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## IN THIS ISSUE

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### Cover:

*Sweden's Robin Quaison  
gets the better of Portugal's  
Toze, but it took a penalty  
shoot-out for Sweden to  
become European Under-21  
champions*

Photo: Getty Images

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Under the chairmanship of the UEFA President, the UEFA Executive Committee met in Prague on 29 June, the day before the final of the European Under-21 Championship.



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### IRELAND CELEBRATE VICTORY IN THE UEFA REGIONS' CUP

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The Eastern Region IRL team won the UEFA Regions' Cup on home turf in the final round of the UEFA competition for amateur teams that took place in the Republic of Ireland from 26 June to 4 July.



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Spain have won the 2014/15 European Under-19 Championship, the final tournament of which was played in Greece from 6 to 19 July.



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By beating Switzerland in the final of the tournament played in Iceland from 22 June to 4 July, Spain won the European Women's Under-17 Championship for the third time.



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## A NEW SEASON AND A NEW CYCLE

With the various qualifying rounds for both the UEFA Champions League and the UEFA Europa League now drawing to their conclusion, the starting grid for the 2015/16 club competition group stages is taking shape.

With this season heralding the latest three-year cycle, there is evolution across all of our club competitions in order to maintain their status at the pinnacle of European club football. The UEFA Champions League group stage welcomes the winners of the UEFA Europa League for the first time, in the form of Sevilla FC. The UEFA Europa League brand, meanwhile, has a new look, and is creating an attractive new image for the competition. A substantially improved revenue package and a revised distribution system for the next three seasons have been developed in partnership with the European Club Association, and will benefit all the participating clubs, as the sales process has met the ambitious targets originally set.

Equally, the regulatory framework is keeping pace with developments in the competitions. Financial fair play has clearly reached its goals and has been hugely successful, as shown by the tremendous reduction in losses and increasingly responsible financial behaviour of the clubs. After a lengthy review process in close consultation with clubs and other stakeholders, the new UEFA Club Licensing and Financial Fair Play Regulations have also evolved, while maintaining their core philosophy. This has allowed us to expand and strengthen the financial fair play process for the foreseeable future.

The UEFA Women's Champions League has expanded, with a record 56 clubs from 47 UEFA member associations taking part in the latest competition, while the UEFA Youth League, now enjoying its place as a permanent fixture on the club competition calendar, has witnessed the most comprehensive overhaul. The youth teams of the clubs competing in the UEFA Champions League will now be joined by the domestic youth champions of 32 nations. Now boasting 64 clubs, the competition will follow two paths, the UEFA Champions League path and the domestic champions path. These paths determine the routes to the knockout phase, which will involve 24 clubs, with matches scheduled for early 2016.

The four competitions will see exactly 200 clubs contesting a place in the finals, and at UEFA, we look forward to keenly fought matches – and matches where players, coaches and fans together respect the rules and uphold the principles of fair play.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be 'Gianni Infantino'.

**Gianni Infantino**  
UEFA General Secretary

## KEY DECISIONS IN PRAGUE

Updated UEFA Club Licensing and Financial Fair Play Regulations, the venues for the 2017 club competition finals and draw procedures for the EURO 2016 play-offs and final round were focal points at the UEFA Executive Committee's latest meeting in Prague on 29 June.



The committee approved the 2015-18 UEFA Club Licensing and Financial Fair Play Regulations, following a two-year consultation process with key stakeholders. The updated regulations will encourage more growth and development, inclusivity and market stimulation through a careful broadening and refinement of the requirements, while also taking into account the economic environment and the experience gained over the past five years.

### UEFA PRESIDENT'S AWARD TO JOSEF MASOPUST

The announcement of the 2014 UEFA President's Award in Prague was a poignant occasion. The recipient, Czech legend Josef Masopust, had passed away on 29 June at the age of 84. The UEFA President, Michel Platini, had been able to visit Masopust in Prague shortly before his passing.

Masopust was European Footballer of the Year in 1962. He played 63 times for Czechoslovakia in a brilliant career, and scored his team's goal in their 3-1 defeat against Brazil in the 1962 World Cup final in Santiago, Chile.

His superb skills inspired Dukla Praha to eight domestic titles, and he went on to coach FC Zbrojovka Brno to the Czech title in 1978. "I wanted to give this award to Josef in his home country," said the UEFA President. "It was a moving experience that I shall never forget." ●



Josef Masopust was named European Footballer of the Year in 1962

### Final venues

In 2017, the Millennium Stadium in Cardiff (Wales) will stage the UEFA Champions League final, the Friends Arena in Stockholm (Sweden) will host the UEFA Europa League final, and the Nacionalna Arena Filip II in Skopje (FYR Macedonia) will be the venue for the UEFA Super Cup match.

The Executive Committee appointed Helsinki (Finland) and Bratislava (Slovakia) as the host cities for the Ordinary UEFA Congresses in 2017 and 2018 respectively.

UEFA's vice-presidents were appointed: Ángel María Villar Llona (Spain, first vice-president), Marios N Lefkaritis (Cyprus, second vice-president), Giancarlo Abete (Italy, third vice-president), Grigoriy Surkis (Ukraine, fourth vice-president) and Michael van Praag (Netherlands, fifth vice-president). Karen Espelund (Norway) was also confirmed by acclamation as the female representative on the UEFA Executive Committee for a further four-year term.

### Draw procedures approved

Draw procedures for the EURO 2016 play-offs and final tournament were approved. For the play-off draw in Nyon on 18 October, the eight teams will be divided into two groups of seeded and non-seeded sides, based on the UEFA national team coefficient rankings. Each fixture will pit a seeded team against a non-seeded team, with the first team drawn playing the first leg at home.

For the final round draw in Paris on 12 December, the 23 qualified teams will be divided into four pots:

- Pot 1: five teams, including holders Spain if they qualify (France will not be included in the pots, as they will automatically be assigned as team A1).
- Pots 2, 3 and 4: six teams.

Starting with pot 1, and then moving from pot 4 to pot 2, each of the six final tournament groups will be composed of one team from each pot.

The European Under-21 Championship final round in Poland in two years' time will take place from 16 to 30 June 2017. Finally, the compositions of the UEFA committees and expert panels, the Control, Ethics and Disciplinary Body, the Governance and Compliance Committee and the Appeals Body were approved for the 2015-19 period. The next UEFA Executive Committee meeting will take place in St Julian's in Malta on 17/18 September 2015. ●

# MICHEL PLATINI TO STAND FOR THE FIFA PRESIDENCY

On 29 July, the UEFA President, Michel Platini, announced his intention to stand as a candidate for the FIFA presidency.

In a letter sent to the presidents and general secretaries of the 209 member associations of world football's governing body, Mr Platini said: *"This was a very personal, carefully considered decision, one in which I weighed up the future of football alongside my own future. I was also guided by the esteem, support and encouragement that many of you have shown me."* Mr Platini pledged that he would work tirelessly *"in the interests of football"*.

*"There are times in life when you have to take your destiny into your own hands,"* he said. *"I am at one of those decisive moments, at a juncture in my life and in events that are shaping the future of FIFA."*

Michel Platini, who has been president of UEFA since 2007, working tirelessly to promote, protect and develop football in Europe, added that in recent months he had defended his ideas and proposals *"to give FIFA back the dignity and the position it deserves."*

He highlighted his aspiration to unite world football by working with all member national associations – *"listening to everyone and respecting the diversity of the game around the world."*

He said he was standing as a candidate *"with enthusiasm and conviction, but also with the humility of someone who knows that he cannot succeed on his own."*

The FIFA presidential elections will take place at an Extraordinary FIFA Congress in Zurich on 26 February 2016. ●



## YOUTH LEAGUE COMES OF AGE



From 2015/16, the UEFA Youth League will become a permanent UEFA competition and increase to 64 teams, allowing for the inclusion of domestic youth champions. It will remain an Under-19 competition, but clubs will be permitted to include a maximum of three Under-20s in their 40-strong squad, in order to alleviate the burden on players with school commitments.

The expansion will increase the quality of football and ensure that more countries are represented. At the same time, the innovative feature of the inaugural edition of the UEFA Youth League, whereby the competition mirrors the UEFA Champions League's format and match calendar, has been preserved.

As in previous years, the youth teams of the 32 clubs participating in the group stage of the UEFA Champions League will compete in the same eight groups of four. The holders, Chelsea FC, who defeated FC Shakhtar Donetsk in the 2015 final, will be one of those teams.

As of this season, though, there will also be a parallel path for countries' domestic youth champions. This will be open to the domestic champions of the top 32 associations in UEFA's club coefficient rankings. If an association does not have a domestic youth champion, or its domestic champion is already competing in the UEFA Champions League path, it will be replaced by the next association in UEFA's rankings.

These sides will contest two home-and-away qualifying round ties, with the eight winners hosting the runners-up from the eight UEFA Champions League groups in single-leg play-offs. The eight group winners will then face the winners of those play-offs in the round of 16. From then on, the UEFA Youth League will be a traditional knockout competition.

This two-path format offers the best of both worlds. It will mean that teams still enjoy the benefits of following the same schedule as the UEFA Champions League (which allows players to travel and spend time with their senior squads), while enabling more clubs to experience international youth football and giving the competition added exposure. ●

# SWEDISH TEAMWORK SECURES THE PRIZE

Dramatic victory over Portugal in the Czech Republic on 30 June puts a new name on the trophy.



It was hardly an auspicious start. By half-time in their opening match against Italy, Sweden had already played 18 minutes with ten men and were a goal down thanks to the penalty resulting from the red card offence. However, head coach Håkan Ericson spurned the traditional tactical response of a 1-4-4-1 formation and, bravely deploying a 1-4-3-2, told his team to go for it. Two second-

half goals secured an against-the-odds win that showcased the team's collective qualities – and, with hindsight, proved extremely costly for Italy. This summed up the realities of a tournament where teams upstaged individuals, where margins were slender, and where momentary lapses in concentration shaped destinies. The final round of the European Under-21 Championship in the Czech Republic proved to be rich in tales of the unexpected.

Like the Italians, the hosts paid a high price for a below-par performance in one half of a game. They were good value for their 1-0 half-time lead in the Group A opener against Denmark – only to take their foot off the gas after the interval. Denmark, having been allowed to settle into their passing game, duly scored twice in the second half to win 2-1. In the second game in that group, Serbia's fluent passing and dangerous counterattacking were highly impressive in their 1-1 draw with Germany. However, Mladen Dodić's

team, having set their alarm clocks to watch their compatriots win the U-20 World Cup final in New Zealand, then took their eye off the ball against the Czech Republic and were beaten 4-0, with Jan Kliment scoring the tournament's only hat-trick. Those three goals were enough to make him the top goalscorer at a tournament where forwards struggled to make their mark. Jakub Dovalil's side then produced another creditable performance to draw 1-1 with Germany, but four points left the hosts in third place behind the Germans and the Danes. Denmark, having been defeated 3-0 by Germany, rounded off a topsy-turvy group by beating Serbia 2-0 to earn first place and the right to stay in Prague, while Germany headed east to Olomouc to confront the winners of Group B.

As was the case in Group A, nobody knew who that would be until the final whistles sounded on the final day of the group stage. Sweden had followed their unlikely victory over Italy with a 1-0 defeat against an England side that produced neat possession play but failed to translate it into goals – with the winner coming in the form of a long-range 85th-minute volley



## RESULTS

### Group A

17 June	Czech Republic v Denmark	1-2
17 June	Germany v Serbia	1-1
20 June	Serbia v Czech Republic	0-4
20 June	Germany v Denmark	3-0
23 June	Czech Republic v Germany	1-1
23 June	Denmark v Serbia	2-0

### Group B

18 June	Italy v Sweden	1-2
18 June	England v Portugal	0-1
21 June	Sweden v England	0-1
21 June	Italy v Portugal	0-0
24 June	England v Italy	1-3
24 June	Portugal v Sweden	1-1

### Semi-finals

27 June	Denmark v Sweden	1-4
27 June	Portugal v Germany	5-0

### Final

30 June	Sweden v Portugal	0-0*
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\*Sweden won 4-3 on penalties

by substitute Jesse Lingard. In a goal-shy group, Portugal had beaten the English 1-0 and played out a footballing contradiction against Italy – a thrilling goalless draw. But Luigi Di Biagio's team came within a minute of reaching the last four. 3-0 ahead against England in their final group match, they celebrated Portugal's 82nd-minute opener against Sweden – only for substitute Simon Tibbling to equalise a minute from time with a shot that deflected off two defenders. It was the only shot to beat Portugal goalkeeper José Sá in 480 minutes of football. That second half against ten-man Sweden cost Italy second place in the group and, with the four semi-finalists qualifying for Rio 2016, a place at the Olympic Games.

### Two prolific semi-finals

Few would have predicted that Portugal, having scored twice in three group games, would then put five past Germany in their semi-final. However, with Bernardo Silva rampant as an attacking catalyst and William Carvalho running the show from his position as a controlling midfielder, they did just that. Even fewer would have predicted that, after a dozen group games had yielded only 27 goals, the two semi-finals would produce 10. In the other game, in Prague, Sweden were 2-0 ahead by the interval and, with Denmark pushing forward after halving the deficit in the second half, clinched a 4-1 win with two trademark counterattacks.

That meant that Portugal and Sweden would meet for the second time in a week. And the reward for the impeccable organisational work by the Football Association of the Czech Republic was a crowd of 18,867 at Stadion Eden in Prague, among them a phalanx of yellow-shirted Sweden fans who gave their team vociferous support from the warm-up until late in the night. They were unfazed by the strong start made by Portugal, who, with Carvalho directing operations and Silva weaving intricate patterns in attack, made the opening phase something of a monologue, albeit without causing Patrik Carlgren in the Sweden goal undue concern. However, as the game wore on, the Swedish forwards began to use their physical presence to unsettle the Portugal defence and disturb Carvalho, while Simon Tibbling's solo runs were a constant thorn in their side. The match became a story of sustained pressure by Portugal punctuated by clearer chances resulting from Swedish counterattacks, with Sá forced to react quickly and bravely to snuff out the danger.

The crowd had everything to cheer but goals. And so, after a goalless two hours, the title was decided by a tense penalty shoot-out. The additional assistant referees had to be called into action to determine whether the fourth spot kick, by Portuguese substitute Tozé, had crossed the line after striking the crossbar. Carlgren then threw himself to his left to save from Ricardo Esgaio – but Sá then saved from Abdullah Khalili.

## A YOUNG REPORTER'S EXPERIENCE

Thanks to the International Sports Press Association's UEFA-sponsored Young Reporters programme, a group of fledgling journalists covered the final round of the European Under-21 Championship in the Czech Republic in June. One of those reporters, Ana Magalhães, looks back at a memorable experience.



Young journalists with the UEFA President and UEFA Executive Committee member Avraham Luzon

Having the opportunity to cover a sports event such as the final round of the European Under-21 Championship is a great achievement for any journalist. Doing so at such a young age – 22, in my case – was beyond my wildest dreams.

I arrived in the Czech Republic with high expectations, and I returned to Portugal with those expectations entirely fulfilled. It was a privilege to learn from such inspiring journalists. I still have much to learn, but I am certainly a better – and better-prepared – journalist than I was before.

One key element of this project was the chance to explore all the different facets of media work. I enjoyed writing articles as much as I loved conducting stand-up interviews in front of the camera and editing videos. I found the mixed zones particularly interesting – being close to the players, and experiencing and recording their 'mixed' emotions.

Rushing to meet deadlines while writing in a foreign language was the main challenge. Writing in English and writing news in English are two entirely different things. I improved in the first area, and I started to learn how to do the second, which will be a huge advantage for me in my career. From the UEFA media office to the local organising committee, hundreds of people worked hard to make the tournament a success. Learning from them was also very important.

The personal gains for me were immense. I now have useful contacts in various countries, as well as stronger ties with colleagues at national level.

The hardest part was definitely saying goodbye. I am enormously grateful to the International Sports Press Association and UEFA for this wonderful opportunity. If I were given another chance to experience such an adventure, I would be off to the airport like a shot... ●

After Victor Lindelöf had made it 4-3 to Sweden, Carlgren went to his right to make the crucial save from – of all people – the Portuguese playmaker Carvalho. Sweden, drawing on the virtues of endeavour, tactical discipline and mental and physical resilience – and despite winning only two of their five games – had engraved their name on the trophy for the first time. ●

# FOR LOVE, NOT MONEY

The continent's top amateur footballers gathered in Dublin for the ninth UEFA Regions' Cup, with the finals demonstrating the breadth of talent that exists below the professional ranks in Europe.



Eastern Region IRL captain Kenneth Hoey remembered the "sickening" feeling of walking past the UEFA Regions' Cup trophy after his side lost the 2011 final to hosts Braga; this time, it was someone else's turn to get that sinking feeling as the Irish side took the world's top amateur prize on home soil.

Now in its ninth edition, the UEFA Regions' Cup gives amateur sides the chance to compete at European level. As UEFA Youth and Amateur Football Committee chairman Jim Boyce put it: *"This is the Champions League for amateur players. These are lads who play at the weekend and play mainly for fun, but they have an opportunity to play in a European competition, come to new countries and make new friends."*

### Serious effort

There was fun to be had at the finals in the Republic of Ireland, but the football was deadly serious, with teams from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Germany, Northern Ireland,

Poland and Turkey joining the hosts in battling for a place in the final. Staging the tournament in Dublin made things logistically simple, with six top-class venues in and around the capital providing superb stages for the matches. The

quality of the pitches and the standard of the accommodation and training bases did further credit to the Football Association of Ireland. Even the weather was splendid.

The format is simple enough – there are two four-team groups, each team plays each of the others once, and the winners of Group A meet the winners of Group B in the final.

Gerry Smith's Eastern Region IRL were sure of a place in the final after two games, following up a 2-0 win against Ankara with another 2-0 win against South Moravia – who also started Group A with a win. Smith could afford to rotate his squad and rest some key players for their final group match (a 2-1 win against Tuzla Canton), knowing that their 4 July final opponents still had plenty to do.

Over in Group B, Sreten Ćuk's Zagreb side emerged as early favourites, mauling Dolnośląski 4-0 on the opening day and then beating Eastern Region NIR 3-1 on day two; however, Württemberg took four points from their opening two games, meaning both sides went into their final game at Home Farm with an eye on the final. The German side took an early lead, but Zagreb – marshalled by brilliant playmaker Božidar Kramaratić – recovered to win 2-1.

### Winning feeling

The final at Tallaght Stadium was a step too far for the tiring Croatian side. Kramaratić was on the bench through injury, and they could muster little response to David Lacey's early opener in front of a crowd of well over 1,000. *"It's probably the best day of my life – it's unbelievable,"* Lacey said after the final whistle. *"We've tried for so long to win this trophy – we got the silver medal in 2011, and now we've got gold."*

*"A lot of work went into this,"* added Hoey, a 34-year-old postman from Cork. *"We had to lose first to win it."*

For most of the players, appearing in the UEFA Regions' Cup is the pinnacle of their footballing lives – though the number of UEFA Regions' Cup alumni being picked up by professional clubs seems to increase with each edition. The referees at the finals have a more tangible future at the top level of the game, with the tournament providing an excellent platform for up-and-coming officials from all over Europe to prove their abilities. Swiss referee Nikolaj Hänni had the honour of leading the final, the part-time factory worker showing excellent command of his matches in Ireland. Another triumph in a tournament where dreams really do come true. ●



Ireland celebrate

## RESULTS

### Group A

26 June	South Moravia (CZE) v Tuzla Canton (BIH)	1-0
26 June	Eastern Region IRL v Ankara (TUR)	2-0
28 June	Eastern Region IRL v South Moravia (CZE)	2-0
28 June	Ankara (TUR) v Tuzla Canton (BIH)	2-1
1 July	Tuzla Canton (BIH) v Eastern Region IRL	1-2
1 July	Ankara (TUR) v South Moravia (CZE)	2-0

### Group B

26 June	Zagreb Region (CRO) v Dolnośląski Region (POL)	4-0
26 June	Eastern Region NIR v Württemberg (GER)	2-2
28 June	Zagreb Region (CRO) v Eastern Region NIR	3-1
28 June	Dolnośląski Region (POL) v Württemberg (GER)	0-1
1 July	Württemberg (GER) v Zagreb Region (CRO)	1-2
1 July	Dolnośląski Region (POL) v Eastern Region NIR	1-2

### Final

4 July	Eastern Region IRL v Zagreb Region (CRO)	1-0
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# SPAIN WIN TOUGH FIGHT FOR UNDER-19 TITLE

The competitive nature of U19 football was showcased by a final tournament of the 14th European Championship in which no team remained unbeaten and issues were decided by the slimmest of margins.



Spain ultimately took the glory but some of it deserves to be directed towards the Hellenic Football Federation, led by its president, Georgios Girtzikis, who delivered an impeccably organised event. Their reward was cumulative attendance figure of 66,463, which more than doubled the total for the previous year.

The host team also played a creditable role under the guidance of Giannis Goumas, a member of the Greece team that won the European Football Championship in Portugal, who was anxious to imbue his squad with, as he put it, "the spirit of EURO 2004". They responded in style but still had to join the massed ranks of nail-biters on the final day of the group stage. After a 2-0 defeat by France, they waited anxiously for the outcome of the other Group A game between Austria and Ukraine – and were unable to celebrate until confirmation that Austria's final onslaught, goalkeeper included, had failed to alter a 2-2 scoreline.

A day later, the nail-biting was even more frenzied, as a topsy-turvy Group B played out its final dramas. Spain had started by beating defending champions Germany 3-0, while the Netherlands edged it 1-0 against Russia. But the second matchday was a case of the losers winning and, of course, the winners losing – with the result that all four teams went into the final matches level on three points. Ninety minutes later, they were still level – this time on four points – with the Germans and the Dutch travelling home as the unlucky losers on goal difference.

At this point Veria, one of the three venues used for the 15-game tournament, bowed out of the proceedings and there was a capacity crowd in Larissa to watch Greece take on Russia in the first semi-final. During the first half, the host team gave the fans plenty to cheer about – only for the wheels to come off after the break. A marking lapse at a corner was followed by a second goal within two minutes. Then came a penalty, a red card and, ultimately, a 4-0 defeat which sent Russia into the final.

Dmitri Khomukha's squad, with ten of the players who had won the U17 title two years earlier, had impressed with power play and

dangerous counterattacking. Their 3-1 defeat of Spain had dealt a psychological blow to Luis de la Fuente's team – but they repaired the damage when their composed possession play earned them a 2-0 win against a strong France team that had sidestepped the mass nail-biting by powering through the group with maximum points.

This set up a return between Russia and Spain at the final in Katerini, coincidentally the venue where Spain had taken what was then the U18 title exactly 20 years earlier by beating Italy 4-1. Russia's earlier victory made them favourites in the final – but second helpings proved to be totally indigestible. Spain took a firm grip on midfield, hid the ball from the Russians, twisted and turned away from attempts to pressurise them and created chance after chance – thwarted by the woodwork and heroics by goalkeeper Anton Mityrshkin. But the incessant pressure finally produced goals for Borja Mayoral (the top scorer, with three) and substitute Matías Nahuel, who made it 2-0 four minutes after coming on and allowed Spain to lift the U19 trophy for the seventh time. ●

## RESULTS

### Group A

6 July	Greece v Ukraine	2-0
6 July	Austria v France	0-1
9 July	Ukraine v France	1-3
9 July	Greece v Austria	0-0
12 July	France v Greece	2-0
12 July	Ukraine v Austria	2-2

### Group B

7 July	Netherlands v Russia	1-0
7 July	Germany v Spain	0-3
10 July	Spain v Russia	1-3
10 July	Germany v Netherlands	1-0
13 July	Russia v Germany	2-2
13 July	Spain v Netherlands	1-1

### Semi-finals

16 July	France v Spain	0-2
16 July	Russia v Greece	4-0

### Final

19 July	Spain v Russia	2-0
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The first goal of the final, scored by Spain's Borja Mayoral



# SWEDEN BECOME HEROES OF THEIR TIME IN ISRAEL

Sweden's players celebrated lifting the European Women's Under-19 Championship trophy to the tune of their country's winning Eurovision Song Contest entry of earlier in the year. As well as being "heroes of our time" as the song proclaimed, their matches – and the tournament as a whole – represented a vital stepping stone in the development of women's youth football.



The tournament raised the profile of the women's game in the country. All three of the national team's group matches were televised domestically and were played out to crowds in excess of 2,000. To prepare for the tournament, the Israel Football Association operated a girls' football academy during the two years leading up to the event, and last season the team played in the top flight of the Israel domestic women's championship, finishing fourth.

Their competitive showings against Sweden, France and Denmark in the UEFA tournament are best contextualised by comparing them with the team's qualifying matches, which they lost with an aggregate score of 0-18.

UEFA women's football development ambassador Laura Georges attended the tournament and gave an inspirational visit to the host squad on the day of their last group match, against Denmark, a match in which they scored their only goal of the finals through their talented No10, Eden Avital.

### Experienced hosts

The local organising committee were boosted by the experience of having hosted the European Under-21 Championship finals two years before. Netanya had been one of the venues for those finals and staged five matches this time, including the final, between Spain and Sweden, which

was played in front of an impressive crowd of 7,230. The other venues, Lod, Ramla and Rishon LeZion, were all within an hour's drive of the tournament headquarters, in the coastal city of Herzliya, just north of Tel Aviv.

In Group A, France and Sweden prevailed over Israel and Denmark on the first two matchdays to qualify for the semi-finals without conceding a goal and also book their places at the 2016 Women's Under-20 World Cup in Papua New Guinea.

Meanwhile, Group B held intrigue until the final whistle on the third matchday. Germany captain Rebecca Knaak rose to head an 87th-minute winning goal in a gripping encounter against England on the opening night and Spain swept aside Norway with an exciting exhibition of technical flair. While both would make it through to the last four, they would not be without their scares. Norway beat Germany with a tactically astute display to give themselves hope, but when neither they nor England took their chances on the last day, both were eliminated, allowing Germany to top the group with a 1-0 win over Spain. The margins were so fine though, that had Lena Pauels not produced a fantastic late save to repel Laura Ortega's header, then Germany would have been heading home.

The goalkeepers had the chance to shine again in the semi-finals, where both matches were settled on penalty shoot-outs.

### Blackstenius outstanding

Stina Blackstenius confirmed her status as the tournament's outstanding player with a stunning performance as Sweden earned a 3-3 draw with Germany in a match of fluctuating momentum in Netanya. Then Emma Holmgren denied Madeline Gier and Felicitas Rauch to send Sweden through to face Spain, who scored all five of their penalties after a 1-1 draw with France, progressing when Marie-Charlotte Léger blasted the tenth kick of the shoot-out over the top.

Spain were technically strong but found the physical differences too much to overcome in the final, suppressed by two Blackstenius headers in the first half and their challenge finally snuffed out when the dominant No9 played in substitute Filippa Angeldal to cement a 3-1 success. The team had joined the celebrations of the national Under-21 team earlier in the summer and now had some silverware of their own. Calle Barrling's players could celebrate being heroes of their time. ●

## RESULTS

### Group A

15 July	France v Denmark	1-0
15 July	Israel v Sweden	0-3
18 July	Sweden v Denmark	1-0
18 July	Israel v France	0-4
21 July	Denmark v Israel	2-1
21 July	Sweden v France	0-1

### Group B

15 July	England v Germany	1-2
15 July	Spain v Norway	4-0
18 July	England v Spain	1-3
18 July	Germany v Norway	0-2
21 July	Norway v England	0-0
21 July	Germany v Spain	1-0

### Semi-finals

24 July	France v Spain	1-1*
*Spain won 5-4 on penalties		
24 July	Germany v Sweden	3-3*
*Sweden won 4-2 on penalties		

### Final

27 July	Spain v Sweden	1-3
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Sweden's Stina Blackstenius sealed her good performance during the tournament with two goals in the final



# THREE OUT OF FIVE FOR SPAIN

The European Women's Under-17 Championship final tournament in Iceland was historic for being the competition's first eight-team summer final round. It also deserves to be remembered for producing 45 goals in 15 games.



That tally eclipsed the 37 strikes registered in 16 matches at the inaugural eight-nation finals in England in December 2013, and UEFA technical observer Béatrice von Siebenthal saluted the attacking

proWess seen at six venues in and out of the Icelandic capital, Reykjavik. *"There is more tempo in the game, even more than last year,"* she said, *"and more commitment to attacking play."*

This eighth Women's Under-17 tournament brought together three of last season's semi-finalists in four-time champions and holders Germany and twice-victorious Spain and England, plus usual suspects France and four countries appearing for the second time at this level: the Icelandic hosts, Norway, the Republic of Ireland and Switzerland.

The draw was tough on the home nation, pitted against Germany, England and Spain, yet while Ulfar Hinriksson's inexperienced team lost their three Group A bouts, they improved considerably through their week of competition. If any side exemplified the tournament's developmental value, it was Iceland. As for the holders, they dispatched the Nordic outfit 5-0 on matchday one, only to yield to Spain's uber-pressing and transitional play in a 4-0 defeat that mirrored the sides' group-stage result 18 months before. Anouschka Bernhard's Germany recovered on that occasion to beat the Iberians on penalties in the final, and here their revival was again emphatic – a 5-0 pasting of England, fuelled by Stefanie Sanders, which took them above their opponents into second place.

The third matchday also witnessed the main drama in Group B. France had become the first side to qualify, with narrow wins over Ireland and Norway, and were set to complete a procession to the semi-finals when leading the Swiss 1-0 at half-time. However, not for the last time, the Alpine outfit grew exponentially into the game; their equaliser pipped Norway to the second spot, then Jolanda Stampfli's last-gasp winner toppled the French at the head of the group. The reward for Monica Di Fonzo's Swiss troops was a last-four shot at Germany, but the first of the Valsvöllur semi-finals on 1 July was Spain v France. It was the toughest test yet for Pedro López's side. France, coached by Sandrine Soubeyrand, were in front through Sarah Galera until minute 79 of the 80, when Natalia Montilla lobbed a brilliant equaliser. In the ensuing shoot-out, Lucía García slotted Spain's decisive penalty for a 4-3 success. The conclusion to the second



Spain's Lucía García up against Switzerland's Luisa Felder during the final in Reykjavik

semi was no less exciting: with six-goal top scorer Sanders shut out, Swiss substitute Amira Arfaoui finished a fine move to eliminate the champions at the death.

Three days later at the same Reykjavik venue, first-time finalists Switzerland were punished for another circumspect start. García's fifth of the finals and a Luisa Felder own goal made it 2-0 inside 13 minutes, and a second own goal soon after half-time gave the Swiss too big a mountain to climb. The subsequent trading of goals between Géraldine Reuteler and Arfaoui, and Carmen Menayo and Lorena Navarro confirmed Spain's third crown from their fifth final.

With the goal average boosted to three a game, Béatrice von Siebenthal hailed the rising standard of the Women's Under-17 event: *"It has been a very wise decision to expand it to eight teams. We have seen so many good games: the quality is definitely there."* ●

## RESULTS

### Group A

22 June	England v Spain	1-1
22 June	Iceland v Germany	0-5
25 June	Germany v Spain	0-4
25 June	Iceland v England	1-3
28 June	Spain v Iceland	2-0
28 June	Germany v England	5-0

### Group B

22 June	Republic of Ireland v France	0-1
22 June	Switzerland v Norway	2-2
25 June	Republic of Ireland v Switzerland	0-1
25 June	France v Norway	2-0
28 June	Norway v Republic of Ireland	2-0
28 June	France v Switzerland	1-2

### Semi-finals

1 July	Spain v France	1-1*
*Spain won 4-3 on penalties		
1 July	Switzerland v Germany	1-0

### Final

4 July	Spain v Switzerland	5-2
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# UEFA RESEARCH GRANT PROGRAMME PROJECTS

The jury for the UEFA Research Grant Programme – which supports the work of doctoral and postdoctoral researchers studying European football – has chosen its research grant proposals for the 2015/16 season.

To celebrate its 60th birthday, UEFA launched a special edition of the programme supporting projects developed for, and in conjunction with, its member associations. The jury has carried out a comprehensive review of the 52 applications received and chosen the following six proposals:

**Effizienzpotenziale im strategischen Stadionmanagement (efficiency potential in strategic stadium management)**, by Daniel Gruber, University of Bayreuth, Germany (supported by the German Football Association).

**An unprecedented civilising process? Social evaluation of the 'Supporters United' fan project in Poland**, by Radosław Kossakowski, University of Gdansk, Poland (supported by the Polish Football Federation).

**Transfer of skills from futsal to football in youth players**, by Luca Oppici, Victoria University, Australia (supported by the Royal Spanish Football Federation).

**Beyond the game: If, when and how local football clubs practise corporate social responsibility**, by Esben Rahbek Gjerdrum Pedersen, Copenhagen Business School, Denmark (supported by the Danish Football Association).

**Mental health in football**, by Katy Stewart, University of Glasgow, Scotland (supported by the Scottish Football Association). *The jury decided to award this grant in memory of Prof. Stewart Hillis, a former member of the UEFA Medical Committee, who passed away last year.*

**Optimising player performance and readiness to train: Fatigue and recovery of neuromuscular function following football match-play**, by Kevin Thomas, Northumbria University, Newcastle, England (supported by The Football Association).

The 52 applications received were supported by 25 UEFA member associations. The six researchers chosen will now devote the next nine months to their research. They will report to European football's governing body next year, in cooperation with the supporting national associations.

By encouraging cooperation between the national associations and the academic community, UEFA hopes to help get research projects off the ground that the associations can then use in order to further develop their own activities and projects.

## 2014/15 research presentations

The jury has also heard the final presentations by the researchers who received grants for 2014/15:

**Intentions to drop out in adolescent female footballers from five European countries: The role of the coach-created motivational climate**, by Paul Appleton, University of Birmingham, England

**A comparative perspective on European football: Organisational capacity of European football clubs**, by Christoph Breuer, German Sport University, Cologne, Germany

**Risk versus benefits: The use of creatine by youth football players**, by Pascale Kippelen, Brunel University, England

**Player load monitoring: Protecting the elite player from overload using miniature high frequency triaxial accelerometers**, by Mark Robinson, Liverpool John Moores University, England (see next page)

The UEFA Research Grant Programme is invaluable for a number of reasons. The research in question produces interesting new insights into European football and helps Europe's football family to fulfil its mission by making its decision-making more effective and informed. ●

*The members of the jury with the selected 2014/15 researchers*



# USING ACCELEROMETERS TO MONITOR TRAINING LOADS

Since 2010, UEFA has supported a series of academic research projects related to football through the UEFA Research Grant Programme. In the first of a new series of articles summarising different research projects funded by the programme, Dr Mark Robinson presents his research.



Dr Mark Robinson is a senior lecturer in biomechanics in the School of Sport and Exercise Sciences at Liverpool John Moores University. His research interests include lower-limb musculoskeletal injury, biomechanical modelling techniques and statistical analysis of biomechanical data. He has published 25 internationally peer-reviewed journal articles since 2010 on these topics. ●

and slow down a lot, the car's suspension has to cope with all of the forces that the car experiences. An accelerometer on a player records the same kinds of data and can therefore provide useful information about the demands on a player's bones, cartilage, muscles, tendons and ligaments, etc. (also known as the 'mechanical

load'). After a match, the mechanical load experienced by the player can lead to desirable changes in the player's body (given sufficient recovery time), but it can also lead to undesirable damage where there is insufficient recovery time (overload injuries) or the mechanical load becomes too large for the system to deal with (acute injuries).

Elite footballers accelerate and decelerate hundreds of times during a match as part of a team effort to secure victory, pushing their bodies to the limit. Helping players and coaches to understand when the body is likely to exceed its limits is very important in terms of keeping players on the pitch, as there is nothing worse than having your team's best players out injured. Tiny Global Positioning System (GPS) and accelerometer sensors are now commonly used at elite level to measure the physical demands of training and adjust players' training loads in order to optimise matchday performances and reduce the likelihood of injury.

## So, what can GPS and accelerometry tell us?

GPS is like the odometer on a car. If you want your car to travel a certain distance, you need to make sure that you put enough fuel in the car to cope with the journey you want to make. GPS tracks the distance travelled and helps coaches to make sure that players are capable of coping with the energy demands of the game (known as the 'metabolic load'). Continuing with the car analogy, using an accelerometer can be likened to measuring the shock absorption that a vehicle requires. If the road is bumpy, or you speed up

and slow down a lot, the car's suspension has to cope with all of the forces that the car experiences. An accelerometer on a player records the same kinds of data and can therefore provide useful information about the demands on a player's bones, cartilage, muscles, tendons and ligaments, etc. (also known as the 'mechanical

load'). After a match, the mechanical load experienced by the player can lead to desirable changes in the player's body (given sufficient recovery time), but it can also lead to undesirable damage where there is insufficient recovery time (overload injuries) or the mechanical load becomes too large for the system to deal with (acute injuries).

Researchers at Liverpool John Moores University have conducted a research project using accelerometry to improve our understanding of the measurement of mechanical loads experienced by players. A number of players performed football-like activities (running, jumping, landing, changing direction, etc.) in a controlled laboratory environment while wearing an accelerometer between their shoulder blades. The data from the accelerometer was then compared with a gold-standard measure of mechanical loading on the body, and a mathematical relationship between the accelerometer and the actual mechanical load was established. Further work is ongoing to refine this relationship, but it is anticipated that football clubs will soon be using accelerometry data to plan and monitor training, taking both mechanical and metabolic loading into account in order to prevent overload injuries. ●

# INVESTING IN SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

From reviewing social responsibility activities during the 2013/14 season to preparing for a socially responsible and sustainable UEFA EURO 2016, three publications came out in July, illustrating UEFA's increased engagement in the field of social responsibility and sustainability.

## Preparing for EURO 2016

On 9 July in Paris, UEFA and EURO 2016 SAS presented a report on their social responsibility and sustainability plans for next summer's final tournament in France.



A panel of distinguished guests was on hand for the launch of the Social Responsibility and Sustainability One-year-to-go report at the Quai Branly Museum, including Jacques Lambert, EURO 2016 SAS president, Emmanuelle Assmann, president of the French Paralympic Committee

and former wheelchair fencing Olympic bronze-medallist, and Tony Estanguet, three-time Olympic canoe slalom champion for France and a member of the International Olympic Committee.

After underlining the civic responsibility of all event organisers, Jacques Lambert explained how EURO 2016 has been intrinsically linked to sustainable development since France's bid, and presented some specific measures.

"I'll give you two examples of educational measures. First, providing every spectator with an 'eco-calculator' so they can find out for themselves the impact in terms of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of their travelling to EURO 2016. The second example is our desire for the EURO 2016 stadiums to be smoke-free. That is aimed at everyone, so that at the very least for a period of two or three hours something is done that is good for everybody's health," said the EURO 2016 SAS president.

In addition, UEFA officials' flights will be offset and the credits invested in a wind farm in New Caledonia. And through the eco-calculator, fans will be able to choose the most favourable means of transport for them and contribute to the windfarm project by offsetting their own emissions.

From an organisational perspective, eight priorities have been defined, all falling into one of the following categories: Respect Access For All, Respect Your Health, Respect Diversity, Respect Fan Culture, and Respect the Environment.

## WHAT DO CSR, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND CARBON OFFSETTING ACTUALLY MEAN?

**Corporate social responsibility (CSR)** aims to achieve sustainable development – economic, social and environmental – in society.

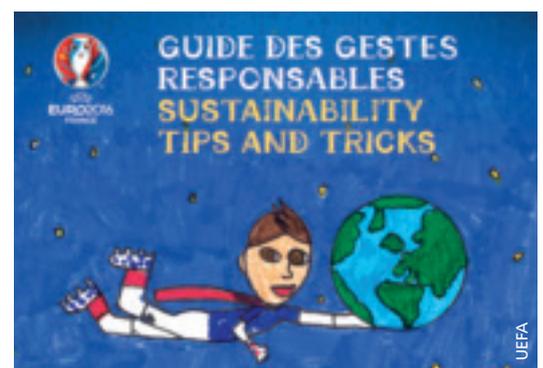
**Sustainable development** means meeting our current needs without comprising the ability of future generations to meet theirs.

**CSR in football** promotes sustainable development in all aspects of the game in cooperation with its stakeholders.

CSR is not charity; it is about how business is done.

And CSR is not at the expense of profits – it is about how profits are made.

**Carbon offset schemes** allow individuals and companies to invest in environmental projects around the world in order to balance out their own carbon footprints. ●



Fans and staff working at the tournament taking place in ten cities across France can also be proactive. For this purpose, a sustainability tips and tricks guide has been published, suggesting 15 ways to raise awareness of sustainable development, help save time, cut costs and improve well-being.

### Looking back to 2013/14

Building on last year's inaugural UEFA Football and Social Responsibility Report, the 2013/14 edition is now available in English, French and German. It looks at how football can contribute to sustainable development in society, and confirms UEFA's commitment to reporting on an annual basis.



UEFA invested €5m – all financed by fines imposed as disciplinary sanctions in connection with UEFA competition matches – through 35 partner organisations during the 2013/14 season, with those organisations benefiting from financial, material and media support, as well as the transfer of knowledge.

*“Football has the power to overcome what society at times cannot – from disabled fans cheering alongside their fellow supporters in the stadium, to children from communities divided by war and conflict playing together,”* said Peter Gilliéron, chairman of the UEFA Fair Play and Social Responsibility Committee.

*“We will continue to encourage and support our member associations, helping them to develop their own programmes and share our commitment to practising and promoting football in a socially responsible way.”* ●

## FOOTBALL FOR ALL IN BERLIN

The power of football for society was highlighted at the UEFA Champions Festival in Berlin, where a number of activities were staged from UEFA's 'football for all abilities' portfolio.

Talented blind or visually impaired players from FC Bordeaux and MTV Stuttgart competed on the mini-pitch at the foot of the Brandenburg Gate on the opening day of the festival, with an exhibition of skills from Special Olympics players on the second day and amputee players taking centre stage just before the UEFA Champions League final kicked off at the city's Olympiastadion.

The crowds were given a chance to understand the special skills associated with blind football on the festival site in central Berlin. Blind and partially sighted footballers play with blindfolds on and are guided by the sound of their voices and an acoustic ball filled with shells. The nature of the game requires advanced sporting capabilities and an acute sense of space.

Ulrich Pfisterer, chairman of the International Blind Sports Federation (IBSA) and coach of Blind Football Team Germany and of MTV Stuttgart, said: *“I would like to have blind football recognised as a major sport worldwide. There are many blind people who don't know that blind football exists and that they can actually play. At the moment, there are 42 nations playing it. There are many more nations who could play, including in Africa, and our role is to help other countries develop the sport.”*

### Special opportunities

Developing participation and opportunities are the key aims of UEFA's involvement through its football and social responsibility programme. With 24 countries now implementing blind football programmes, the collaboration is clearly working and the same can be said of the link-up with Special Olympics Europe/Eurasia (SOEE), which over little more than a quarter of a century has expanded its network of players from 20,000 to over 133,000.

*“The match here gives us a great opportunity to show the people what Special Olympics is,”* said Steffa Michailowa, responsible for participation and sports projects at Special Olympics Deutschland.

### Exposure for amputee football

Sizeable and diverse crowds were present for all of the matches at the festival, none more so than the amputee match which took place just hours before the UEFA Champions League final. Teams from Spain and Poland entertained with their skills in the year of the creation of the European Amputee Football Federation (EAFF), which has gained UEFA support. Cheered on by fans in town to support FC Barcelona against Juventus, the Spanish team ran out 8-2 winners.

*“The atmosphere is special and it's a great advertisement for our sport. To those who don't know so much about amputee football, I have one message: watch us more often and follow what we do through social media,”* said the EAFF's Mateusz Szczepaniak.

Interest levels have already been raised by the inclusion of such socially vital projects at such a popular and well-attended festival. ●

FC Bordeaux v MTV Stuttgart at the Champions Festival at the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin



# UEFA CFM FLOURISHES ACROSS EUROPE

The UEFA Certificate in Football Management (UEFA CFM) programme continues to enhance management skills across Europe’s national associations – with France and Italy the latest to stage national editions.

The third and final seminar of the UEFA CFM’s most recent edition took place at the French Football Federation’s (FFF) Clairefontaine technical centre in France, with 27 participants graduating. The programme enjoys an international feel and promotes knowledge-sharing across associations – ten FFF representatives were joined not only by eight colleagues from French regional federations and the professional football league (LFP), but also by two participants from the Football Association of Wales, one from the Hellenic Football Federation and one from the Royal Netherlands Football Association.

With UEFA EURO 2016 in France drawing ever closer, the Clairefontaine seminar also offered an ideal opportunity for five UEFA staff members to gather useful experience in preparing for next summer’s blue-riband national team tournament.

A EURO 2016 SAS country manager gave a presentation on preparations for the event, taking place at ten venues around France from 10 June to 10 July next year. The UEFA volunteer manager highlighted the EURO volunteer programme, which was launched in May, with 6,500 volunteers required across the venues in a wide variety of roles. Event management and the UEFA Champions League organisational model were also on the agenda for the Clairefontaine event.

Italy kicked off its own UEFA CFM national edition with a seminar at an appropriate setting – the football museum in Coverciano, Tuscany. Once again, the 35 participants came not only from Italy, but also from further afield, with 16 representatives of the Italian Football Federation (FIGC) and 9 from Italian clubs and the Italian professional football league (LNP) studying along-

side 10 guests from the national associations of Slovenia, Moldova and Malta.

## Great opportunity

*“This is a great opportunity for the FIGC,”* said the Italian association’s deputy director, Francesca Sanzone. *“This course, in fact, provides an important chance to address various footballing matters with representatives of the leagues and clubs, as well as with members of other national associations, each with their different experiences.”*

Italy will join other UEFA member associations which are scheduled to stage UEFA CFM national editions next year – Estonia, Hungary, Norway, Portugal, Scotland and Ukraine.

The UEFA CFM programme reinforces the management skills of association staff and football stakeholder representatives for the general benefit of European football. The information gathered and skills learned help graduates move with confidence into senior positions and profit effectively from their studies.

The nine-month programme involves studies in football organisation, strategy and strategic management, operational management, marketing and sponsorship, communications, media and public relations, and event organisation.

Six interactive online modules and three face-to-face seminars are included in the UEFA CFM. Content is adapted to local conditions while maintaining the programme’s overall values. The Swiss Graduate School of Public Administration (IDHEAP) at the University of Lausanne awards the certificates, and the course is prepared and led by respected academics from universities in France, Italy, Spain, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. ●



Participants at the CFM seminar in Italy

Getty Images

## FIRST WORLD TITLE FOR SERBIA

Between 30 May and 20 June, 24 teams played in the 19th Under-20 World Cup in New Zealand.

At last summer's European Under-19 Championship final round in Hungary – which decided not only the European champions, but also the six teams which would take part in the 2015 Under-20 World Cup – Serbia were knocked out by Portugal in the semi-finals on penalties. Since then, the young Serbs have clearly learnt to keep their cool in crucial moments, as their progression through the knock-out matches in New Zealand went to show: after equalising against Hungary in the dying seconds of their round of 16 tie, before snatching victory in extra time, Serbia went on to knock out the USA on penalties in the quarter-finals, and then to beat Mali in extra time in the semi-finals. And they managed to carry that composure through to the final itself, their winning goal against Brazil also coming in extra time!

Their mettle earned them Serbia's first world title since gaining independence, having won the 1987 World Youth Championship as part of Yugoslavia.

But Serbia's matches were not the only close-fought ones as far as Europe's contingent was concerned. Germany, the 2014 European Under-19 champions, were knocked out by Mali in the



quarter-finals on penalties, and Portugal were defeated in the quarter-finals by Brazil, also on penalties. And it was penalties again that put an end to Ukraine's run in the competition, with Senegal proving to be more skilful at the task in their round of 16 tie. Austria, the only European team left to mention, were knocked out in the round of 16 by Uzbekistan. ●

## BRONZE FOR ENGLAND

The world's top women's football teams were in Canada between 6 June and 5 July for the Women's World Cup.

The title was won by the USA, who beat Japan 5-2 in the final in Vancouver, thereby taking revenge on the team that had denied them victory in the 2011 final in Germany. The Americans now have three women's world titles under their belt, having also won the competition in 1991 and 1999.

In terms of the European contingent, England achieved their best-ever result and showed how much they have improved, winning the bronze medal by converting a penalty in extra time after a match for third place against Germany that had been goalless until then. In the semi-finals, England had lost to Japan (2-1) and Germany to the USA (2-0).

Apart from England, there were six other European teams in Canada, three of whom – the Netherlands, Switzerland and Spain – were making their World Cup debuts. The Netherlands and

Switzerland both finished third in their groups and made it through to the round of 16, while Spain had to make do with only one point from their three group matches.

Sweden fell to Germany (4-1) at the quarter-final stage, where Norway were also eliminated, against England (2-1). France, who finished top of their group above England and then beat South Korea 3-0 in the round of 16, were not far off reaching the semi-finals, leading Germany 1-0 in the quarter-finals until minutes before the final whistle. However, the Germans equalised with a penalty and then won the resulting penalty shoot-out.

Above all else, this seventh Women's World Cup definitely showed that women's football is on the up and up and that its popularity is following suit. ●

# MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS



## Visions for the future and high-calibre discussions

On 26 and 27 June, the Austrian Football Association (ÖFB) held its first ever members' conference, in Mondsee in the state of Salzburg. Representatives of the regional associations and the Austrian Bundesliga, including presidents, chief executives, directors, sporting directors and other officials, spent 26 June discussing projects relating to the future of Austrian football under the heading 'Fußball2020'. Participants presented findings, ideas and strategies in the areas of sport, economics, media and communications, law, infrastructure and social affairs, which they had produced with the aid of a number of internal and external experts.

That was followed, on 27 June, by high-calibre discussions involving the head coaches of the Austrian and Croatian national teams, Marcel Koller and Niko Kovač, the highly successful coach of FC Ingolstadt 04 (who have just been promoted to the German Bundesliga), Ralph Hasenhüttl, and the head coach of last season's double-winning FC Salzburg side, Adi Hütter. These football experts gave us insight into national and international football, their personal views on coaching, trends in modern football and the development of young players in European leagues. They were unanimous in their support for the approach that Austria has adopted in terms of the individual development of talented young players.



Left to right: Adi Hütter, Niko Kovač, Leo Windtner, Marcel Koller and Ralph Hasenhüttl

"This conference showed the unity of our organisation, and we presented and discussed many ideas and projects that we will be embarking on and implementing in the coming years," said the ÖFB's president, Leo Windtner.

● Carmen Redl



## Live Your Goals

A 'Live Your Goals' festival was organised recently by the Association of Football Federations of Azerbaijan (AFFA) at the Khachmaz Olympic complex in the north of the country. Among those taking part in the event were the coach of the Azerbaijan national team, Mahmud Gurbanov, the head coach of the women's Under-17 national team, Siyasat Asgarov, and Aysun Aliyeva, who plays for the women's Under-21 team.

The first Live Your Goals festival was held in Germany in 2011. The main aims of the project are to increase the popularity of women's football, to get more girls involved in football, to create the conditions for them to be able to



play football, and to increase interest in women's football, at regional level in particular.

Festivals have been organised in Azerbaijan since 2012, when events were held in Zaqatala, in Guba, in Shaki, in Masalli, and in Baku. Representatives of international football organisations and well-known women's football veterans Shirley Cruz and Steffi Jones took part. In 2014, festivals were held in Mingachevir and Sumgayit.

● Tora Akhmedova

More and more girls in Azerbaijan are taking up football



## Dragons still in the race for France

Led by head coach Mehmed Baždarević, the Bosnia and Herzegovina national team secured an important victory over Israel (3-1) in Zenica. As a result, in their four remaining EURO 2016 qualifying matches, they are still in with a chance of finishing second in Group B or of getting through to the play-offs by finishing third. First up is their match against Belgium on 3 September in Brussels, followed by a home fixture against Andorra three days later. Their last two qualifiers will be against Wales on 10 October in Zenica, and away against Cyprus three days later.

Meanwhile, our Under-21s did not get off to a particularly good start in their bid to qualify for the next European Under-21 Championship final round in Poland in 2017. They returned from their trip to Drammen to play Norway with a 2-0 defeat to show for their efforts. Beforehand, coach Darko Nestorović's players had played a goalless warm-up match against Montenegro in Čitluk. Their next qualifying match is at home against Kazakhstan on 2 September.

Over in the Republic of Ireland, our amateur team from the Tuzla Canton took part in the

9th UEFA Regions' Cup final tournament in Dublin. Unfortunately, they lost all three of their matches in Group A, 1-0 against South Moravia (Czech Republic), 2-1 against Ankara (Turkey) and 2-1 against the hosts, Eastern Region (Republic of Ireland).

Indoors, our futsal team had two preparatory gatherings for their play-offs against Kazakhstan for a place in the UEFA Futsal EURO 2016 in Serbia. The Bosnians will be hosting the first leg on 15 September, with the return leg scheduled for 22 September.

In club football, the premier league resumed on 25 July. Eighteen rounds will be played this autumn so that the national team has enough EURO 2016 preparation time. New names in the league table for this season are the winners of the entity first leagues: FK Mladost Doboj Kakanj and FK Rudar Prijedor. This is the last season with a 16-team premier league, before it is reduced to 12 in 2016/17.

Finally, FK Željezničar have hosted the fourth 'Play football, live life' international tournament, bringing

together Under-17 teams from eight clubs in the region: NK Maribor (Slovenia), HNK Rijeka and HNK Cibalia Vinkovci (Croatia), FK Crvena zvezda (Serbia), SK Sturm Graz (Austria) and domestic clubs FK Sarajevo, FK Olimpik Sarajevo and FK Željezničar. The tournament was won by the host team, with a goal by Mirza Sube defeating NK Maribor. NK Rijeka beat FK Sarajevo 3-1 to finish in third place.

● Fuad Kravac



A win against Israel rekindled Bosnia and Herzegovina's hopes of qualifying for EURO 2016

## Tryavna hosts national five, seven and nine-a-side finals

Tryavna recently hosted Bulgaria's national seven and nine-a-side finals for the second year in succession. This year, there was also a new addition to the programme: a five-a-side tournament for children born in 2006/07.

The opening ceremony took place at Tryavna's sports complex. The three tournaments, which were for children of different ages, were organised by Plamen Mihov, Emil Spasov and Sasho Yordanov, all regional coaches, Dimitar Kukuvanov, head of the Bulgarian Football Union's children's and youth football department, and Pavel Panov, the national association's technical director. A total of 22 teams and

nearly 400 children participated in the various tournaments. Interestingly, no team had representatives in all three age groups.

The winners of the five-a-side tournament were Slavia Sofia. They topped their group before playing DAF Sofia in the final. The match ended 0-0, so penalties were required to separate the teams. Slavia Sofia's players were more accurate from the spot, winning 4-2 on penalties.

Levski Sofia triumphed in the nine-a-side tournament. Indeed, they won every single game, scoring 17 goals and conceding just 3. The team, who were coached by Veselin Sarbakov, beat Chernomorets Burgas 4-1 in the final.

The final of the seven-a-side tournament was contested by the youth teams of CSKA Sofia



The tournaments in Tryavna involved 22 teams this year

and Levski Sofia. CSKA Sofia went ahead early on, scoring with their very first attack. They then imposed their style of play and did not allow their opponents to get back in the match, ended 2-1 to CSKA Sofia.

● *Nikolay Dyulgerov*

## 'Be Proud' multimedia information centre opens

The mayor of Zagreb, Milan Bandić, and the president of the Croatian Football Federation (HNS), Davor Šuker, have opened the 'Be Proud' multimedia information centre, where visitors will have an easily accessible, interactive opportunity to learn about the rich history of Croatian football. The attractive location in the immediate vicinity of the main Zagreb square, at 2 Petrinjska Street, offers Croatian football a place to celebrate its major moments and worthy individuals.

"We often emphasise our motto, *Be Proud*, and this centre shows what we can be proud of. This is a recognition of the many people who have contributed to Croatian football and an opportunity for younger generations to learn and to develop a desire to become part of it. Croatian football deserves a place in the very centre of Zagreb, and this centre will help to promote Croatian football both at home and abroad," the HNS president said.

The centre is structured as a football stadium, with locker rooms including screens, illustrations and artifacts from Croatian football history, and



Milan Bandić, the mayor of Zagreb, and Davor Šuker, president of the Croatian FA

lockers with reminders of Croatia's appearances at major tournaments. Together, they form a photograph of the bronze medal celebrations from the 1998 World Cup. Moving forward, visitors enter the tunnel to reach the field and explore the Wall of Fame, featuring the greatest names in Croatian football history. Through interactive screens, they can explore even deeper and select the best goals, matches and players. Also available are videos of significant

matches, goals, trophies and awards, with futsal and women's football also represented. The entire content is available in Croatian and English, and admission is free of charge.

In other news, NK Pajde Möhlin (Switzerland) won the third 'world championship' for emigrant Croatian clubs in a tournament played in Zagreb in June, while the city of Slavonski Brod hosted a youth football camp for minorities in Croatia, with several other similar camps already scheduled.

Luka Modrić (Real Madrid CF) won the Croatian footballer of the year award for 2014/15, while Marko Pjaca from Dinamo Zagreb won the award for the best player in the Croatian top division.

In the city of Opatija, the Croatian Football Federation organised its yearly stadium security conference. "I think you will agree with me that we have to do everything in our power to reach a point where we talk only about football after football matches", said Davor Šuker.

Finally, on a sad note, the Croatian national team lost one of its former players on 28 June, when Goran Brajković (two caps) died in a motorcycle accident.

● *Tomislav Pacak*

## Grassroots finals

Last season, more than 5,000 children participated in the 2014/15 Grassroots Championships organised by the Cyprus Football Association. The championships began in the first week of November and ended on the last weekend in May, with the finals being held in Limassol.

There were six age categories (for players born in 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2007 respectively), and two teams from each category participated in the finals. The standard of football was high, and all matches were played in the spirit of respect and fair play.

The passion, talent and enthusiasm of the children, combined with the various events organised by the national association, made the finals day a real festival of youth football.

Hundreds of spectators attended the finals, and the children gave their all on the pitch, enjoying their participation in the event.

All teams were awarded prizes for reaching the finals, and those awards were presented by the coaches of Cyprus's national youth teams. The national association has been organising these championships since 2007, and every year there is another sizeable increase in the number of teams and children participating.



● *Constantinos Shiamboullis* The grassroots champions



### New competition for veterans

At the end of June, the Football Association of the Czech Republic (FAČR) organised the final round of its first ever competition for veterans – players aged 40 and over – at the home of SK Motorlet Praha. Spectators had the rare opportunity to watch great ex-professionals such as Karel Poborský, formerly of SL Benfica, Manchester United FC and the Czech national team, who played for a team from his region, Ceske Budejovice.

The final tournament was contested by eight teams from different regions, which competed in two groups of four, followed by semi-finals and a final.



Next year, the FAČR wants to increase the number of veterans' teams and have regular competitions in all 14 regions. The plan is to organise a 16-team final tournament contested by the winners of the 14 regional competitions, the previous year's champions and an additional guest team. This tournament could be held at the FAČR's new headquarters in Prague.

● Michal Blažej

A successful first veterans' competition



### A rewarding sport

The FA played host to the Cerebral Palsy Football World Championships at St George's Park in June. The event brought together 15 of the top nations in the world, vying not only for the title of world champions but also for places at the 2016 Paralympic Games in Rio.

With England having hosted the 2012 London Paralympic Games with great aplomb,



England captain Jack Rutter in action against Japan

the bar for the tournament was set very high. Phil Heap, assistant tournament director, said: "The initial idea of bringing the tournament to England came about from the success of the Paralympic Games in 2012. We wanted CP football to be captured in a similar way and for our home country to hold the world championships".

The team that brought CP2015 to life was a combination of internal and external operations, drawing on staff from The FA's two main hubs, Wembley and St George's Park, the latter being home to England's 24 national squads. Allied with these was on-site support from an army of 'Team 7' volunteers.

"There has been a lot of help with the organisation of the tournament from different individuals and teams. We wouldn't have been able to pull off such a huge event without them. All the volunteers have been brilliant – the atmosphere at the venue is incredible and everyone has come together to be able to create and see through a tournament of this scale," said Phil.

Aside from the small matter of staging an international football

tournament, The FA also had a legacy to fulfil. When the bid was made to the International Federation of Cerebral Palsy Football, the overriding objective was to raise the profile of the sport, as Phil outlined: "One of the main things we want to get out of the tournament is to raise awareness not only of CP football but of disability football as a whole. Disability football is just one element of the game, and it's a very rewarding sport not only to play but also to be a part of."

The future of CP football is looking bright. The FA is working with the eight regional cerebral palsy football centres and the CP Sport organisation to establish a national participation league for adults.

The CP World Championships were won by Russia, who retained the title by beating Ukraine in the final. Brazil were bronze medallists, while England secured a spot as the representatives for Team GB at the Paralympics in 2016, having finished in fifth position.

Meanwhile, next up for St George's Park as an international tournament venue will be the European Under-17 Championship final tournament in 2018.

● Maria de Leon



### More than 7,500 children take part in inaugural school project

More than 7,500 children participated in the Estonian Football Association's school project in its first season. For the second season the aim is to get even more schools and youngsters involved. During the first season, from September 2014 until June 2015, Estonian FA coaches visited 105 schools nationwide, where 3,992 boys and 3,532 girls, mostly aged from 7 to 11, took part in training sessions.

"It is a grassroots project to get the youngsters familiar with football and to teach them the habit of doing sport. The first season went really well and the feedback from schools is extremely positive," said Teet Allas, former national team player and project leader.

One of the important things the schools gain from the visit is a book containing many different football exercises developed especially for the project by the association. Teachers can use them for their lessons, as well as the balls, vests and cones provided by the association. "During the school visits we involve local football clubs and players to make the training more interesting and to link kids with local clubs. Former national team head coach Tarmo Rütli has also been one of the persons involved. He is very famous and well-respected, so kids and teachers like him a lot," said Mr Allas.

The Estonian FA plans to produce short video clips of different exercises to make the whole project even more attractive. Special attention will be paid to girls, who are invited to participate in FIFA Live Your Goals festivals



A successful first year for the Estonian schools project

and attend the Estonian women's team home matches in the Women's EURO qualifiers.

The school project is supported by both Coca-Cola HBC Estonia and Nike.

● Media office

## First girls' Under-15 team

The Faroese Football Association earlier this year decided to set up its first girls' Under-15 national team. Even though the Faroese FA has had a boys' Under-15 team for several years and girls' Under-17 and Under-19 teams for many years, there has never been a Faroese girls' Under-15 team.

That has all changed now. A girls' Under-15 national team has been started and the association has hired Svenn Olsen, an experienced youth coach at Faroese club

Víkingur, as the head coach, with Pól Helgi Jacobsen, an experienced women's youth coach, as his assistant.

Since March the pair of them have been working with a large squad of players and by July they were ready to pick a final squad to go to Denmark to play in the Brøndby Cup. The Faroese boys' Under-15 team has been participating in this



tournament for several years already.

The Faroese FA is very excited about its girls' Under-15 team and hopes it will boost the development of women's football in the Faroe Islands.

● Terji Nilson

Svenn Olsen

## A new head coach and coaching instructor

Jeff Wood has recently been appointed head coach of Gibraltar's national team, with immediate effect. Jeff brings with him a wealth of footballing experience and expert knowledge of Gibraltarian football. He also holds a UEFA A licence.

As well as being head coach of the national team, Jeff also becomes the Gibraltar Football Association's coaching instructor, making him responsible for training and developing coaches in Gibraltar and delivering courses in accordance with the UEFA Coaching Convention.

As part of his role, Jeff will offer assistance to the head coaches of Gibraltar's youth teams, working closely with them to nurture young Gibraltarian talent and prepare those players for future international honours.

Jeff is delighted to be taking up this role: "This is a fantastic opportunity. Given that I have been involved with Gibraltarian football in the past, I know there is a lot of talent – and especially hungry talent – in Gibraltar. I hope to be able to oversee the development and

nurturing of that talent and make the whole of Europe and the world take Gibraltar seriously, given the calibre of player that we constantly produce."

The Gibraltar Football Association's general secretary, Dennis Beiso, said: "I am delighted to be able to confirm Jeff's appointment. Jeff has been involved in Gibraltarian football at various levels for a number of years. He enjoys the trust

and confidence of the players and worked very effectively alongside Dave Wilson during the recent games against Croatia and Germany. With Jeff and Dave, we now have a good, professional team in place to take our squad forward to the next challenges that await us. I am particularly pleased that Jeff will be taking on responsibilities in the area of coach education. Now that we have joined the UEFA Coaching

Convention and can award our own UEFA B licences in Gibraltar, we needed someone in place to both deliver the courses and assist other Gibraltarian coaches with their work, be it at national or club level."

● Steven Gonzalez

Jeff Wood, the new national team coach



## Veteran series concludes with a final festival

The national veteran footballers' association recently organised the 2014/15 national veterans' league final tournament at the national veteran footballers' festival, the main sponsor of which was the Hungarian Football Federation (MLSZ).

The league was first organised in 2008, when it became part of the MLSZ's grassroots programme. This year's competition involved more than 600 footballers over 60 years of age, of whom those playing for the top 12 teams went on to take part in the finals held at Szőnyi úti Stadion, home of BVSC Budapest. With Érszentmihályi taking part for the first time this year, the event has become a truly nationwide competition, with teams from the eastern and western regions among the 12 finalists.

"This is a unique competition in Europe. No other football association organises such a competition for footballers over 60 years of

age. The aim is not primarily to increase the number of participants, but rather to help maintain the physical and mental fitness

of older people. In addition, the veterans set an example to the younger generations of their families, displaying their love of and devotion to football. Special guests at this year's festival included MLSZ executive board member Tibor Nyilasi and tournament ambassadors Máté

Fenyvesi, Pál Dárdai Sr and János Csank," said Tibor Óze, grassroots programme manager.

● Márton Dinnyés

More than 600 veterans took part in the tournament this year





### Kick-off event looks to the future

Stakeholders in Italian football recently convened in Cesena for a kick-off event aimed at strengthening the sport's foundations through knowledge sharing.

The three-day event, which was organised by the Italian Football Federation (FIGC) with assistance from UEFA's HatTrick programme, sought to establish links between football and other sections of Italian society, facilitate growth and development, and foster an inclusive environment that promotes social responsibility programmes.

*"Italian football takes as its starting point its legacy, its international prestige and its strong identification with its main strengths, including its 1.4 million registered members (834,000 of*

*whom are under the age of 18)," said Michele Uva, chief executive of the FIGC. "Eleven major issues concerning the world of football have been discussed here with more than 250 people from different sections of society, with the aim of obtaining input which will be useful in helping us to improve our activities – not only from a sporting point of view, but also in terms of organisation.*



A match to establish links between football and other sections of Italian society

*There is an important aspect to this event: the need for the FIGC to dig deep into the foundations of football to unearth weaknesses that are not necessarily exclusive to football. We are looking at our weak points and aspects of the sport in which we are lagging behind."*

The event included round-table sessions on a wide range of topics relating to football. It also gave the FIGC an opportunity to publish its 2014 balance sheet, which was presented by Michele Uva during the participants' plenary session. This document, which was produced internally by the association, spans a two-year period (2013 and 2014) and seeks to communicate and demonstrate the value of its various

activities where measurable results have not yet been achieved.

In addition to that kick-off event, Cesena also hosted a FIGC youth football tournament entitled Progetto Rete, which was aimed specifically at unaccompanied foreign minors, most of whom were from non-EU countries. That tournament shows the FIGC's belief in the inclusivity of football.

*"We are a federation that has a solid identity and aims, in parallel, to do more and more in terms of social responsibility,"* Michele Uva said.

● Diego Antenzio



### General contractor for the new football stadium in Riga



The Latvian Football Federation has signed a contract with Arčers Ltd as the general contractor for the new sports complex in Riga

The Latvian Football Federation (LFF) has chosen Arčers Ltd as the general contractor for the new sports complex in the capital city, Riga. The new sports complex – unofficially named the Home of Football – will have a new football stadium that will be used by the Latvian national football teams and various local football clubs for their international games.

A contract between the LFF and Arčers was signed on 23 July. The plan is to reconstruct the existing football ground on Krišjāņa Barona street and transform it into a modern sports complex that can also be used for other sports and by local schoolchildren. In addition, it will be the new home of the LFF and the museum of Latvian football. The reconstruction process is scheduled to be finished by May 2017. The funds for the project will be provided by the LFF, with help from UEFA.

*"This sports complex will be a beautiful and necessary building, but its emotional fulfilment will be the museum of Latvian football. This Home of Football will be the place that gathers the very best of the past, present and future of Latvian football,"* said the LFF general secretary, Jānis Mežeckis.

The LFF anticipates that the first construction works on the site will begin in early 2016.

● Toms Ārmanis



### New approach to continuing professional development for coaches

The Malta Football Association (MFA) has changed the way in which continuing professional development (CPD) for coaches is organised and dispensed. As a first step in implementing this new approach, the MFA technical centre recently organised a course for its licensed coach educators to equip them to run streamlined CPD activities under its guidance. While other CPD activities are still encouraged, only those approved by the MFA

technical centre will be valid for coach licensing purposes from now on.

Under the new system, CPD activities will be organised in different categories and it will be mandatory for licensed coaches to attend at least one three-hour CPD course a year for the specific area or age-group in which they are currently coaching.

This new approach to CPD for licensed coaches also fits with the wide-scale improvements to the coach licensing system that are being envisaged by the MFA and its technical centre, as well as with the requirements of the UEFA Coaching Convention.

● Alex Vella



The Malta FA organises different categories of continuing professional development for its coaches

## FC Sheriff win Moldovan Super Cup

The ninth Moldovan Super Cup in Tiraspol pitted the Moldovan Cup holders, FC Sheriff, against the Moldovan champions, FC Milsami Orhei. After a dramatic match – Lilian Popescu's first as coach – FC Sheriff lifted the Moldovan Super Cup for the sixth time in their history, having beaten Milsami 3-1.

Third in the league last season, Moldovan Cup winners Sheriff immediately took the game to Milsami and were two goals up after eight minutes through Juninho Potiguar and Andrei Macrițchii.

The title holders responded when Marcel Metoua felled Romeo Surdu in the area and early substitute Cristian Bud calmly converted the penalty. It did not take Popescu's side long to restore the two-goal margin, however, with

Cadu scoring with a header following a cross by Mateo Sušić from the right. Ricardinho could have made it 4-1 after the break, but failed to convert a spot kick that he had earned himself.

After the match, Sheriff's captain, Benjamin Balima, was presented with the trophy by the general secretary of the Football Association of Moldova (FMF), Nicolai Cebotari.

*"It's always nice to start with a win," Popescu said. "We need time for the team to gel, but it was not bad for a first competitive match."*

● FMF press office



FC Sheriff, winners of the Moldovan Super Cup

## 'Girls on the Ball' conference

The innovative 'Girls on the Ball' project concluded recently with a one-day conference at Ulster University, Jordanstown, that focused on career opportunities for women in sport and included presentations by ten female role models. The project was designed by Amazing Brains and delivered in partnership with Ulster University and the Irish Football Association (IFA).

The 'Girls on the Ball' project, which was funded through the UEFA Respect programme, involved three schools – Holy Cross College in Strabane, Magherafelt High School and Abbey Community College – taking part in three workshops over a two-month period. Each workshop tackled a number of inter-related topics, giving 200 Year 10 schoolgirls the opportunity to: (i) develop a growth mindset; (ii) enhance educational, entrepreneurship and life skills; and (iii) explore women's football and other sporting communities.

The IFA's women's domestic football manager, Sara Booth, said: "As part of the IFA Girls' and

*Women's Football Plan, we have highlighted the need to use the power of football to promote health, education and social development. Partnerships with dynamic social enterprises such as Amazing Brains and educational leaders like the School of Sport, Ulster University, are crucial in helping us achieve this objective."*

Roisin McFeely (chief executive of Amazing Brains) said: "Girls on the Ball set out to excite, engage and empower Year 10 girls in the development of the skills, competencies and mindset required in their place of employment, in entrepreneurship, in study, in sport and throughout their everyday lives. The feedback from both students and teachers indicates that we achieved these aims and more! We will undoubtedly see some of these girls in sports leadership roles in the future." Dr Katie Liston of Ulster University was delighted to welcome the Year 10 students to the Jordanstown campus, with many visiting for the first time: "Making university accessible to everyone is one of our key objectives. We anticipate that more

*and more girls will seek out opportunities in sport because of this programme, and we look forward to continuing this unique collaborative work in the future."*

● Sara Booth



Sara Booth, Roisin McFeely, Emily Shaw (UEFA), Katie Liston and two pupils from Magherafelt High School

## Young Eagles summer academy

In July, Gniiewino in the north of Poland was the setting for the second Young Eagles summer academy football camps organised by the Polish FA for young players. The first two weeks were reserved for boys born in 2002 and 2003, with a girls' camp organised during the third week. "We want to take a closer look at promising young players to assess their level. We are keen to prepare them for our national teams," said Bartłomiej Zalewski, coach of the Under-16 national team.

The first camp started on 28 June, involving 80 boys born in 2003. The camp started with fitness tests and included training on the beach by the Baltic Sea and meeting the players of Polish champion club KKS Lech Poznań, who

were in Gniiewino for their pre-season training. "We are pleased because we had the opportunity to work for a few days with young and gifted

*players who had the opportunity to display their ability in training sessions, matches and physical fitness tests,"* said Marcin Dorna, coach of the Under-21 team.

The main aim of the camps is to invite young players and to select the best of them for the national youth teams. All the camps are run by the coaches of the Polish national youth teams.

● Jakub Kwiatkowski



The first two weeks of July were reserved for football camps for boys born in 2002 and 2003



## Festival of football and annual general meeting

The eyes of the Irish football community were on the western counties of Sligo and Leitrim in July as the Football Association of Ireland (FAI) annual general meeting and festival of football took place.

Ireland's annual gathering of administrators and officials from all the leagues and affiliates in the country takes place in a different region of Ireland each year. Through the week-long festival of football format which precedes it, the association has been very successful in keeping close to the clubs and leagues that it represents.

The festival of football saw a delegation from the FAI, led by president Tony Fitzgerald and CEO John Delaney, visiting community clubs for a variety of events. Republic of Ireland manager Martin O'Neill and former internationals including Paul McGrath, Ray Houghton and John Aldridge also made visits during the festival. In all, 26 clubs were visited by the delegation before the asso-



*A standing ovation for John Delaney*

ciation was given civic receptions by both Sligo and Leitrim county councils to recognise the work it is doing in the community. On the evening before the AGM, awards were presented to volunteers at the pre-AGM delegates' dinner. This included the FAI Grassroots and League Communications Awards, Services to Football Awards and Coach of the Year Awards. The FAI Club of the Year 2015 for excellence in four separate areas of progression – coach education, community, participation and club development – went to Achill Rovers, from Achill Island, off the east coast of Ireland. They were nominated in the participation category – securing a cheque of €1,500 for that nomination – for increasing membership numbers despite a falling population and building a club that is open to all the

community, actively encouraging new residents to become involved in all aspects of club life. As the overall winners, the club also received a cheque for €5,000.

At the AGM, CEO John Delaney received a standing ovation from the delegates after a strong oration in which he paid particular thanks to the support UEFA has given the association and Irish football. One of the highlights of the year was UEFA's awarding of EURO 2020 matches to Dublin.

The FAI's high-performance director, Ruud Dokter, made a presentation to the delegates outlining the association's national player development plan and how it will impact clubs around the country. It is envisioned that the changes introduced will significantly raise the playing standards for Irish children in the years to come.

Another key presentation was that of Declan Conroy, who is carrying out an extensive review of the SSE Airtricity League. His findings will be received by the FAI in August.

● Stephen Finn



## Volunteers strengthen Romanian football

More than 20 students and young professionals have joined the volunteer programme of the Romanian Football Federation and already been of service in the organisation of various activities.

The programme started during International Volunteer Week from 11 to 17 May, when the volunteers were selected not just on the basis of their CVs but also following one-to-one interviews. A love for the game, enthusiasm, willingness to get involved in all kinds of projects and an open mind were the main criteria by which the candidates were judged. As well as all these virtues, we were pleased to find a lot of curiosity and energy displayed by the students and young professionals who applied.

The chosen volunteers received three days of training from the federation, during which they learned about the organisation, its staff and the

way it works, as well as meeting Romanian football legends such as Miodrag Belodedici, Aurel Țicleanu and Jean Vlădoiu, all three of whom currently hold various positions within the Romanian FA.

Soon after the training programme, the volunteers were involved in several CSR activities, as well as playing an active part in the organisation of the Romanian Cup final and the UEFA KISS workshop held recently in Bucharest. Several of the volunteers are students at the national sports university in Bucharest and being involved in the programme gives them a glimpse of how their future professional lives could be. They will have the opportunity to gain first-hand experience in a wide range of fields, from physical preparation and coaching to marketing, team management, the organisation of football events, and more besides.

Volunteering has become increasingly important in Romania since the adoption of a proper



*Volunteers ready to learn the ropes*

legislative framework and now that more and more young people understand the importance of gaining work experience while still at college or university or before starting a long-term job. As the Romanian FA strategically promotes the involvement of young people in football, volunteering is a less demanding but exciting form of commitment for the young volunteers themselves, as well as an important instrument for the development of football.

● Paul Zaharia



## Referees hold spring conference

The San Marino Referees' Association held its now traditional springtime gathering at the headquarters of the San Marino FA in April. No effort was spared in organising the event, which was led by a team of instructors that included Pierluigi Collina, Francesco Bianchi, Andrea Lastrucci and Franco De Falco.

Pierluigi Collina, who was joining us for the first time, is a member of the UEFA Referees Committee. He passed on some of his expertise and experience in top-level refereeing and football administration.

Francesco Bianchi is a UEFA referee observer and sits on the UEFA Referee Convention Panel. He had plenty of helpful advice for our own observers on how to achieve consistency in assessing referee performance, and delivered



*Pierluigi Collina, the instructors and the conference participants*

a fascinating lecture entitled 'Control: am I in control of myself, of the players, of the situations?'

Andrea Lastrucci is a Serie A and international futsal referee, and also currently serves as a FIFA and UEFA instructor. He provided insights into the Futsal Laws of the Game and, specifically, how to manage particular situations that might arise during a match, drawing on a number of scenarios from our own national league. Franco De Falco is a former professional footballer who

played for a number of clubs in Serie A. Now a professional coach, he led a seminar exploring how players move on the pitch in the context of different tactical formations, which is important for a referee to be able to read the game.

Assisted by our fitness coach, Simone Savoretti, the participating referees also tested the latest generation of Polar devices, whose wearable sensors make it possible to monitor match officials' movement and activity, whether during training or an actual match.

It is hugely significant for a small national association like ours to be able to attract individuals of such proven expertise and experience who can pass on the skills our referees require to contribute effectively both to our own league and to UEFA competitions at which they are invited to officiate.

● Stefano Podeschi

## Scottish project chosen

A research proposal on mental health issues in football – supported by the Scottish FA – has been selected by UEFA for its prestigious Research Grant Programme. The project was one of six chosen from 52 applications and has been awarded in memory of Professor Stewart Hillis, former member of the UEFA Medical Committee, who passed away last year.

A principle aim of the University of Glasgow research group will be to examine the incidence of mental health issues in Scottish football (both male and female players) and find out the best way to manage those identified with mental health issues. Working with PFA Scotland (the professional footballers' union) and Scottish women's football, the group will shortly conduct a survey of players in Scotland

and implement a pathway to allow players to access an appropriate health professional.

The proposal has been drawn up by University of Glasgow teacher Katy Stewart, who is also a part-time employee of the sports medicine centre at Hampden Stadium. Speaking to the Scottish FA, she said: *"We are delighted to be awarded this grant, particularly in memory of the late Professor Stewart Hillis, who worked tirelessly over a number of years to ensure player welfare in Scottish football, and it is a fitting tribute for him to be acknowledged by UEFA for all his hard work."*

The UEFA Research Grant Programme was created to support the work of researchers studying for or already holding a PhD and analysing European football. Each project is granted up to €15,000 of research funding. The six researchers will now spend the next

ninth months working on their projects – with the cooperation of their national associations – before reporting back with their findings next year. The chairman of the UEFA Research Grant Programme jury, William Gaillard, said: *"There is considerable variety in the topics; the multi-disciplinary element is one of the most interesting aspects of this programme."*

● David Childs

## 2014/15 Dôvera Schools Cup

A record 1,525 teams applied to take part in the 2014/15 Dôvera Schools Cup, the fourth edition of the biggest five-a-side competition in Slovakia. Qualifying competitions were held at district and regional level, with both boys' and girls' categories. Just eight teams in each category qualified for the finals as the winners of the regional rounds.



A girls' competition was also on the programme

Although this nationwide competition does not have a long history, it has produced many talented young players – such as Martina Šurnovská and Mária Míkolajová, who joined the national Under-17 team after competing in the competition. Andrea Bogorová also made her debut in the Slovak Under-17 team last year.

The coach of Slovakia's national team, Ján Kozák, and forward Martin Jakubko visited the final tournament, which was held at the Slovak Football Association's national training centre in Poprad. Jakubko presented the tournament's top goalscorer – Matej Rozenberg from SNP primary school in Banská Bystrica, who got on the scoresheet eight times – with a signed FC Amkar Perm shirt.

The event also featured an exhibition match between young players from socially disadvantaged backgrounds as part of the Wild Card project.

The tournament was organised under the auspices of Slovakia's ministry of education, science, research and sport, in cooperation with the Slovak Football Association and health insurance company Dôvera, and all participating teams were given fantastic prizes. The two winning teams – the boys' team from Školská primary school in Zilina and the girls' team from Sadová primary school in Senica – will travel to Luxembourg at the beginning of October to watch the Slovak national team's final qualifying match for EURO 2016.

● Peter Šurin

## Serbia win U-20 World Cup

Saturday 20 June 2015 was a golden day for Serbian football – the day of the finest achievement in its national teams' history. It was the day that Serbia won the U-20 World Cup in New Zealand, beating Brazil 2-1 after extra time in the final. For a country of Serbia's size to become world champions is a truly amazing achievement. It is also a sign of the enormous belief of this generation of players, who were convinced that they would one day be a true footballing power on the world stage.

Those players have followed in the footsteps of the Yugoslav Under-20 team who were crowned world champions in Chile in 1987. However, today's Serbia has a smaller population and a more limited pool of players, so this success is even more impressive. When we talk about this generation of players, it is important to note that it all started back in 2013 at the final round of the European Under-19 Championship in Lithuania, where Serbia became champions of Europe.

After that tournament, Veljko Paunović was appointed head coach. The former midfielder, who played for FK Partizan, Club Atlético de Madrid and many other Spanish sides, obtained his coaching qualifications at the Football Association of Serbia's coaching school, in cooperation with UEFA. He is hard working, talented, entirely dedicated to his work and

hungry for success. Paunović selected his squad and worked intensively with them for two years – hard work that paid dividends in New Zealand.

It was clear from the final round of the 2013/14 European Under-19 Championship in Hungary that something special was happening, as Serbia again reached the semi-finals, before being knocked out by Portugal on penalties. Luck was not with them that day, but it was at certain points in this summer's U-20 World Cup.

*"No one knows the exact ranking of the different teams in the world. That had a great impact on our path to success. I can say freely now that we earned this trophy. We lived for it, believed in the mission we had, wanted the best and gave everything we had. We didn't stop, even after losing our first match against Uruguay. This Serbian generation was unified and strong; we all breathed as one. God gives the hardest tasks to his best students. I believe we deserved this result,"* Paunović said.

That victory was followed by triumphant scenes on the streets of Belgrade – scenes often sparked by successes and trophies in other sports, but never football. When the team returned from New Zealand on 22 June, the newly crowned world champions were given a special welcome complete with open-top buses, cheering and singing. The players stood on the balcony of Belgrade City Hall and held the trophy aloft in front of a crowd of about 100,000 people. These were unforgettable

moments full of fresh optimism – optimism that Serbia will one day have a reason to celebrate on the European and world stage at senior level.

● Aleksandar Bošković





### Emmen's successful football academy closes

"The academy in Emmen was a great success, one of the key elements of our youth development policy," says Heinz Moser, the coach of Switzerland's Under-21 side. As someone who spent many years working at the academy, he should know. Moser explains that the Credit Suisse Academy in Emmen closed at the end of June after ten successful years "because the big clubs have seen how important youth development is and invested lots of money in setting up their own training centres." Urs Dickerhof, vice-chairman of Emmen's town council, is also fulsome in his praise: "We really enjoyed having the young players here, and we



Haris Seferović at the Emmen academy

are proud to think that players who have won the U-17 World Cup and gone on to represent Switzerland at senior level learnt their trade in Emmen."

The Swiss Football Association's Credit Suisse Academy in Emmen, which opened in August 2005, closed at the end of June because the majority of the country's top young players are no longer being developed centrally. For the last

ten years, 18 talented young players from each school year have trained at Emmen's sports complex during the week, as well as spending two years at local primary schools. The footballers lived with host families in Emmen and had lunch and dinner together in a restaurant. They also had supervised homework sessions. The academy was regularly visited by other national associations, coaches and numerous foreign delegations. Indeed, our youth development concept has been widely praised. We are particularly proud that players such as Pajtim Kasami and Haris Seferović (who were both part of the team that won the U-17 World Cup) used the academy to make the leap from talented youngster to professional – and international – football.

● Pierre Benoit



### 2015/16 Turkish Super League named in memory of Hasan Doğan

The Turkish Football Federation's executive committee has decided that the 2015/16 Turkish Super League should be named the Hasan Doğan season, in memory of its previous president who died from a heart attack during his presidency in July 2008.

The 2015/16 Hasan Doğan season is based on three principles aimed at ensuring fair play in football: tolerance, friendship and respect.

The Turkish deaf national team (also known as the 'Silent Scream'), who are supported by the Turkish

Football Federation and the Turkish Deaf Sports Federation, won the European Deaf Football Championships in Hannover, Germany, in June. In the final, Turkey beat Russia 4-0.

In the group stage, Turkey drew with Belgium 1-1, defeated Croatia 8-0 and beat France 2-0, thereby finishing top of Group C and going through to the quarter-finals, where they beat the Republic of Ireland 5-2. In the semi-finals, they were pitted against England, who they beat 3-2 to secure their place against Russia in the final.

● Aydın Güvenir



The logo for the 2015/16 championship honouring Hasan Doğan



### Paul Trollope joins as Wales national team coach

The Football Association of Wales (FAW) is delighted to announce that Cardiff City FC's Paul Trollope will be joining Wales as national team coach. Trollope replaces former Wales and Fulham FC teammate Kit Symons, who left his post to concentrate on his role as manager of the Cottagers.

Wales manager Chris Coleman said: "On both a personal and professional level, we are very sad to lose Kit, but I fully understand the reasons behind his decision and wish him the very best of luck at Fulham. I am, however, delighted to welcome on board another former teammate of mine, Paul Trollope, who is a young and highly thought-of coach. Paul will be a great team member and will fit in perfectly with the staff."



### Leaders visit UEFA

During a visit to UEFA's headquarters in Nyon, Switzerland, the Football Federation of Ukraine (FFU) president, Andriy Pavelko, said he counts on UEFA's support for national and regional football development projects. The FFU president travelled to Nyon with the federations' general secretary, Volodymyr Geninson, to meet with the UEFA President, Michel Platini, and representatives of UEFA's national associations division.

"UEFA is our home, and most importantly, we are part of the European football family. I took

the opportunity to thank UEFA for giving Ukraine and Poland the possibility to host EURO 2012. It genuinely gave a huge boost to the development of football in Ukraine. We understand what the routes of development are going to be both at European level and at Ukrainian level and where we might count on UEFA's support for our regional and national football development projects."

The FFU president also stressed his federation's commitment to working alongside UEFA to tackle the issue of match-fixing: "One of the first aims is to fight against this evil, starting with mass youth football and going right up to the professional leagues. We have taken our example from UEFA – we are handing out more power so that we have the ability to effectively fight against one of the biggest problems of football." Draft bills have already been put before Ukraine's parliament and will be discussed in the local football community in order to implement effective measures as part of the campaign.

● Yuri Maznychenko

Michel Platini and Andriy Pavelko



Paul Trollope (right) has joined the Wales coaching staff

The Bluebirds' CEO, Ken Choo, added: "As a club we are proud and pleased to see Paul recognised by the FAW. Whilst his primary focus remains on the task at hand here at Cardiff City, we are happy for the national side to use Paul's talent to their benefit, at agreed junctures, as they pursue a place in the European Championships. It goes without saying that they have our full backing during this exciting time."

Following this appointment, Osian Roberts will become assistant manager to Coleman, with Paul Trollope joining the highly experienced Wales backroom staff.

● Rob Dowling

## BIRTHDAYS

Gerhard Aigner (Germany, 1 Sept.)  
 José Guilherme Aguiar (Portugal, 1 Sept.)  
 Manuel Díaz Vega (Spain, 1 Sept.)  
 João Morais (Portugal, 1 Sept.)  
 Anatoly Vorobyev (Russia, 2 Sept.)  
 Marco Brunelli (Italy, 2 Sept.)  
 Savo Milošević (Serbia, 2 Sept.)  
 Gérard Houllier (France, 3 Sept.)  
 David Elleray (England, 3 Sept.)  
 Rudolf Bata (Czech Republic, 4 Sept.)  
 Victor Mintoff (Malta, 4 Sept.)  
 Grigoriy Surkis (Ukraine, 4 Sept.)  
 Barry Taylor (England, 5 Sept.)  
 Eija Vähälä (Finland, 6 Sept.)  
 Bernd Stöber (Germany, 6 Sept.)  
**Shmuel Shteif (Israel, 6 Sept.) 50th**  
 György Mezey (Hungary, 7 Sept.)  
 Antonio Laranjo (Portugal, 7 Sept.)  
 Werner Helsen (Belgium, 7 Sept.)  
 Vignir Már Thormóðsson (Iceland, 7 Sept.)  
**Adrian Titcombe (England, 8 Sept.) 70th**  
 Pierre Rochcongar (France, 9 Sept.)  
 Kostadin Gerginov (Bulgaria, 9 Sept.)  
 Geir Thorsteinsson (Iceland, 9 Sept.)  
 Ilonka Milanova Djaleva (Bulgaria, 9 Sept.)  
 Ioannis Tsachlidis (Greece, 11 Sept.)  
 Katarzyna Wierzbowska (Poland, 11 Sept.)  
 Tomas Karpavicius (Lithuania, 11 Sept.)  
**Talal Darawshi (Israel, 12 Sept.) 50th**  
 Tanya Gravina (Malta, 12 Sept.)  
 Stanisław Speczik (Poland, 13 Sept.)  
 Jon Skjervold (Norway, 13 Sept.)  
 Ingrid Jonsson (Sweden, 13 Sept.)  
 Frank Wormuth (Germany, 13 Sept.)  
 Philippe Prudhon (France, 13 Sept.)  
 Ivan Gazidis (England, 13 Sept.)  
 Miguel Liétard Fernández-Palacios  
 (Spain, 13 Sept.)  
 Javid Garayev (Azerbaijan, 14 Sept.)  
 Kim Robin Haugen (Norway, 14 Sept.)  
 Adam Giersz (Poland, 15 Sept.)  
 Eugeniusz Nowak (Poland, 15 Sept.)  
 Dejan Savičević (Montenegro, 15 Sept.)  
 Sokol Jareci (Albania, 15 Sept.)  
 Tony Asumaa (Finland, 15 Sept.)  
 Revaz Arveladze (Georgia, 15 Sept.)  
**Paddy McCaul (Republic of Ireland,  
 16 Sept.) 60th**  
 Antonis Petrou (Cyprus, 16 Sept.)  
 Fran Gavin (Republic of Ireland, 16 Sept.)  
 Kelly Simmons (England, 16 Sept.)  
 Antoine De Pandis (France, 17 Sept.)  
 Antero Silva Resende (Portugal, 18 Sept.)  
 Şenes Erzik (Turkey, 18 Sept.)  
 Roberto Rosetti (Italy, 18 Sept.)  
 Miroslava Migalova (Slovakia, 18 Sept.)  
 Stefano Farina (Italy, 19 Sept.)  
 Gaioz Darsadze (Georgia, 19 Sept.)  
 John Fleming (Scotland, 20 Sept.)  
 Miloš Marković (Serbia, 20 Sept.)  
 Helena Herrero González (Spain, 21 Sept.)  
 Viktor Paradnikov (Ukraine, 21 Sept.)

Nenad Dikić (Serbia, 21 Sept.)  
 Stefan Weber (Germany, 21 Sept.)  
**Vladislav Khodееv (Russia, 21 Sept.)  
 50th**  
 Cornelis de Bruin (Netherlands, 22 Sept.)  
 Vasile Avram (Romania, 22 Sept.)  
 Goetz Eilers (Germany, 23 Sept.)  
 Umberto Lago (Italy, 23 Sept.)  
 Giangiorgio Spiess (Switzerland, 24 Sept.)  
 Eugen Strigel (Germany, 24 Sept.)  
 Ionel Piscanu (Romania, 24 Sept.)  
 Matteo Frameglia (Italy, 24 Sept.)  
 Magdalena Urbanska (Poland, 24 Sept.)  
 Dr Mogens Kreutzfeldt (Denmark,  
 25 Sept.)  
 Paul Krähenbühl (Switzerland, 25 Sept.)  
**Karl-Heinz Rummenigge (Germany,  
 25 Sept.) 60th**  
**Christine Frai (Germany, 25 Sept.) 50th**  
 Ayse Idil Cem (Turkey, 25 Sept.)  
 Stephen Lodge (England, 26 Sept.)  
 Camelia Nicolae (Romania, 26 Sept.)  
 Dzmitry Kryshchanovich (Belarus, 26 Sept.)  
 Aleš Zavrl (Slovenia, 26 Sept.)  
 Sławomir Stempniewski (Poland, 26 Sept.)  
 Jens Kleinfeld (Germany, 27 Sept.)  
 Mariano Delogu (Italy, 28 Sept.)  
 Michael van Praag (Netherlands, 28 Sept.)  
 Karel Bohunek (Czech Republic, 28 Sept.)  
 Eric Romain (Belgium, 28 Sept.)  
 Dariusz Dziekanowski (Poland, 30 Sept.)  
 Cristina-Daniela Uluc (Romania, 30 Sept.)

## NOTICES

- On 9 June, Alan McRae took over from Campbell Ogilvie as president of the Scottish Football Association.
- Since the beginning of June, Nikita Simonyan has been acting president of the Russian Football Union, taking over from Nikolai Tolstykh.
- Since 22 July, Azamat Aitkhozhin has been the new general secretary of the Football Federation of Kazakhstan, replacing Allen Chaizhunussov.
- In July Nebojša Ivković was appointed general secretary of the FA of Serbia, taking over from Zoran Laković.
- Since 27 July, Radu Visan has been the new general secretary of the Romanian Football Federation, replacing Gheorghe Chivorchian.
- The Football Federation of FYR Macedonia has moved to Bul. ASNOM bb, MK-1000 Skopje.

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### Meetings

**1 September, Nyon**  
 UEFA Youth League: draws for the domestic champions path (first and second rounds)  
 Women's Football Committee

**2 September, Nyon**  
 Elite Club Coaches Forum

**15/16 September, Malta**  
 Top Executive Programme (TEP) strategy meeting

**17/18 September, Malta**  
 Executive Committee

**21 September, Bratislava**  
 Development and Technical Assistance Committee

**21–25 September, Bratislava**  
 Coach education workshop

**23 September, Nyon**  
 Anti-Doping Panel

### Competitions

**3–5 September**  
 European Qualifiers (EURO 2016):  
 matchday 7

### 6–8 September

European Qualifiers (EURO 2016):  
 matchday 8

### 15 September

European Futsal Championship:  
 play-offs (first legs)

### 15/16 September

UEFA Champions League: group matches  
 (matchday 1)  
 UEFA Youth League: UEFA Champions  
 League path group matches (matchday 1)

### 17 September

UEFA Europa League: group matches  
 (matchday 1)

### 22 September

European Futsal Championship: play-offs  
 (return legs)

### 29/30 September

UEFA Champions League: group matches  
 (matchday 2)  
 UEFA Youth League: UEFA Champions  
 League path group matches (matchday 2)  
 UEFA Youth League: domestic champions  
 path first round (first legs)

### 29 September–4 October

UEFA Futsal Cup: main round



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