz and Javi Rodríguez had given José Venancio's defending champions a 2-0 half-time lead, it looked like game over when Lin added a third with just over four minutes to play. Not in this tournament. With the flying goalkeeper directing operations, Portugal hit back with two goals in 39 seconds to hint at further exploits in brinkmanship. Yet just when an equaliser seemed on the cards, Daniel turned them over again by ramming the ball in at the other end to make it 4-2 with only 22 seconds to play. It was an appropriate finale to a tournament where the results might hint at the slender margins between victory and defeat but cannot begin to reflect the dramas which underlay them.



Spain's Kike tries to get past Portugal's Gonçalo Alves in the final.

## THE KNOCKOUT PHASE

### QUARTER-FINALS

25.01 in Budapest	Azerbaijan – Ukraine	3-3*
25.01 in Debrecen	Czech Republic – Italy	3-3*
26.01 in Budapest	Serbia – Portugal	1-5
26.01 in Debrecen	Russia – Spain	0-0*

### SEMI-FINALS

28.01 in Debrecen	Azerbaijan – Portugal	3-3*
28.01 in Debrecen	Czech Republic – Spain	1-8

### THIRD-PLACE PLAY-OFF

30.01 in Debrecen	Azerbaijan – Czech Republic	3-5
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### FINAL

30.01 in Debrecen	Portugal – Spain	2-4
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\* after penalty kicks



Jaime Lissavetzky,  
Jordi Hereu, Senes Erzik  
and Joan Laporta



Jim Battle  
of Manchester  
city council  
signs the goodwill  
declaration.

# Fan hosting seminar in Barcelona

## Promotion of fair play and respect

EUROPEAN CLUB FOOTBALL HAS BEEN GOING ON FOR MORE THAN 50 YEARS. WHY HAS THERE

NEVER BEEN A MEETING LIKE THIS BEFORE? THAT WAS THE MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION AS CLUBS,  
CITIES AND UEFA TEAMED UP IN BARCELONA FOR A GROUNDBREAKING SEMINAR.

The inspiration for the event dates back to a conversation between Michel Platini and the mayor of Barcelona, Jordi Hereu. The Catalan capital regularly stages high-profile European matches and, as the city's councillor for prevention and security, Assumpta Escarp, was later to explain, a game played two seasons ago represented a turning point. The city was left to foot the bill for damage to public property and a massive mop-up operation. The Barcelona authorities decided to turn 'crisis' into opportunity and the result was a decision to take a proactive approach and to implement a new philosophy on how fans could best be welcomed to the city. That was the theme of the conversation between the mayor and the UEFA president – and the leit-

motiv of a unique encounter between representatives of major clubs and cities.

### Public ceremony

The event on 1 and 2 February consisted of two distinct segments under the banner 'football, host cities and respect'. The first was a public ceremony in the city hall which attracted 31 photographers and 11 TV crews. On stage was UEFA's first vice-president, Senes Erzik, alongside the president of FC Barcelona, Joan Laporta, Spain's secretary of state for sport, Jaime Lissavetzky, and Jordi Hereu.

The ceremony itself was for the signing by the city and club representatives of a goodwill declaration promoting fair play and respect in cities where international matches are staged. The

autograph hunters and photographers focused on former stars such as Luís Figo and Emilio Butragueño, who were appearing for FC Internazionale and Real Madrid CF, yet, on this occasion, the thousand words were worth more than the picture.

The four speakers transmitted the same message. Senes Erzik remarked that welcoming groups of visiting supporters often boils down to preventing damage, identifying troublemakers, avoiding incidents and segregating fans from the local population – negative aspects, each and every one of them. He summed up the core theme of the gathering by asking "do we segregate or integrate?"

Jordi Hereu, reflecting on Barcelona's change of policy, commented "*the time has come to focus on enjoying football and enjoying the experience of visiting a foreign city.*" Jaime Lissavetzky added: "*Spain wants to be a reference point in terms of positive behaviour and the best way to achieve this is to make respect and passion for the game compatible on the pitch, in the stadium and in the city.*" Joan Laporta told the audience that FC Barcelona was working hand in hand with UNESCO to eradicate racism and violence and "*this is the moment to promote football matches as social opportunities*".

This theme was carried into the second part of the event – a seminar staged the following morning. Richard Giulianotti, a professor at Durham University in the UK and a researcher into fans' behaviour for a couple of decades,



A perfect setting for  
the ceremony



Emilio Butragueno lent his support to the 'fan hosting' initiative.



UEFA vice-president Senes Erzik and Luis Figo shake hands.

commented: "Today's supporters are often experienced travellers within an 'imagined community' united by their allegiance, their memories, their rivalries and their friendships. While they are protective of their collective identity, they are open to cultural exchanges. There is no single formula for achieving this, but UEFA could certainly follow up this magnificent initiative by establishing a network of information based on the strategies adopted by different cities."

### Different strategies

And there will be different strategies, with clubs and cities aiming to find a way of recreating the sort of fan-park atmosphere that converted EURO 2008 into a fiesta. Assumpta Escarp told the gathering that Barcelona's approach was to offer, with the collaboration of public and private bodies, leisure activities, music, food and refreshments as well as making sure that signage and public transport were user-friendly to visiting fans. The mayor of Glasgow, Bob Winter, added that, although policing policies and attitudes remained core elements at high-risk matches, his city had also involved various partners in a Team Glasgow project aimed at creating a welcoming atmosphere – which often started with mementos being handed out as soon as fans arrived at the airport. *"This is two-way traffic," he said, "based on intensive contacts with other cities. We make our own population aware of the identity and culture of the supporters who are visiting our city and, at the same time, we try to display Scottish culture to the visitors. The emphasis is on them enjoying the visit as well as enjoying the match."*

Willie McDougall, one of UEFA's security officers and, as the name might suggest, a fellow Scot, endorsed the value of giving something, however small, to supporters who might then be more prepared to give something back in terms of behaviour. *"The policing element will always be there," he commented, "and forward planning is crucial. You need to create a safe venue and manage the crowd in a secure manner, but a lot can be done to generate positive waves. For example, empowering 'friendly' sup-*

*porters can help to marginalise the bad guys."*

Daniela Wurb, representing the FSE (Football Supporters Europe) network, feels that *"there is an overemphasis on the behaviour of a minority and something must be done to change a climate in which fans are sometimes prevented from seeing the city they are visiting."* Karl Evans of Manchester United FC and Mike Storey, the lord mayor of Liverpool, agreed that there was a tendency to over-concentrate on negatives or to underestimate or disregard information provided by the fans themselves. However, both reported that clubs were now making determined efforts

to engage with communities as well as their established fan groups.

The seminar and the signing of the declaration of goodwill in Barcelona were regarded as milestone events in terms of reviewing the way visiting fans are treated. But reaching a milestone has little significance if the travellers sit down to admire it. The challenge is to take the fan hosting concept a stage further – and the city of Barcelona insisted that further invitations would be issued with a view to monitoring progress.

The diversities within Europe and European football mean that, as Willie McDougall put it, *"there is no single blueprint. But by working alone we will achieve nothing."*



Photos: Laura Ullach



# European Team Sports association takes shape

# Team sports combine forces

**TEAM SPORTS RELY, IN ESSENCE, ON COLLECTIVE EFFORT, SO IT IS ONLY NORMAL THAT THE FEDERATIONS THAT ORGANISE AND MANAGE THEIR ACTIVITIES SHOULD FOLLOW SUIT.**

All European sports organisations have certain things in common, be it in their everyday activities, such as the organisation of competitions, or in issues linked to their politico-economic environment. It was this realisation that led them, early in the new millennium, to come together for informal discussions on points of common interest.

Regular meetings of this sort have been organised by the basketball (FIBA Europe), handball (EHF), ice hockey (IIHF), volleyball (CEV) and football (UEFA) federations, which were later joined by their rugby counterparts (FIRA-AER). The next step was taken on 8 December, when the group strengthened their relationship by creating the European Team Sports association (ETS).

There are no plans at present for this new association to have its own permanent headquarters. Instead, the member federations will continue to take turns to host meetings, chaired by the president of the host federation. It is conceivable that other team sports will join the movement, which will work in harmony with other sports organisations.

## EU matters

The objective of the ETS is to promote, develop and represent the interests of European team sports and to increase the exchange of information between its members. Clearly, issues linked to the EU are a key area of concern for the ETS, as underlined

in the association's inaugural media release: *"The European Team Sports express their satisfaction with the newly recognised status of sport in the Lisbon Treaty. As responsible, professional, democratic and representative European partners, the European Team Sports also express their desire to work in partnership together with their direct institutional counterparts, namely the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission, in order to shape a healthy future for European sport."*

Since the Bosman case, which affected not only football but also other team sports in Europe, numerous questions have been raised by European legislation and the stability of sport has been jeopardised by the uncertainties that have emerged as regards the conformity of sports regulations with EU law.

As in the Bosman case, all decisions taken by the Court of Justice of the European Union against the sporting regulations of a European federation can have a kind of snowball effect that comes to bear on other sports. It is therefore particularly important that the federations should have a suitable platform for sharing information and experiences, and adopting common positions and strategies.



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In this context, the ETS has clearly explained its position: "As regards EU law and sport, the European Team Sports support the view that the specific nature of sport should be fully acknowledged by all European institutions."

### Various subjects

Numerous issues that could be affected by EU law have yet to be resolved, including the development of the federations and the pyramid structure of the European sports model, the protection of national teams and vital questions linked to the commercial rights of the federations which, in turn, finance grassroots sport in Europe. These are all areas in which the ETS will be able to adopt a common approach.

However, the activities of the ETS will not be limited to EU matters. The federations can learn from each other's experiences in fields including competition regulations and formats, marketing of their competitions, relations between continental and world federations, match calendars, medical matters and even refereeing issues, such as numbers of referees per match. It should also be noted that four of the six ETS member federations support the MESGO programme, which aims to deliver an Executive Master in European Sport Governance (*cf. uefadirect, January 2010*).

The ETS could also discuss the structures of the federations themselves, their licensing systems and their disciplinary measures. In all of these areas, each federation has its own experience and has sought its own solutions. Pooling the lessons they have learned can only be good for all European team sports and help to strengthen their unity, while at the same time consolidating the position of sport as a whole in European society.

## News from Brussels

**On Tuesday, 9 February, the European Parliament officially voted in a new college of commissioners, who will hold office for the next four years under the continued presidency of José Manuel Barroso. As before, sport will fall within the remit of the commissioner responsible for education and culture.**

Composed of one commissioner per EU member state, the European Commission is one of the most important institutions of the EU. Its main role is to propose and put in place EU policies and ensure that they are duly applied throughout the union.

Having been initially nominated by their heads of state and government, the European commissioners were appointed on 27 November. The college was then approved by the European Parliament last month, with 488 votes for, 137 against and 72 abstentions.

**The new commissioners and their portfolios are as follows:**

**Austria:** Johannes Hahn – Regional Policy

**Belgium:** Karel De Gucht – Trade

**Bulgaria:** Kristalina Georgieva – International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response

**Cyprus:** Androulla Vassiliou – Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth (including sport)

**Czech Republic:** Stefan Füle – Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy

**Denmark:** Connie Hedegaard – Climate Action

**Estonia:** Siim Kallas (Vice-President) – Transport

**Finland:** Olli Rehn – Economic and Monetary Affairs

**France:** Michel Barnier – Internal Market and Services

**Germany:** Günther Oettinger – Energy

**Greece:** Maria Damanaki – Fisheries and Maritime Affairs

**Hungary:** László Andor – Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

**Ireland:** Máire Geoghegan-Quinn – Research and Innovation

**Italy:** Antonio Tajani (Vice-President) – Industry and Entrepreneurship

**Latvia:** Andris Piebalgs – Development

**Lithuania:** Algirdas Semeta – Taxation and Customs Union, Audit and Anti-Fraud

**Luxembourg:** Viviane Reding (Vice-President) – Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship

**Malta:** John Dalli – Health and Consumer Policy

**Netherlands:** Neelie Kroes (Vice-President) – Digital Agenda

**Poland:** Janusz Lewandowski – Financial Programming and Budget

**Portugal:** José Manuel Barroso – President

**Romania:** Dacian Ciolos – Agriculture and Rural Development

**Spain:** Joaquín Almunia (Vice-President) – Competition

**United Kingdom:** Catherine Ashton (Vice-President) – High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

**Slovakia:** Maros Sefcovic (Vice-President) – Inter-Institutional Relations and Administration

**Slovenia:** Janez Potocnik – Environment

**Sweden:** Cecilia Malmström – Home Affairs

Androulla Vassiliou, born in Cyprus on 30 November 1943, was previously commissioner for health. In this capacity, she worked with UEFA on the *Eat for Goals!* cookbook, launched on 30 September 2008 (*cf. uefadirect, No. 78*).



The Executive Committee was received by the president of Malta and former president of the Malta Football Association, George Abela.

D. Aquilina



D. Aquilina

# Meetings and other activities

## Creation of a centre of refereeing excellence

**FLORIANA, NEAR TO MALTA'S CAPITAL, VALLETTA, WAS THE VENUE FOR THE UEFA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE'S FIRST MEETING OF 2010, HELD ON 28 JANUARY WITH THE UEFA PRESIDENT, MICHEL PLATINI, IN THE CHAIR.**

Preceded by visits to the country's prime minister, Lawrence Gonzi, and president, George Abela, the Executive Committee meeting was organised in Malta as part of the celebrations to mark 100 years of national football competitions on the island and 50 years of the Malta Football Association being a full member of UEFA and FIFA.

In a meeting lasting just over four and a half hours, the Executive Committee dealt with a huge range of business, from the UEFA Regions' Cup

to the European Football Championship, not to mention the restructuring of the UEFA administration and budgetary matters.

### National team competitions

In national team competition matters, the committee began by setting the timeline for the EURO 2016 bid procedure. Following the withdrawal at the end of 2009 of the joint bid of Norway and Sweden, three countries remain in the running: France, Italy and

Turkey. Their bids were to be handed over to UEFA in Nyon on 15 February, while on 27 May – also at UEFA's headquarters – the candidates will present their bids to the Executive Committee, which, based on the recommendations of the National Team Competitions Committee, will take its decision the following day and then announce it in Geneva.

Turning to other national team competitions, the committee received a progress report on preparations for EURO 2012 in Poland and Ukraine. It also adapted the autumn dates in the 2009–11 European Under-21 Championship in accordance with the changes to the double-date system (Friday and Tuesday instead of Saturday and Wednesday). These date changes concern mainly the play-offs, which will now take place on 8/9 and 11/12 October 2010. Finally, the Executive Committee approved the regulations of the 2010/11 UEFA Regions' Cup, which 39 associations have entered.

Turning to club competitions and, more precisely, the UEFA Futsal Cup, SL Benfica were chosen to host the finals, which will therefore

## Changes in the UEFA administration

At its meeting in Malta, the Executive Committee appointed **Theodore Theodoridis** as UEFA's new deputy general secretary, to support the general secretary, Gianni Infantino. A former member of the Stadium and Security Committee and former vice-chairman of the Club Competitions Committee, Theodore Theodoridis joined the UEFA administration in January 2008 as director of the national associations division, a position that he will continue to hold alongside his duties as deputy general secretary.



UEFA/Woods

The general secretary, Gianni Infantino, also presented the new structure of the UEFA administration, which now consists of six divisions: joining existing directors Steve Aeschlimann (services), Josef Koller (finance), Giorgio Marchetti (competitions) and Theodore Theodoridis (national associations), Alasdair Bell has been appointed director of legal services/

general counsel, while Alexandre Fourtou takes charge of communications.

**Alasdair Bell** first became involved with UEFA as part of the team that represented it in the Bosman case. Since then he has undertaken many other UEFA assignments. He also has vast experience of EU community and competition law. He took up his new position in mid-February.



UEFA/Woods



UEFA/Woods

Until the creation of the new subsidiary UEFA Events SA, **Alexandre Fourtou**, who joined UEFA in August 2001, was chief executive of the subsidiary UEFA Media Technologies (UMET) and the leading force behind the entire development of the uefa.com website, which now falls under the communications division.



Interviu Madrid, last year's winners of the Futsal Cup, will be trying to defend their title in Lisbon.

Sportsfile

take place in Lisbon from 22 to 25 April. In addition to the host club, the other finalists are Araz Naxcivan (Azerbaijan), Luparense Calcio A5 (Italy) and title-holders Interviu Madrid (Spain).

### Centre of refereeing excellence in Nyon

Fulfilling the wish of the UEFA president to give the UEFA headquarters in Nyon not only an administrative character but also a sporting one, the Executive Committee agreed to UEFA taking over the management of the Colovray sports centre opposite its headquarters. The lease concluded with the Nyon authorities runs for 49 years. On 1 April, UEFA will take on the development, maintenance and running costs, guaranteeing Nyon's sports clubs the same conditions of use as before. UEFA will also organise sports activities at Colovray. The first step will be taken this autumn with the creation of a centre of refereeing excellence, where young referees from all its member associations will be invited to further their training with the help of leading experts. The Executive Committee approved the necessary financial resources for this pilot project until at least 2012.

The committee also accepted the Finance Committee's proposal to invest some of UEFA's reserves in bricks and mortar by constructing a new administrative building in Nyon and thereby further extending UEFA's headquarters. While this third building is under construction, the villa La Falaise will be converted to receive guests.

■ The Executive Committee agreed to donate €270,000 to the Czech Football Association as a contribution towards the cost of repairing the football infrastructure of 21 clubs in Bohemia and Moravia that was damaged by the floods that struck these regions last July.

■ It also allocated €45,000 to the Icelandic Football Association for a pilot project to install a mini-pitch at a prison.



The Colovray sports centre will be home to a centre of excellence for young referees.

UEFA-Woods

### Referee Convention

Another five national associations have met the requirements of the convention and been accepted by the Executive Committee as signatories. They are the football associations of Cyprus, Italy, Lithuania, Moldova and Wales.

This brings the number of associations that have signed the convention to 30, leaving 23 which are still under evaluation.

### UEFA Women's Champions League

Although no action has taken place in the UEFA Women's Champions League since the round of 16, a disciplinary decision has been taken that changes the face of the quarter-finals.



Fortuna Hjørring lost both legs of their round of 16 tie against Olympique Lyonnais (1-0 in Denmark and 5-0 in France); however, the Danish club protested that the French side had fielded two ineligible players in the return match. The UEFA Control and Disciplinary Body rejected the initial

protest, but the Appeals Body then annulled that decision and ruled in favour of Fortuna Hjørring. The result of the second-leg game was therefore amended to a 3-0 win for the Danes, who thus qualify 3-1 on aggregate and will now meet ASD Torres Calcio of Italy in the quarter-finals.

### Sweden head fair play rankings

Under the banner of respect, the UEFA fair play rankings have become a long-established practice since they were introduced more than 16 years ago, in the 1993/94 season.

The purpose of the rankings is to reward the national associations whose teams (national and club) show the greatest respect for the spirit of the game by giving them an extra berth in the European competitions, previously in the qualifying stage of the UEFA Cup and now in the same stage of the UEFA Europa League.

Three associations enjoy this privilege, i.e. the top three in the UEFA rankings at the end of the season. At the midway point at the end of last year, Sweden (8.263 points), Denmark (8.169) and England (8.168) headed the table, followed by Finland, Republic of Ireland, Norway, Scotland and Germany, all on more than 8.1 points.



The youth teams also contribute to their national associations' fair play rankings, which can result in an extra place in the UEFA Europa League.

D. Aquilina



Jean-Luc Marchal/Terre des hommes

**As part of the MOVE project supported by UEFA and set up by the organisation Terre des Hommes, a gathering of more than 250 children and 150 adults (parents, officials and teachers) took place in Durres, in Albania.**



On 20 November, Universal Children's Day, this gathering offered the participants a series of activities, including a fair play football tournament. It involved mixed teams of children from different communities and was played according to special rules, with only goals scored by girls counting and the referee being replaced by a mediator whose role was also to encourage contact before and after the matches and to help the players to express their feelings. The tournament thus proved to be a good way to encourage respectful communication. It also helped the children to improve their self-esteem and to develop their sense of belonging.

In 2008, UEFA committed itself to the MOVE project for four years. The aim of the project is to help leaders to improve their personal, social, methodological and technical skills to enable them to then improve the psychosocial development of children in Albania, Moldova and Romania through games and sport.

## Only a Game? moves to Istanbul

**Only a Game?, the interactive exhibition designed by Olivier Guibaud, opened its doors in Istanbul on 21 January, following very successful runs in Brussels in 2007 and Liverpool in 2009.**

UEFA, the Turkish Football Federation (TFF) and the city of Istanbul have joined forces to present this exhibition in the Turkish city to mark its year as a European Capital of Culture. For this third showing, the exhibition, which explores the links between football and European society during the last 50 years, has also been able to count on the support of the museums of Istanbul's three great clubs, Besiktas JK, Fenerbahçe SK and Galatasaray AS, which enables it to associate the heritage of Turkish football with the game's European roots.

*"The exhibition is the perfect platform to convey an important social message, and we are very proud to host the exhibition in Istanbul, the capital of diversity," declared Senes Erzik, first vice-president of UEFA and honorary president of the TFF, who attended the inauguration of the exhibition.*

bition with the president of the TFF, Mahmut Özgener, the mayor of Istanbul and other figures from the worlds of sport, politics and culture.

The exhibition is being held at the Taksim Cumhuriyet Sanat Galerisi and is open from 10.00 to 22.00 every day except Monday until the end of April.

## Obituary – Sándor Barcs

**Sándor Barcs**, former president of the Hungarian Football Federation, passed away on 8 January at the age of 97, which made him the oldest surviving former member of the UEFA Executive Committee, to which he was elected in 1962. In July 1972, as first vice-president of UEFA at the time of the death of its president, Gustav Wiederkehr, Sándor Barcs became caretaker president of UEFA until the extraordinary congress held in Rome on 15 March 1973, when Artemio Franchi was elected president.



Keystone

A leader of great stature, Sándor Barcs contributed significantly to the work of UEFA, which, in recognition of his distinguished services, made him an honorary member at the 1980 UEFA Congress in Rome, following his retirement in 1978 from the Executive Committee, on which he had served for 16 years as vice-president.

Sándor Barcs also belonged to many other UEFA committees in his time, contributing, in particular, to the UEFA club competitions and playing a major role in the creation of the European Cup Winners' Cup.

In Malta, the Executive Committee paid tribute to him by observing a minute's silence in his memory at the start of its meeting on 28 January.

## Match against poverty in Lisbon

**UEFA backed a match against poverty in Lisbon on 25 January, in which many past and present international football stars took part.**



Over 50,000 spectators watched the ex-internationals (Patrick Kluivert in blue) and SL Benfica's All-Star XI draw 3-3.

Leong/AFP/Getty Images

All the proceeds from the match – an initiative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) – are being directed towards relief and reconstruction efforts in support of the Haiti earthquake victims.

**The Only a Game? exhibition has opened in Istanbul.**

Tanguy Cortier



**Fitness is crucial for both new referees and their more seasoned counterparts.**



# International referees course

## Reading the game

**READING THE GAME WAS ONE OF THE CORE THEMES WHEN  
103 INTERNATIONAL REFEREES MET IN MALTA FOR THE ANNUAL WINTER  
COURSE WHICH RAN FROM 1 TO 4 FEBRUARY.**

In point of fact, the course consisted of two overlapping events involving, firstly, the 52 new European referees on the FIFA list and, two days later, the experienced match officials in the elite and premier categories. The venue was Floriana, near Valletta (Malta), where the course formed part of the commemorations of a century of league football on the island and half a century of full FIFA and UEFA membership.

### Two courses

As usual, the introductory course focused firstly on assessing the new referees' physical, medical and mental condition via fitness tests, individual examinations and sessions on mental preparation. One of the novelties later in the course was a practical session led by referee instructors Valentin Ivanov and Steve Bennett aimed at exercising the participants' judgement and positioning in player simulation situations and assessing their reactions in terms of how offences should be most appropriately punished.

On the advanced course, one of the major features was a session dedicated to the ongoing experiment involving two additional assistant 'goal-line' referees. As the pilot testing has now been extended into the knockout rounds of the UEFA Europa League, the advanced referees needed to be primed for a role which they may need to play for the first time in their careers. In the presence of International FA Board member Donald McVicar and FIFA's Fernando Tresaco, they watched clips from group matches and were quick to realise that, for officials accustomed to covering lots

of ground and keeping up with play, the goal-line role represents a radically different modus operandi.

### Common elements

There were, however, elements which were common to both courses, including extensive DVD analysis aimed at unifying criteria and reactions to certain types of infractions or incidents. The emphasis was on protecting players from reckless or overzealous challenges, appropriate punishment for holding, pulling and pushing offences in the penalty area, and the best-practice approach to detecting and dealing with simulation.

This is where one of the other sessions was of special relevance. UEFA's technical director, Andy Roxburgh, was with both groups to discuss the importance of reading the game and ways to improve this ability. The sessions featured DVD clips from EURO 2008 and the UEFA Champions League which illus-

trated the importance of positioning – and, in refereeing, 'positioning' is all about making the right runs at the right time. But, whereas a player's running is all about making the best angles to receive passes, the referee's is about making the best angles to achieve a clear vision of play. In Malta, the referees were invited to review a number of situations where they needed to be on 'red alert' at set plays, with Andy Roxburgh examining examples of legitimate and not-so-legitimate blocking manoeuvres employed to gain space for an attacking team-mate at corners or free-kicks.

*"The better you are at reading the game," he commented, "the easier it is to make the right calls and the greater the chance of the game being exciting, fair and spectacular."*

### Ten European referees for the World Cup

A postscript to the event was written within hours of the advanced course referees travelling home from Malta. Congratulations on being included in the pre-tournament list for the FIFA World Cup are due to ten European referees: Olegário Benquerença (Portugal), Massimo Busacca (Switzerland), Frank De Bleeckere (Belgium), Martin Hansson (Sweden), Viktor Kassai (Hungary), Stéphane Lannoy (France), Roberto Rosetti (Italy), Wolfgang Stark (Germany), Alberto Undiano Mallenco (Spain) and Howard Webb (England).





FFA

**Armenia**  
Football is now part of the school curriculum.

**Austria**  
Alfred Ludwig (left) and Leo Windtner present the pamphlet 'The future has begun'.



GEPA Pictures für ÖFB

## ARMENIA



### Grassroots activities

It is well known that mass football is the first step towards big sport and the professional game. Grassroots football development and promotion has a positive impact on the sport as a whole, and it is one of the most effective ways of attracting children and adults of all ages to enjoy physical exercise and resume their interest in sport.

As grassroots football includes children's football, amateur football, women's football, futsal, disability football and more besides, we value its role both as a popular sport and a worthy means of involving different social groups.

The grassroots department of the Football Federation of Armenia (AFF), headed by Marina Tashchyan, cooperates closely with other AFF departments. One of its most important achievements in grassroots football promotion is the football in schools project. In 2008, the AFF signed an agreement with

the ministry of education and science and the ministry of sports and youth to include football as a regular subject in the curriculum of comprehensive secondary schools in Armenia.

Of the three hours a week set aside for physical education, one is devoted to football. The HFF has produced materials and manuals for PE teachers, which it has delivered to all the schools. All 1,500 Armenian secondary schools have already adopted and implemented this education programme. The AFF grassroots instructors have also organised seminars for the PE teachers to help them to establish and apply suitable teaching methods. At the end of December, an extensive, nationwide PE teacher training programme was completed. The AFF seminars included both theoretical and practical training and the schools were provided with sports equipment such as manuals, balls, cones, pumps and bibs.

The AFF grassroots department is always open to new ideas and endeavours to promote football throughout the country. We follow the stance of the UEFA president, Michel Platini, in believing that, as one of the most popular sports around, football must be organised not as a product, but as a wonderful game to be enjoyed by everyone. Grassroots football is therefore the key starting point for us. ■

Tigran Israelyan

## AUSTRIA



### The future is now

On 15 January, Leo Windtner, president of the Austrian FA (ÖFB), and Alfred Ludwig, ÖFB chief executive, presented the results of the association's future workshop, which had been launched exactly two years ago under former ÖFB president Friedrich Stickler. Two months earlier than originally planned, in September 2009, the ÖFB executive committee took decisions on all of the projects discussed. In three working groups (sport, finance/economy, law/structure), a total of 24 projects were examined in depth, 15 of which have already been fully implemented, with a further four on the point of completion. The remaining five projects (e.g. construction of a football centre of excellence, construction of a women's centre, establishment of a professional sports law) are currently still ambitions, but should be realised by mid-2011. The most notable of the future workshop projects include a new corporate identity/design for the association, the fan project supported by the UEFA Hat-Trick programme (on 1 December, Erich Weisckircher, Austria's stadium and security manager

## AZERBAIJAN



### Tournament for disabled people

The Azerbaijani Disabled Football Federation, in cooperation with the Association of Football Federations of Azerbaijan (AFFA) and with UK Sport sponsorship, has successfully held the traditional Payiz futsal tournament for deaf and hearing-impaired players. The recent tournament, which involved five teams – Birlik, Zirva, Shimshak, Ganjlik and Umid – was ceremoniously opened at the Azerbaijan Technical University sports hall in Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan.

The event participants all showed off their skills, but it was Birlik who came out on top. These tournaments are an excellent opportunity to give disabled people greater faith in themselves, through playing football and making new friends. The AFFA plans to organise more such events in Baku and other cities in Azerbaijan. ■

Firuz Abdulla

#### Azerbaijan

The prize-giving ceremony at the end of the tournament



## BELARUS



### International Under-17 tournament in Minsk

From 10 to 17 January, Minsk hosted the sixth edition of an international indoor youth tournament that is already well known in Belarus and beyond. Every year many young fans from Minsk anxiously wait for the first match to kick off.

The opening ceremony was a great mix of laser show, dynamic music and greetings from special guests such as Liutauras Varanavicius (president of the Lithuanian Football Federation and member of the UEFA Executive Committee), Gennady Nevyglas (president of the Football Federation of Belarus) and Nikolay Ladutko (acting mayor of Minsk). The UEFA general secretary, Gianni Infantino, also sent a recorded welcome message to the players and fans.

Eight teams came to Minsk in the hope of winning the trophy: Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine. None were newcomers to the tournament.

Belarus, Belgium, Lithuania and Ukraine were drawn into Group A, while Azerbaijan, Latvia, Moldova and Russia formed Group B. The group matches were spread across three

#### Belarus

The Russian U17s, winners of the tournament



matchdays. The teams that finished bottom of their groups (Belarus and Azerbaijan) played for seventh place, with Belarus winning 5-0. Fifth place was decided in a match between Latvia and Lithuania, and just like last year it came down to a penalty shoot-out. Moldova and Ukraine did battle for third place, with the Ukrainian team creating a sensation by finishing third despite their players being a year younger than all other competitors. They were trailing 2-0 before managing to score four goals and win 4-2. In the final, Russia beat Belgium 2-0.

Individual awards went to: Aleksey Berezin (Russia), best goalkeeper; Brice Ntambwe (Belgium), best defender; Vladlen Urchenko (Ukraine), best midfielder and Semion Sinavsky (Russia), best forward. ■

Yulia Zenkovich

## BELGIUM



Photo News

### Milan Jovanovic receives 2009 golden boot

Having finished runner-up last year behind Belgian national team player Axel Witsel, Milan Jovanovic (28) was in January named best league player of 2009 and winner of the golden boot. Our country's journalists and many Belgian football personalities voted for R. Standard de Liège's Serbian international, recognising his brilliant performances in the domestic league as well as on the European stage during the past year.

Suspense was high ahead of the announcement. Milan Jovanovic started out as the favourite, but two RSC Anderlecht players, Mbark Boussoufa and Romelu Lukaku, also emerged as potential winners after being picked out by



#### Belgium

Milan Jovanovic poses with his golden boot in front of the Standard stadium.

pushed him back into fourth place in the final rankings.

Even though Standard's season is below expectations, the quality of its team is undeniable and its past two outstanding seasons, at both domestic and European level, played in its favour, as witnessed by the presence of four of its players in the top ten, the other two being striker Dieumerci Mbokani (fifth place) and goalkeeper Sinan Bolat (ninth).

Two other awards were also presented at the ceremony on 13 January: former Belgian international Bart Goor (36), won the goal of the season award for his superb goal for KFC Germinal Beerschot Antwerpen against Standard, while our national team captain and Arsenal FC defender Thomas Vermaelen (24) was voted best Belgian footballer playing abroad. ■

Pierre Cornez

## BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA



### Festival of youth, friendship and football

The third international junior cup took place recently on the pitches of Nedjarici and Stup in Sarajevo. This year, 52 clubs from five countries (Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro, Slovenia and Bosnia-Herzegovina) took part in three age categories (born in 1997, 1998 and 1999).

It was a festival of youth and friendship, but also of beautiful football, with over 500 young hopefuls and their coaches delighted by the atmosphere in the Bosnian capital. The tournament produced great games, impressive scorelines and excellent football, with many spectators and first-rate organisation by the football school in Sarajevo.

The team from the Bambi Kraljevo football school in Serbia won first place in the category of children born in 1997, having played Frankopan Rijeka (Croatia) in the final. In the final in the 1998 category, Mladost Radost (Cacak, Serbia) outplayed Radnik Hadzici (Bosnia-Herzegovina), and the young players of Omladinac Split (Croatia) were the best of the teams born in 1999, beating Trogir (Croatia) in their final. Ilirija of Ljubljana received the fair play award, while Mija Kuljanin was given a special prize for being the only girl participating.

Members of the executive board of the Bosnia and Herzegovina Football Federation (NFSBiH), meanwhile, have elected Jasmin Bakovic as general secretary. He took over his duties at the beginning of the year, but has been



#### Bosnia-Herzegovina

A festival atmosphere at the youth tournament

working for the NFSBiH since 2000. In 2002 he was appointed head of competitions, with general and legal responsibilities. He was also secretary of the national team for six years.

Bakovic was born in Sarajevo in 1965. He played for the Sarajevo junior team, followed by FK Famos Hrasnica, who competed in the Yugoslav second division (west). After a serious injury, he had to end his playing career and worked as a sports journalist. He has graduated from the University of Sarajevo's faculty of law and is currently preparing his MA thesis for the faculty of sports. He is a recognised professional in football administration and has great credibility in the world of sport.

Finally, the NFSBiH centre for staff education has hosted a ceremony to present UEFA Pro, A and B coaching licences. All attendees were greeted by the members of the NFSBiH presidency, Sulejman Colakovic, Bogdan Ceko and Ilio Dominkovic, as well as Munir Talovic, the director of the centre. The attendees included popular former footballers and Bosnian internationals such as Elvir Baljic, Mirza Varesanovic, Sulejman Halilovic, Senad Repuh and Tomislav Piplica, alongside former Croatian and Slovenian internationals Boris Zivkovic and Ermin Siljak.

Also among the attendees were the father and son duo Blaz and Vladimir Sliskovic. Having received the UEFA A licence, Sliskovic Jr is following in the footsteps of his father, who received a UEFA Pro licence. ■

Fuad Kravac

referee exchange programme for our championship matches this season.

Lastly, 15 coaches took part in the third phase of our first ever UEFA Pro licence course in January. The next phase followed in February, when the coaches went on a study trip to England to visit Premiership and Championship clubs. ■

Kyriakos Giorgallis

## CYPRUS



### Referee exchange programme

The president of the Cyprus FA (CFA), Costakis Koutsokounnis, has announced that the 2008/09 and 2009/10 seasons have been two of the best in the history of Cypriot football and the results are already in to prove it.

At a press conference, the president provided an overall review of last season and mentioned the opportunities that had been created for further development in our country, especially in youth development. He placed special emphasis on the grassroots championships the FA is organising for thousands of young people.

Further to our teams' successes in UEFA competitions, the president also said that it was a great honour for the CFA to be in such a good position in the UEFA fair play rankings, paying tribute to the people involved in this success.

Moreover, the CFA has reached an agreement with the Bulgarian Football Union on a



## CZECH REPUBLIC

### A surprise bronze

The Czech national futsal team did not go to the European Futsal Championship final round in Hungary as favourites. Their bronze medals were also all the more surprising as they finished ahead of futsal heavyweights Russia and Italy, whom the Czech Republic, coached by Tomas Neumann, eliminated in the quarter-finals.

The Czech team also received bronze medals at the 2003 final round in Italy, but back then there was no third-place play-off and both losing semi-finalists received medals. The Czechs' latest success is therefore all the more satisfying.

*"We are very happy. Our goal was to qualify for the quarter-finals, which we did. In our decisive match against Hungary, the hosts were 4-0 ahead at one point, but we came back to win 6-5. Our team were not only bold but they also played like a team,"* Tomas Neumann said afterwards.

Among the mainstays of the team were the experienced Michal Belej and Martin Dlouhy, the only two who also played in the 2003 final round. In the semi-final against the eventual champions, Spain, the Czech Republic's captain, Martin Dlouhy, scored his 100th goal for his country. He also scored a crucial goal in the match for third place against Azerbaijan.

*"The futsal elite in Europe is expanding more and more, so it is hard to break into it. That's why finishing third means so much more to our national team and is a credit to all those who have*



**Czech Republic**  
A surprise result for the Czech team

time and generosity that we have achieved the progress made over the past six years. I am sure that one day this contribution will be reflected on the world stage."

Hot and humid conditions meant the workshops were hard work for all involved, but this did not stop the participants from throwing themselves fully into every training session. Ray Olivier, who has been out to Ecuador for a number of years now to train local referees, was once again impressed by the level of their commitment: *"It's been a pleasure to see how far the referees have come over the years. Their enthusiasm is infectious and we've had some great feedback from all those involved."*

The courses were held at the FEF's excellent training facilities in Guayaquil and covered a wide range of advanced techniques for referees and those involved in refereeing. As well as intensive fitness sessions, Ray and Neale led sessions on decision-making, match analysis and analysis of report forms. ■

Maria de León



## ENGLAND

### FA proud of Ecuador referees' progress

The agreement between The FA and CONMEBOL, the South American football confederation, continued into 2010, with the first courses of the year taking place in Guayaquil, Ecuador. FA representatives were hosted by the Federation of Ecuadorian Football (FEF) for the sixth consecutive year.

Ray Olivier, national referee manager, and Neale Barry, head of senior referee development, delivered three courses, continuing The FA's ongoing work with Ecuadorian referees. They started with a four-day elite referees workshop, followed by a one-day match inspectors workshop and ending with an instructors workshop.

Les Dickens, a FIFA media officer who works closely with the FEF, was delighted with the visit: *"It is only through The FA's experience,*

*worked to make it happen,"* said Otakar Mestek, chairman of the national futsal committee.

Futsal in the Czech Republic has a long tradition and a broad base of 55,000 licensed players, as well as further non-licensed forces. Every year, for example, a secondary school championship is organised in which thousands of children participate.

Until the last moment, the Czech Republic had hoped to bid to host the 2012 Futsal World Cup, but was forced to abandon its plans for financial reasons. ■

Jaroslav Kolar

World Player of the Year no less than three times. *"Birgit Prinz is undoubtedly the most outstanding female German footballer of the past decade. But more importantly, she is also a wonderful person, who takes a keen and caring interest in many other aspects of life,"* said Theo Zwanziger, president of the German FA, in praise of the qualities of the 1. FFC Frankfurt striker. ■

Stephan Brause



## GERMANY

### Birgit Prinz wins 200th cap

Birgit Prinz celebrated a very special event on 17 February, when she made her 200th appearance for the women's national team and captained Germany in their friendly against North Korea in Duisburg – an unprecedented milestone in the history of German football. Prinz made her national team debut in 1994, when she was just 16, against Canada in Montreal. Since then she has been instrumental in shaping the women's national team, played in numerous tournaments and helped the team to win two world cups, five European championships and three Olympic bronze medals. She has also been voted FIFA Women's



Germany  
An impressive record  
for Birgit Prinz

Horst Hamann/DFB

## ISRAEL

### Fair play prize for fans

Maccabi Netanya fans have been awarded EUR 1,000 worth of football merchandise for being the Israeli premier league's fairest fans in the first half of the 2009/10 season.

The prize was awarded through the New Israel Fund's (NIF) Kick It Out Israel campaign, the Israel FA and the ministries of public security and education. Maccabi Netanya's fans achieved the best score in the NIF's weekly index of racist and violent behaviour by fans.



**Israel**  
An anti-racism demonstration ahead of a Maccabi Netanya match



*"We don't want to set up disciplinary committees for violence and racist behaviour by fans; we want to give out prizes like this,"* the chief executive of the Israel FA, Ori Shilo, said.

For his part, the Maccabi Netanya president, Daniel Jammer, said that *"there is no doubt that this trend of improved behaviour will continue."* ■

Nimrod Suzin



**Kazakhstan**  
The national team coach, Bernd Storck, during a training session



## KAZAKHSTAN

### New contract for national coach

A new contract with Kazakhstan's national team head coach, Bernd Storck, was signed on 15 January. It is a one-year contract, with the possibility of further renewal.

*"We are satisfied with the work of Bernd Storck. Our young team is making progress with every match, as proven by their games against Croatia and Ukraine at the end of 2010 World Cup qualifying competition. Mr Storck's football philosophy follows modern trends and we are sure it will promote further progress for our young team,"* the vice-president of the Football Federation of Kazakhstan, Viktor Katkov, said.

Storck added: *"I am proud to have an opportunity to continue my cooperation with the Football Federation of Kazakhstan. We have made progress recently and I am very keen to continue working with the team. It is interesting for me to watch young footballers progressing, the whole of Kazakh football developing and its position strengthening in Europe. I hope our cooperation will be effective and our team will delight the fans in the EURO 2012 qualifiers."*

Bernd Storck, 47, from Germany, has been working in Kazakhstan since July 2008, when he headed the Kazakhstan Under-21 national team and FC Alma-Ata. He took his club to the final of the 2008 Kazakhstan Cup and achieved good results with the Under-21s (3-0 against Poland; 1-2 against Spain). Storck then headed the senior Kazakhstan national team for the second half of 2010 FIFA World Cup qualifying competition. ■

Alexandr Keplin

► Sweden – new players from the youth academy have taken their places.

Nõmme JK Kalju, who finished in fifth place last year, have also snapped up some Estonian youth internationals and added some Brazilians to the team, giving them hope for success too. Narva JK Trans, who won bronze medals last season, and Viljandi JK Tulevik, who finished sixth, would also like to move up the ladder.

Tartu JK Tammeka have a new coach in the form of Levadia's former assistant, Marko Kristal, who won 143 caps for Estonia as a player and has taken over from Norbert Hurt. Paide Linnameeskond and FC Kuressaare have also retained their places in the Meistriliiga, while Kohila-Järve FC Lootus have been promoted.

During the winter break, club representatives took part in various seminars organised by the Estonian Football Association (EJL). The EJL's top football committee has also continued to run development schemes, which include individual sessions for top executives from the clubs. The aim of the EJL is, together with specialists and club representatives, to find solutions to problems, develop possible areas for cooperation and ensure the clubs' continued development. ■

Mihkel Uiboleht



**Latvia**  
Once a month, the most talented youngsters get a taste of life on the national team



## LATVIA

### LMT Virsliga: ten teams in three rounds

The 2010 Latvian LMT Virsliga starts at the beginning of April, with ten teams competing in three rounds, thereby giving each team 27 matches in the country's top division. This has been decided by the Latvian Football Federation (LFF), *"however, we're still searching for the most suitable calendar for our clubs and national team,"* says Janis Skredelis, head of competitions. Depending on the weather, the first matches may be played inside at the Olympic sports centre in Riga, also the headquarters of the LFF.

The teams competing in the 2010 LMT Virsliga will be the current Latvian champions, SK Liepajas Metalurgs, last year's runners-up, FK

Ventspils, third-placed Skonto FC, FK Jurmala, JFK Olimps, SK Blazma Rezekne, FC Tranzits Ventspils, first-division champions FK Jelgava, first-division runners-up FK Jauniba, and FK Daugava Daugavpils, who the LFF board decided to include in the 2010 LMT Virsliga as they had missed a season due to financial problems.

The LFF organised a draw to decide the calendar for the first two rounds, leaving the third to be decided once the results of the second round are known. The team finishing last in the 2010 LMT Virsliga 2010 will be automatically relegated, while the ninth-placed team will play the runners-up in the first division for the right to contest the strongest Latvian league in 2011.

In other news, the head coach of the Latvian national team, Aleksandrs Starkovs, together with LFF general sponsor Nordea bank, has launched a youth football talent agency. Each month Starkovs gathers the 20 most talented football players aged 12-16 from all over Latvia and, under the watchful eyes of former national team players, talks to them, trains them and gives them a taste of national team football, thereby motivating them to achieve their full potential. ■

Martins Hartmanis



## LIECHTENSTEIN

### Martin Stocklasa voted 2009 footballer of the year

For the first time in its 75-year history, the Liechtenstein Football Federation (LFV) has elected its footballer of the year. The award for 2009 has gone to Martin Stocklasa, who has made 85 appearances for his national team and who has been playing for SV Ried in the Austrian Bundesliga since 2008. He won against four other candidates in a poll involving various expert panels and a public internet vote.

Apart from the footballer of the year award, the LFV made three other awards. In the young footballer of the year category, the fans and experts voted for David Hasler of FC Basel 1893. The 19-year-old striker has already been capped nine times with the senior national team and is one of Liechtenstein football's most promising young players. The third LFV award for 2009 went to former German Bundesliga professional Uwe Wegmann, who was named club coach of the year, while the fourth award, for the volunteer of the year, was presented to Gebhard Oehri for his longstanding service to his club. ■



**Liechtenstein**  
Martin Stocklasa

Anton Banzer

## LUXEMBOURG

### Investing in the future

In order to cope with the constant expansion of its technical, administrative and organisational activities, the Luxembourg Football Federation (FLF) has decided to extend its headquarters in Mondercange, where, apart from its offices, the federation also has its technical training centre. The current premises, from where the federation has operated since 2005, is now bursting at the seams.

The extension will house, among other things, a new reception, additional offices and meeting rooms, a lecture hall and a new laundry, as well as several rooms reserved for sports activities.

For example, the different national youth teams will have their own dressing rooms, as will the women's national team. And students at the federation's football academy will, aside from their sports activities, receive assistance with their homework from qualified specialists in specially designed classrooms.

For referee and coach education and continuing development, there will be rooms equipped with the latest audiovisual equipment.

#### Luxembourg

The headquarters at Mondercange are being extended.



This ambitious FLF project will be realised with contributions from the FIFA and UEFA assistance programmes, as well as subsidies from the Luxembourg authorities and the FLF's own resources.

When the work, which began in March last year, is completed by mid-2010, the federation will have a multifunctional, modern building at its disposal where it can carry out its many diverse activities in the best possible conditions. ■

Joël Wolff

## FYR MACEDONIA



### International anti-violence conference



In the second half of December, the FA of FYR Macedonia (FFM) organised the first international conference on the prevention and suppression of violence at football stadiums.

The conference, organised in partnership with the parliament of FYR Macedonia and UEFA, was attended by the president of the Macedonian parliament, Trajko Veljanovski, the minister of labour and social policy, Xhelal Bajrami, the dean of the faculty of physical education at Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, Gino Strezovski, and the UEFA security officer Kenny Scott, as well as ambassadors, professors from the academy for the training of judges and prosecutors,

members of Football Against Racism in Europe (FARE), the national head coach, Mirsad Jonuz, sports stars Georgi Hristov and Gordana Naceva, journalists, students, fans and many others involved in football.

Also present were the president of the FFM, Hari Hadzi-Risteski, and the entire FFM board.

Lazar Nanev and Ivan Anastasovski, both members of the board, had previously promoted the conference through lectures and workshops.

Alongside the conference, interesting debates and workshops were held, the conclusions of which will be submitted to the parliament and incorporated into legislation

### FYR Macedonia

The anti-violence conference

on safety in stadiums, as explained by Mr Veljanovski.

The conference, which attracted great interest, is just one part of the FFM's strategy to combat violence and will be followed up with other activities. ■

Zoran Nikolovski

## MOLDOVA



### Promotion of charity activities

As part of its ongoing charity mission, the Football Association of Moldova (FMF) recently made donations to an orphanage.

For the fourth year in a row, the FMF produced surprises to lift the spirits of children at the Concordia orphanage in Pirita, in the Dubasari region: 300 children aged from 1 to 16 gathered in the sports hall to receive gifts from the FMF president, Pavel Cebanu, accompanied by Moldovan internationals Victor Golovatenko (FC Khimki, Russia), Alexandru Onica (FC Vorskla Poltava, Ukraine) and Victor Comlionoc (FC Obolon Kyiv, Ukraine).

The children enjoyed gifts of footballs, books and even a trampoline. After the official donations, the children were given an opportunity to get autographs, sing songs and dance with their famous guests. ■

Press office



**Moldova**  
Alexandru Onica signs autographs.

## MONTENEGRO



### Jovetic named player of the year

Stevan Jovetic has been voted best Montenegrin player of 2009 in a traditional poll organised by the Football Association of Montenegro.

Jovetic was awarded 96 points in the poll, putting him ahead of former winner Mirko Vucinic and Sporting Clube de Portugal forward Simon Vukcevic. The votes were cast by the coaches and captains of Montenegro's top football clubs. Former three-time champion Vucinic finished on 79 points, while Vukcevic collected just 9.

FK Buducnost forward Ivan Vukovic was voted best player in the top domestic league, ahead of Vladimir Gluscevic (FK Mogren), Ivan Boskovic (OFK Grbalj) and Predrag Ranelovic (FK Rudar Pljevlja), while Dejan Vukicevic of FK Mogren was named best coach for the second year in a row. ■



#### Montenegro

The president of the Montenegrin federation, Dejan Savicevic, presents the player of the year award to Stevan Jovetic.

Ivan Radovic

After falling 2-0 behind, more than 2,500 spectators saw UEFA Cup winner Pierre van Hooijdonk (46 caps, 14 goals) score twice. The other three goals were by ex-Rangers players Michael Mols and Pieter Huistra and former Feyenoord winger Regi Blinker.

Founded in 1879 and based in the city of Haarlem, Royal HFC is the oldest football club in the Netherlands. Since 1923, HFC have played 77 games against the ex-internationals, each time on one of the first days of January. Over a period of 87 years, the amateur club has won 22 matches.

In February the ex-internationals and coach Ruud Gullit travelled to Moscow for

## MALTA



### Landmark anniversaries

The current season is a landmark in the history of the Malta FA (MFA). It is the 100th anniversary of the national league and the association's 50th year of FIFA and UEFA membership.

This has given rise to a series of events and celebrations throughout the season, which reached a climax recently. The MFA activities are intended to make the public aware of what the Maltese association, through its several present and past officials, has done for football over the years, and to instil in the younger generation a greater interest in and love of the game.

Events have included several technical and sociocultural activities, as well as high-profile UEFA meetings (including a meeting of the UEFA Executive Committee), UEFA seminars for referees, meetings for the presidents of several national associations, and a special anniversary cup competition, contested by all 52 teams in Malta. A set of commemorative stamps has also been issued to mark the occasion.

The main activities were attended by the island's top dignitaries, including George Abela, president of Malta and formerly of the Malta FA, as well as MFA officials, club administrators, members of the media and several others involved in football in Malta.

The UEFA president, Michel Platini, was guest of honour among other top UEFA and FIFA officials, who were all impressed by the commitment of the MFA officials, the club administrators and all the other football ▲

an indoor tournament against their counterparts from Germany, Italy, Portugal, Russia and Spain, followed by a charity trip to the Peruvian cities of Lima and Iquitos. They play a maximum of six invitation matches a year. Alongside the above goalscorers, the team includes Aron Winter, Dennis Bergkamp, Frank and Ronald de Boer, Phillip Cocu, Marc Overmars and Patrick Kluivert. ■

Tonny Dijkhuizen

**Netherlands**  
The Dutch ex-internationals' team



## NETHERLANDS



### Ex-internationals win traditional New Year's match

Snowy and icy conditions did not hold back the Dutch ex-internationals and players of the amateur side Royal HFC on 2 January. The traditional New Year's match between the two ended in a 5-2 win for the ex-internationals, led by coach Sjaak Swart. The renowned Ajax winger and now honorary club member was capped for the Netherlands 31 times.



**Northern Ireland**  
St Matt's A, winners of the open age tournament

## NORTHERN IRELAND

### Indoor women's tournament

The Valley Leisure Centre, Newtownabbey, recently played host to 18 women's football teams who had travelled from all corners of Northern Ireland to compete in the Dale Farm Senior Indoor Tournament. The five-a-side tournament provided the perfect opportunity for players and teams to test themselves and to develop their fitness and skills before the outdoor season kicks off.

The U16 category attracted eight teams, who took part in a very tight competition. Lisburn A beat Crusaders in their semi-final to go on to play Foyle A, who awaited them in the final after defeating Foyle B in the other



semi. The final produced what was perhaps the game of the tournament, with both sides having opportunities to win. However it was Lisburn A who eventually came out victorious in an enthralling encounter, with goals from Una Stewart, Colleen Long and Danielle Petrie securing a 3-2 win.

The open age group was just as exciting, with ten teams competing for the title of Dale Farm Senior Indoor Cup Champions. After five tough games each, the two sides that battled their way through to the final were actually from the same club, St Matt's. In a final where the players were so familiar with each other's strengths and weaknesses, it was no surprise that the game was a very close affair. Although goals from Maria Sykes and Charlene Brown (OG) gave St Matt's B team a real chance of victory, it was the St Matt's A team that ran out eventual winners, with strikes from Rachel Rogan (two), Kelly-Ann Cartmill and Danielle McNally earning them a 4-2 win.

*"It was fantastic to have such a positive response from the women's clubs in Northern Ireland to this Dale Farm tournament. All the players and club officials thoroughly enjoyed the day and we would like to thank the Valley Leisure Centre for hosting the event. Congratulations to St Matt's and Lisburn on their success,"* said Jackie Blyth, Irish FA women's football assistant. ■

Graeme Beggs



## NORWAY

### New licensing criteria introduced

In November last year, the Norwegian FA (NFF) established new procedures and criteria for granting licences to clubs in its top divisions. The new model is based on that of the Royal Netherlands Football Association, with modifications to meet Norwegian standards. One of the main changes is the implementation of a continuous licensing system, which means that a licence, once issued, is valid until it expires due to relegation or revocation. Clubs are required to focus more on establishing realistic budgets and on developing young players themselves.

With the new system, the NFF aims to be more hands-on in its support of the clubs all year round. As a result, it hopes that its top clubs will establish a responsible and positive environment for the sustainable and reliable development of its players. ■

Le Hang Duong

## Romania

A sixth term as president for Mircea Sandu

*there are plenty of [other] projects on which we are already at work."*

The FRF has 264 affiliated members, of which 259 were present at the meeting. "This presence, almost 100%, is proof of the fact that our clubs are well aware of their role within Romanian football and are keen to take part in the major decisions which affect all of them. It also proves that they are interested in everything that happens and are committed to overcoming the challenges they are facing and the difficult two years ahead," the president said.

All 259 votes were valid and Mircea Sandu obtained an outright victory with 192. The other candidate, Constantin Iacov, received 67 votes.

Presenting a very strong and realistic programme, and stressing that "several projects which I mentioned in my strategic plan are already under way," Mircea Sandu said that the FRF was totally committed to adapting and modernising its regulations and another general meeting would be held this spring (April or May), dedicated exclusively to revising certain provisions of the statutes and regulations. ■

Paul Zaharia



## ROMANIA

### Re-election of Mircea Sandu as president

At the general meeting of the Romanian Football Federation (FRF), which took place at the FA headquarters in Bucharest on 25 January, the long-serving administrator Mircea Sandu was re-elected as FRF president.

A former international player and member of the UEFA Executive Committee, Mr Sandu is starting his sixth spell at the helm of the FRF. He was elected for the first time on 9 August 1990, before being re-elected in 1994, 1998, 2001, 2005 and now 2010.

*"We have worked hard for the football family, because it is our duty to work for all our affiliated members,"* he said, before presenting a comprehensive programme for the next four years. *"The first measures will concern the development of our youth football. But, of course,*

as Sweden's national team coach. Lagerbäck stepped down after Sweden missed out on a place at the 2010 FIFA World Cup, the first and only failure in Lagerbäck's six qualifying campaigns.

52-year-old Erik Hamrén has coached top level clubs in Scandinavia since 1995, and has won titles in Sweden, Denmark and Norway. He is currently in charge of Norwegian champions Rosenborg BK and will initially share his time between Sweden and Rosenborg, until 31 August when his contract with Rosenborg expires. ■

Andreas Nilsson



## SWEDEN

### New deal for TV rights

The Swedish FA has struck a deal with Swiss company Kentaro regarding TV rights for its competitions for 2011-15. The agreement is in three parts, with the FA having negotiated rights for the national teams and the men's and women's leagues brokering separate deals.

*"We are very pleased with our part of the deal. The sum paid will remain undisclosed but, in spite of the financial crisis and the downturn in advertising, we have secured a more profitable deal now compared to the one we made with Kentaro for 2006-10,"* says the president of the Swedish FA, Lars-Åke Lagrell.

Representatives of the Svensk Elitfotboll (men's league) and Elitföreningen Damfotboll (women's league) also expressed satisfaction that the newly struck deal would mean an increase in revenue.



The Swedish FA specifically asked Kentaro to resell the rights to national team matches to a free-to-air broadcaster. The winner in the bidding race was TV4 (Sweden's biggest channel), which secured all the rights on offer from Kentaro.

Meanwhile, Erik Hamrén has succeeded Lars Lagerbäck

**Sweden**  
The new national team coach, Erik Hamrén

**Switzerland**  
Peter Knäbel, the new SFV technical director



## SWITZERLAND



### First technical conference

For the first time since its creation, the technical division of the Swiss Football Federation (SFV) has organised a conference comprising three different seminars – one on grassroots football, one on women's football and one for chairmen of the regional associations' technical committees. Led by the new SFV technical director, Peter Knäbel, about 100 people gathered in Berne to develop ideas and seek solutions to various issues. The conference was rounded off with a well-received presentation by the coach of the Swiss U17

team who sensationally lifted the World Cup in Nigeria. Dany Ryser once again impressed his audience with his expertise and customary modesty.

During the conference it was agreed that the national youth and sport programme should be promoted more heavily. The participants noted great disparity in children's football across the 13 regions, in terms of training and organisation, and a lack of qualified coaches in women's football. They also agreed that targeted measures were needed to remedy the fact that women's football remained less popular in western Switzerland and Ticino than in German-speaking parts. ■

Pierre Benoit



**Ukraine**  
A football lesson demonstration



## UKRAINE

### Kyiv seminar gathers grassroots elite

A traditional, international school football development seminar took place at Kyiv's House of Football at the end of January and included the final of a national contest to find the most innovative PE lesson and the best football-related lesson.

In his opening speech, the president of the Football Federation of Ukraine (FFU), Grygoriy Surkis, said: "When we reached an agreement to introduce a third, football-specific PE lesson in comprehensive schools, UEFA watched carefully to see how far this innovative step, which is unprecedented in Europe and the rest of the world, would go. Convinced of the seriousness of our intentions, it officially accepted Ukraine as an example to other associations. The agreement with the ministry of education and science [MES] has now been extended until 2012, and the ministry for family, youth and sport has also signed."

Later at the seminar, the famous Danish coach Jan Poulsen took the floor. He presented the Open Fun Football Schools project, which is being supervised by UEFA and financed by the national governments of Scandinavia. Ukraine has already signed up, meaning that every year 10 to 12 football camps will be organised

throughout Ukraine, for boys and girls. Children and schools will get sports equipment and trainers, while teachers and instructors will receive materials and special training.

In keeping with tradition, the final of the national contest to find the most innovative PE lesson and the best football-related lesson was held during the seminar. FFU and MES experts selected the five best entrants, who were invited to compete in the final and demonstrate their innovations in practice. All the finalists got presents and rewards from the FFU and the overall winner was given the title 'honoured teacher of Ukraine'.

It is necessary to mention that the introduction and development of this football lessons project was one of the main factors in Ukraine's receiving six stars under the UEFA Grassroots Charter. Grygoriy Surkis said "getting six-star status was one of our greatest achievements last year. Until then only six countries – England, Germany, Netherlands, Scotland, Norway and Finland – had this status." The FFU president also talked about future plans for the football lessons project: "In 2010, the Football Federation of Ukraine, using its own funds and revenue from sponsors and partners,

## TURKEY



### Technical education initiative launched

The Turkish Football Federation (TFF) has established technical education centres targeting promising elite players aged between 10 and 12. This project is one of the key elements in the TFF's grassroots development plan. The aim of the centres is to improve the physical and technical abilities of promising young players and enable them to play and train at an advanced level, with a view to them eventually playing for the national team and professional clubs.

Players in this age group are especially important because they are just starting to develop their skills and have not been signed by the clubs. At each centre, about 60 talented girls and boys are given training concentrating on the fundamentals of the game and the basic skills required. Players are invited to attend the centres via recommendations from their schools (teachers), local clubs, district or county football coaches. All the coaches at the centres hold the UEFA B coaching license and have attended youth coach education seminars run by the TFF.

There are currently 50 centres in 50 different cities across Turkey, training around 3,000 children aged 10 to 12. The TFF is planning to increase the number of centres to 200 by 2013. ■

Türker Tozar

will fulfil its plan to provide schools in the regions with packs containing everything they need for football lessons. Each child's backpack, with a football symbol on it, will contain a ball, an air pump, a shirt, a new school football programme and our book and CDs of teaching methodologies. The programme of providing school with footballs will also be continued." ■

Dmytro Sobko

It is hoped that runners will come from all over Wales and compete wearing their favourite club football shirts. On the day, there will be members of the FAW medical team on hand to give advice to those with questions on health matters. It is also hoped that there will be strong radio, TV and other media coverage of the event. ■

Ceri Stennett



## WALES

### Fun run for a healthy cause

On Sunday, 21 March the Football Association of Wales (FAW) is holding the first Dragonball Run, a 5km fun run open to 500 male runners. The idea of the run is to help raise awareness of men's health issues, as well as raising funds for the John Hartson Foundation, a charity set up by the former Wales international who was diagnosed with testicular cancer last year. John is doing well in his battle and is right behind the race and the initiative to raise awareness among men regarding all aspects of their health.



**Wales**  
A race to raise awareness of health issues

# Communications Birthdays – Calendar

## Birthdays

Josep Lluis Vilaseca Guasch (Spain), member of the circle of former UEFA committee members, turns 80 on 8 March, while on the same day Giorgio Crescentini (San Marino), vice-chairman of the Futsal and Beach Soccer Committee, celebrates his 60th. Ginés Meléndez (Spain), member of the Jira Panel, also turns 60 on 22 March, followed by Anton Ondrus (Slovakia), member of the Football Commission, on 27th. Andrea Lastrucci (Italy), match delegate, celebrates his 50th on 23rd.

UEFA also wishes many happy returns this month to:

- Benny Jacobsen (Denmark, 1.3)
- Luis Medina Cantalejo (Spain, 1.3)
- Damir Vrbanovic (Croatia, 2.3)
- Gerhard Mayer-Vorfelder (Germany, 3.3)
- Esa Antero Palsi (Finland, 4.3)
- Zoran Bahtijarevic (Croatia, 5.3)
- Boris Durlen (Croatia, 6.3)
- Liana Melania Stoicescu (Romania, 6.3)
- Pedro Maria Aurteneche Vinegra (Spain, 7.3)
- Dusan Maravic (Serbia, 7.3)
- Kenneth Scott (Scotland, 7.3)
- Tomás Gea (Andorra, 7.3)
- Alexis Ponnet (Belgium, 9.3)
- Vladimir Alechin (Russia, 9.3)
- Hendrik Kesler (Netherlands, 9.3)
- Ruben Hayrapetyan (Armenia, 9.3)
- Herbert Fandel (Germany, 9.3)
- Joseph S. Blatter (Switzerland, 10.3)
- Mateo Beusan (Croatia, 10.3)
- Lucien Kayser (Luxembourg, 11.3)
- Olga Zhukovska (Ukraine, 11.3)
- Jean-François Crucke (Belgium, 12.3)
- Vlastibor Minarovjech (Slovakia, 13.3)
- Thomas Partl (Austria, 13.3)
- Ivan Cukovic (Serbia, 15.3)
- Markus Merk (Germany, 15.3)
- Cornelius Bakker (Netherlands, 17.3)
- Liutauras Varanavicius (Lithuania, 17.3)
- Christakis Skapoullis (Cyprus, 18.3)
- Marcello Nicchi (Italy, 18.3)
- Andreas Georgiou (Cyprus, 18.3)
- Marina Tashchyan (Armenia, 18.3)
- Hogni i Storustovu (Faroe Islands, 19.3)
- Helmut Spahn (Germany, 19.3)
- Antal Dunai (Hungary, 21.3)
- Jim Boyce (Northern Ireland, 21.3)
- Chris Georghiades (Cyprus, 22.3)
- Michail Kassabov (Bulgaria, 22.3)
- Franz Krösslhuber (Austria, 23.3)
- Miroslaw Malinowski (Poland, 23.3)
- Mahmut Özgener (Turkey, 23.3)
- Outi Saarinen (Finland, 23.3)
- Fernando Ruiz Hierro (Spain, 23.3)

## 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:** 10 February 2010

## Notices

- Mircea Sandu, member of the UEFA Executive Committee, was re-elected on 25 January for a sixth term as president of the Romanian Football Federation.
- On 3 February, an extraordinary general meeting of the Russian Football Union elected Sergey Fursenko as president for a five-year term.
- Mikael Santoft was appointed general secretary of the Swedish Football Association on 1 January.
- Paul Glomsaker was appointed general secretary of the Football Association of Norway on 1 February.

## Match agents

UEFA match agent licences have been issued to:

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## New publication

### 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL LEAGUE

To mark the centenary of the national football league of Malta, Albert Fenech was commissioned by the Malta Football Association to produce a book, the simple layout of which highlights the quality of the images and information. After some 70 pages on the history of Maltese football, its most famous players, its leaders and its infrastructure – all beautifully illustrated, with many archived photos – comes a detailed statistics section, containing lists not only of competition winners, but also of Malta's top scorers and players of the year.



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