

Including



**Interviú Madrid
win the
UEFA Futsal Cup 03**

**Seminars for
referees and mentors
in Nyon 12**

**EURO 2012
host cities 13**





Photos: UEFA/plywoods.ch

Message of the president

A mix of nostalgia and anticipation

The run-up to this May's club competition finals was tinged with nostalgia. While Istanbul prepared to host the last UEFA Cup final before the competition's rebirth as the UEFA Europa League, the long tradition of Wednesday evening finals in the champions' competition would come to an end a week later at the Olympic Stadium in Rome.

This air of nostalgia brought back a host of memories as we recalled the courage and perceptiveness of those who launched these competitions at a time when travelling around Europe was still a great adventure, the wisdom of the administrators who knew how to develop these competitions and gradually adapt them to new conditions and demands, and, of course, the memorable matches and the exploits of the players who have written the history of these competitions and acquired worldwide renown in the process.

However, although football feeds on nostalgia, it does not depend on it: what makes it move forward and keep on developing is the thrill of new challenges, a sensation that was also felt at the finals in Rome and Istanbul, in anticipation of the changes that are set to give fresh impetus to our club competitions.

In the Champions League, moving the final from Wednesday to Saturday reflects the extraordinary importance of UEFA's flagship club competition. In its tentative early years, no one would ever have contemplated "stealing" a weekend from the national leagues' calendars for the European Cup. Nowadays, however, the Champions League plays a huge role in the domestic league season, especially in larger countries, where the fact that several clubs qualify means that the battle for places often continues right to the last. The Champions League final therefore deserves to be the climax of a week-long festival of football. The decision to open the competition up to more national champions should also increase its impact, just as the new Europa League should enable a broader range of teams to make their mark on the European stage.

Always striving to do better: what better way of paying tribute to those who left us the valuable legacy of the UEFA club competitions?

Michel Platini
UEFA President

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COVER

This season's European youth championship final rounds got under way in May. The Under-17 men's teams kicked off first (Germany v Turkey), followed by the Under-17 women and finally the Under-19 men and women.

Photo: Radloff/Bongarts/Getty Images

UEFA Futsal Cup

Madrid triumph in Ekaterinburg



WITH A COMFORTABLE VICTORY AGAINST RUSSIAN HOSTS

MFK VIZ-SINARA EKATERINBURG, INTERVIÚ MADRID WON THE UEFA FUTSAL CUP FOR A RECORD THIRD TIME.

The finals took place from 24 to 26 April in Ekaterinburg, in the foothills of the Ural Mountains, with holders MFK Viz-Sinara Ekaterinburg defending their title on home territory and their fans turning out in such numbers they almost filled the 4,600-capacity Palace of Sport.

Four finals and three titles

Only once in the competition's eight-year history has a club lifted the trophy at home. It was in 2003, when Playas de Castellón FS also became the only defending champions to retain their title.

Unfortunately for Ekaterinburg, Castellón's records remain intact



after this year's final, in which Spain's Interviú Madrid beat the hosts and defending champions 5-1, after having reached an unprecedented fourth final by defeating Kairat Almaty of Kazakhstan 5-0 in their semi-final. In the other semi, Ekaterinburg went through after a tense 2-0 win over compatriots MFK Dinamo Moskva.

Interviú's top-class team gave it their all in terms of strength, knowledge and skill to notch up five goals in the final (Daniel (2), Jordi Torràs, Schumacher and Juanra) and ensure that the trophy would go to Spain for the fifth time in eight years.

The Interviú players' experience in big international finals, for club and

country, proved too much for Ekaterinburg. With this victory, Interviú move a title ahead of the only other repeat winners, Spanish rivals Castellón. In the third-place play-off, outsiders Kairat created an upset with a hard-fought 1-0 win over Dinamo Moskva.

Revamped team

Juan Luis Alonso, who took over as Interviú coach at the start of the season, had every reason to be proud of his team: *"It's always special to win a European title, especially as we had revamped the team since last year, with six new players and a new coach. The club had been very brave to make such changes, so we are all very happy about this victory. It is my happiest day as a futsal coach."*

Sergei Skorovich, Ekaterinburg's coach, was also satisfied with



Carlos Montovanelli (in red, Kairat Almaty) and Aleksandr Rakhimov (Dinamo Moskwa) in the third-place play-off.



The public turned out in force to watch the final round.

Jordi Torras (in green, Interviú Madrid), up against Aleksei Mokhov (MFK Viz-Sinara Ekaterinburg) in the final.



the performances of his young, home-grown team: *"My team tried hard and that makes me happy. I can say that it is a great feeling to play in the finals and in the final itself. We reached it through our own hard work. I congratulated my players after the match and said they did a good job and could be proud of themselves."*

At the end, all the teams and officials who attended the finals agreed on one thing: they were happy with the organisation of the tournament and particularly pleased to see that the host city of Ekaterinburg is hugely passionate about futsal. Seeing so many children playing was definitely an example to everyone. MFK Viz-Sinara Ekaterinburg runs a futsal academy for some 600 young players!

Next edition of the UEFA Futsal Cup

The draw for the preliminary and main qualifying rounds kicks off the 9th UEFA Futsal Cup on 2 July in Nyon.

The preliminary round will be played in mini-tournaments from 15 to 23 August.

The main qualifying round of mini-tournaments then runs from 26 September to 4 October, followed by a second draw on 13 October to determine the mini-tournament groups for the elite qualifying round, to be staged from 14 to 22 November.

The draw for the Futsal Cup finals will be held at the beginning of March 2010, with the four qualifying teams scheduled to compete for the title from 22 to 25 April. The format for the final round stays the same, meaning the semi-finals, third-place play-off and final will all be contested in the same city.

European Futsal Championship

■ The 2009/10 European Futsal Championship also culminates next year. The final round takes place in Hungary from 19 to 30 January, when the hosts welcome the national teams of Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Spain, Italy, Portugal, Czech Republic, Russia, Serbia, Slovenia and Ukraine. This will be the first time that the final round of the competition has featured 12 teams.

The final round draw is being held in Debrecen, Hungary, on 24 September.

■ Four national associations have expressed an interest in hosting the 2011/12 European Futsal Championship: Belgium, Croatia, FYR Macedonia and Slovenia. They have until 15 October to enter their bids. These will be evaluated and submitted to the Futsal and Beach Soccer Committee, which will then make a recommendation to the Executive Committee, for a decision in spring 2010.



Results

24.04 Semi-finals

Kairat Almaty v Interviú Madrid 0-5
Ekaterinburg v Dinamo Moskva 2-0

26.04 Third-place play-off

Kairat Almaty v Dinamo Moskva 1-0

Final

Interviú Madrid v Ekaterinburg 5-1



Juanra cherishes the trophy after Interviú Madrid's third triumph in the UEFA Futsal Cup.

Photos: Sportfile



At the final round draw: the representatives of England, Finland, Germany, Spain...



Malmö New Stadium, the venue for the final.



... Sweden, Italy, Belarus and Serbia.

European Under-21 Championship Football celebration in Sweden

THIS JUNE, THE FOCUS OF EUROPEAN FOOTBALL SHIFTS TO THE SOUTHWEST OF SWEDEN, WHERE THE FINAL ROUND OF THE 2007/09 EUROPEAN UNDER-21 CHAMPIONSHIP WILL TAKE PLACE FROM 15 TO 29 JUNE.

The host cities of Gothenburg, Halmstad, Helsingborg and Malmö, as well as the entire local organising committee, have all been putting in an enormous amount of work, dedication and enthusiasm to make sure the teams and the fans have an enjoyable fortnight.

100,000 tickets already sold

The eight teams are divided into two groups, with Sweden in Group A in Malmö/Helsingborg along with Italy, Serbia and Belarus. Group B, playing in Gothenburg/Halmstad, involves Spain, Germany, England and Finland.

The group matches take place from 15 to 23 June, the semi-finals on 26 June in Gothenburg, and the final on 29 June in Malmö.

By late April, 100,000 tickets had already been sold for the 15 matches, and with many weeks still to go before the matches kick off, the scene is set for a celebration of football during bright June evenings.

The venues

The **Malmö New Stadium** was built in 2008 and has a capacity of 21,000 seats.

Sweden's third-largest city is a model of sustainable urban development and was named the fourth greenest city in the world by Grist Magazine in 2007. Several neighbourhoods have been transformed using innovative, eco-friendly design, exemplified by the 190m high Turning Torso, a spectacular twisting skyscraper in the city centre.

Main football club: Malmö FF

The **Olympia Stadium** in Helsingborg was built in 1898 and has a capacity of 12,500.

Situated at Sweden's closest point to Denmark, with Elsinore clearly visible 4km away on the other side of the Öresund Strait, Helsingborg remains

one of the most important ports in Europe. In football terms, Helsingborg shares a healthy rivalry with regional rivals Malmö FF. The Olympia is one of the oldest football grounds in Sweden, but has been modernised regularly over the years.

Main football club: Helsingborgs IF

The **Örjans vall** stadium in Halmstad was built in 1922 with a capacity of 7,500

Halmstad's long and picturesque coastline, with the famous Tylösand beach, have made the city a popular summer destination for Swedish and foreign holidaymakers alike. Halmstad is also something of a Swedish golf capital. There are 12 courses in and around Halmstad, offering the opportunity to play long into the bright summer evenings. The Örjans vall football stadium is steeped in football tradition and has been renovated many times since it was first built.

Main football club: Halmstads BK

Gamla Ullevi was built in 2008 and has a capacity of 16,700 seats.

Industry and finance have been the focus for Sweden's second largest city since it was founded in the 17th century.

While such sectors are still important for Gothenburg, tourism is also growing, and Liseberg – the biggest attraction in the city – was named one of the top ten amusement parks in the world by Forbes Magazine in 2005.

Main football clubs: IFK Göteborg, GAIS, Örgryte IS, BK Häcken

Fan zones and midsummer celebrations

There will also be plenty of entertainment for fans off the field. All four cities will have special fan zones filled with activities and with giant screens broadcasting matches played in the other cities. The biggest challenge for the organisers will be to attract fans to the two matches played in Malmö and Helsingborg on 19 June. That day happens to be Midsummer's Eve, the biggest holiday in the Swedish calendar, when Swedes traditionally celebrate with family and friends in the countryside. Malmö is planning a special midsummer party for fans of Serbia and Belarus, while Helsingborg will welcome ticket-holders for Sweden v Italy to the city's traditional midsummer festivities in the grounds of the Fredriksdal museum.

Sujay Dutt



The stadium in Gothenburg hopes to see a lot of exciting action.



Jim Boyce, vice-chairman of the Youth and Amateur Football Committee, announces the result of the draw at Mihanović Castle.



The team representatives with the organisers.



UEFA Regions' Cup

Final round heads to Croatia for the first time

CROATIA IS HOSTING THE FINAL ROUND OF THE 6TH UEFA REGIONS' CUP, WHICH TAKES PLACE THERE FROM 15 TO 22 JUNE.

The participants are the eight best regional amateur teams of Europe, which were drawn into the following two groups at the draw held in Tuheljske Toplice on 23 April:

Group A: Football Centre Zagreb (Croatia), Bratislava Region FA (Slovakia), Privolzhie (Russia) and Oltenia (Romania)

Group B: Područni fudbalski Savez Gradiska (Bosnia-Herzegovina), Kempen (Belgium), Republic of Ireland Region 1 (Ireland) and Castilla y León (Spain)

It will be the first time that the Croatian Football Federation has hosted a UEFA final round.

"This is a great and prestigious competition in a sport which, both in Croatia and in most other European countries, is the most popular one. Since our country achieved its independence, Croatia has missed out on taking part in a major tournament only once (EURO 2000), which makes us one of the greatest football nations in the world. One of

the reasons for that success is certainly the fact that football in Croatia is played and loved by everyone, from amateur to professional level. I am certain that this competition will prove that amateur football is the foundation and extremely important prerequisite for top football achievements and results," said Vlatko Marković, president of the Croatian Football Federation, adding that the eight teams in question will have a chance to confirm that.

Sports tradition

Croatia is a tourist country with great cultural and sports traditions. There is no doubt that all those involved in the preparation of this sporting event are going to do their utmost to ensure that all the participants enjoy their stay and that the quality of the organisation is of the highest possible standard. All the participants will be accommodated

in well-known Croatian tourist destinations: one group in Tuheljske Toplice, at the Terme Tuhelj hotel, and the other in Stubicke Toplice, at the Matija Gubec hotel. Both destinations are located about 50km or a 45-minute drive from Zagreb international airport. We are confident that our guests will have a pleasant and comfortable stay.

Besides excellent hotel services, the teams will be provided with all the necessary technical facilities. They will have training fields within 15 minutes of their respective hotels. The matches will be played at smaller stadiums used by the Croatian first and second division teams from the Zagreb region in the towns of Vrbovec, Jastrebarsko, Samobor, Velika Gorica, Lucko and Zapresic, the latter being chosen to host the final match on 22 June.

"The Croatian Football Federation, as the umbrella organisation of Croatian football, has taken all necessary measures in order to stage this UEFA tournament at the highest level and to the great pleasure of all participants. We are taking care of the tiniest details, and as far as the organisational aspect is concerned, the tournament can already start tomorrow," said Zorislav Srebric from the local organising committee, also general secretary of the Croatian Football Federation.

Davor Gavran

Match Schedule

15.06	Vrbovec Velika Gorica Zapresic Lucko	Zagreb v Bratislava Privolzhie v Oltenia Region 1 v Castilla y Leon Gradiska v Kempen
17.06	Samobor Velika Gorica Jastrebarsko Lucko	Gradiska v Region 1 Bratislava v Oltenia Kempen v Castilla y Leon Zagreb v Privolzhie
20.06	Vrbovec Samobor Velika Gorica Jastrebarsko	Bratislava v Privolzhie Kempen v Region 1 Oltenia v Zagreb Castilla y Leon v Gradiska
22.06	Zapresic	Final



The draw was followed by a workshop for the participants.

Photos: HNS



The local organising committee at a...



... working meeting at the House of European football in Nyon.

Photos: UEFA/plivwoods.ch

Women's Under-17 final round in Nyon

All the action on the doorstep of the House of European Football

LAST YEAR'S FINAL ROUND OF THE INAUGURAL EUROPEAN WOMEN'S UNDER-17 CHAMPIONSHIP, WHICH WAS STAGED IN NYON, WAS THE FIRST TIME EVER THAT THE UEFA ADMINISTRATION HAD HOSTED THE FINAL ROUND OF ONE OF ITS CHAMPIONSHIPS.

The unexpectedly high number of spectators who attended the four matches (2,900 in all) and the positive feedback from all participants encouraged the UEFA administration to strengthen its efforts in all areas in order to heighten the appeal of this event for everyone, with the ultimate goal of attracting more spectators than last year.



Immediately after the final whistle of the last championship, and with the new challenges in mind, the UEFA administration started preparing for the next edition and has already achieved many of its goals.

Reto Ziegler, who started his football career in the Nyon region, will act as the tournament ambassador. He is currently playing at Sampdoria in Italy's Serie A, as well as for the Swiss national team. In 2002, he took the decisive penalty kick that gave the Swiss Under-17 national team the European championship crown. He has agreed to help to promote the tournament and will be available for interviews and an autograph session on the final day.

Getting schools involved

Since the spectator target group is schoolchildren, three of the four matches have been scheduled during school time. UEFA is very pleased that two important institutional partners – the cantons of Vaud and Geneva – have agreed to help us in our efforts to attract school classes to the matches. By means of an official letter,

the primary and secondary schools of both cantons (over 300 schools) have been invited to attend the matches.

Furthermore, tailor-made sporting and educational activities will be provided in cooperation with a sports articles manufacturer, the Swiss Football Association and the Geneva and Vaud regional football associations.

This programme includes football skill stations, quizzes and a World Wild Fund for Nature exhibition on environmental issues. In addition, school classes will also have the possibility to visit UEFA's headquarters and to take photographs in front of the different UEFA trophies. Admission to matches will be free this year again, and all spectators will be offered free soft drinks and receive a souvenir T-shirt.

Eight local sponsors on board

UEFA is also very pleased that eight two-year sponsorship deals with local companies have been concluded, including with a well-known radio station and a reputable daily newspaper. These partners will provide considerable financial and material contributions, while the audio and media partners will ensure an extensive promotional programme during the build-up to the tournament. UEFA's TV partner for youth football, Eurosport, will broadcast the final live.

Like last year, the towns and tourist offices of Morges, Rolle and Nyon will cooperate with UEFA on various promotional activities.

In addition, invitations have been sent to all football clubs in Vaud and Geneva, as well as to the local embassies of the four qualified teams, tourist offices in the neighbouring regions of France, private schools, etc.

Germany (reigning champions), France (last year's losing finalists) and the newcomers Norway and Spain will take part in this year's final round.

Excitement on and off the field is guaranteed and the second semi-final, featuring last year's finalists, will certainly be a highlight of this final round.



The poster for the final round.



Since the European Cup Winners' Cup became part of the UEFA Cup, the winners have played in the UEFA Super Cup in Monaco, successfully in the case of Galatasaray, (right) against Real Madrid in 2000, and Valencia, against FC Porto in 2004.

Getty Images



Empics Sport

Evolution of the UEFA Cup

The influence of television

CREATED TO REPLACE THE INTER-CITIES FAIRS CUP, THE UEFA CUP QUICKLY ESTABLISHED ITSELF AS A TOP UEFA CLUB COMPETITION, TO SUCH AN EXTENT THAT IT BEGAN TO OVERSHADOW THE CUP WINNERS' CUP AND EVEN THE CHAMPION CLUBS' CUP.

The UEFA Cup has also known finals involving teams from the same country, for example, in 1995, between Parma and Juventus, when Lorenzo Minotti and his Parma team-mates beat their Italian rivals.

"It is true that we did not expect the UEFA Cup to become so important," says Gerhard Aigner, former UEFA chief executive. "The main reason for its success was the television revenue. The major countries, which were able to enter several teams under the competition regulations, were also those with lucrative television markets.

A club competing in the UEFA Cup was therefore more likely to be drawn against attractive opponents than in the other two competitions in which, in principle, each association only had one representative. Also, since there were no fixed kick-off times, in some countries you could watch the UEFA Cup matches involving all the country's teams on the same day, which could mean football being broadcast from the early afternoon until the evening. Arranging kick-off times had become very difficult and was often the subject of lengthy haggling between the clubs concerned, who wanted to avoid clashing with other matches. Thanks to these broadcasts and the income they generated, the UEFA Cup gradually became more successful than the other two club competitions."

Creation and growth of the UEFA Champions League

"You could therefore say that it was television that pulled the competitions in a new direction. In order to maintain interest in the champions' competition and to counterbalance the growing importance of the UEFA Cup, we began by creating the UEFA Champions League, which ensured that clubs – barring slip-ups – would play several matches and, at the same time, gave the champions a broader platform



Empics Sport



Lennart Johansson, president of UEFA at the time, presents Gerhard Aigner with his UEFA honorary member's diploma at the UEFA Congress in 2004.



Gerhard Aigner participated in many UEFA Cup draws, including this one in Monaco in 2002, at which he is pictured with Jean-Fournet Fayard.

thanks to a new television and sponsorship strategy."

Originally comprising two groups of four teams, the Champions League was expanded to 16 teams in 1994/95 and then, in 1997/98, was opened up to the runners-up from the eight best national associations (via a qualifying round). The 24 teams were then split into six groups.

"Then," explains Gerhard Aigner, "in 1998, the threat of a 'super league' forced us to increase the number of teams in the Champions League group stage to 32, with the best associations each represented by up to four clubs".

Merger of UEFA Cup and Cup Winners' Cup

The UEFA Cup was therefore deprived of the main challengers to the national champions. This loss was partially offset by the merger of the UEFA Cup and the European Cup Winners' Cup, which was approved by the Executive Committee at its meeting in Lisbon on 6 October 1998. "The Cup Winners' Cup had become less important over the years," recalls Gerhard Aigner. "Many national champions also won their domestic cup competition and it was therefore the beaten finalists who entered the Cup Winners' Cup. In addition, the national cup competitions were in crisis: following the introduction of a league cup in some countries, they had become less important and less attractive for the clubs. On more than one occasion, relegated or even second division clubs therefore qualified for the Cup Winners' Cup. Since part of the UEFA Cup had been lost to the Champions League, it was therefore compensated by the integration of the Cup Winners' Cup into the UEFA Cup."

Transfer from one competition to the other

Another new measure was adopted: clubs finishing third in their Champions League groups dropped into the UEFA Cup, as was already

the case for clubs eliminated in the Champions League third qualifying round. "In sporting terms, this measure is certainly open to criticism," says Gerhard Aigner, "but the result is positive because it adds extra interest and the eliminated clubs often offer good value." Galatasaray in 2000, Feyenoord in 2002 and CSKA Moscow in 2005 all proved the point by winning the UEFA Cup having begun the season in the Champions League.

The UEFA Cup, the final of which had become a single match rather than a two-legged affair in 1998, was revamped in the 2004/05 season with the introduction of a

phase involving eight groups of five teams. Five years on, the competition is about to enter a new era, under a new name – the UEFA Europa League – with a phase of 12 groups of four teams. "It is good that the financial aspect will be centralised and the format is easier to understand. The dates are available, it is right to use them to give the competition a greater impact and offer a large number of clubs more matches at European level. But we must not forget that the European competitions should remain, above all, complementary to the national championships."

"Football's situation has changed radically"

Having joined the UEFA administration in 1969, Gerhard Aigner became general secretary in 1989 and was then chief executive between December 1999 and his retirement in December 2003. He was appointed an honorary member of UEFA at the 2004 UEFA Congress in Cyprus. Since then, following the advice of Voltaire's *Candide*, he has been cultivating his garden, although he also enjoys playing golf, a hobby he sometimes combines with his love of travelling. He has clearly not lost his love of football and is often found on the touchline, supporting his sons, who play in a youth team for a club on the shores of Lake Geneva, not far from UEFA's headquarters. Drawing from this experience, he points out that: "It is getting harder and harder to find volunteers to work for clubs. Since the Bosman ruling in December 1995, football's situation has changed radically. Players leave at an increasingly young age, lured by the money offered by the big clubs, and the volunteers barely get to see the fruit of their work." "We cannot turn back the clock," he continues, "but the sport's governing bodies should be allowed to impose limits on the materialism that has infiltrated sport."



UEFA-pjwoods.ch



UEFA-plywoods.ch

Mircea Sandu, president of the Romanian Football Federation and a member of the UEFA Executive Committee, had the idea of producing a commemorative book.

Football federation centenary

A Romanian football narrative

IT WAS IN NOVEMBER 2003, IN THE OFFICE OF MIRCEA SANDU, THE PRESIDENT OF THE ROMANIAN FOOTBALL FEDERATION (FRF), THAT THE IDEA FOR A COMPLETE HISTORY OF ROMANIAN FOOTBALL WAS BORN – TO BE PUBLISHED IN 2009, TO MARK THE FEDERATION’S CENTENARY.

Alongside Mircea Sandu was Mircea Angelescu, former president of the FRF, and Dan Cristea, chairman of the history and statistics committee since 1990.

Straight away it was unanimous: a book would be produced on the history of Romanian football. It was completed in November last year (that is five years later). In two volumes, it runs to almost 1,100 pages and is illustrated with more than 900 photos.

Collecting the information

It was obviously not decided there and then how the book would be structured and who would pen it. In the end Mircea Angelescu and Dan Cristea became the coordinators, working with three sports journalists as co-authors: Razvan Toma, Victor Partan and Mihai Ciuca. Razvan Toma also happens to be vice-chairman of the federation’s history and statistics committee.

The first step was to collect as much information as possible on the history of Romanian football, as well as on the broader history of the country over the last 100 years and the evolution of the game as a whole.

Extensive library research was therefore carried out into everything published in Romania on sport in gen-

eral and football in particular. Each author was assigned different periods and topics to study. Great importance was attached to meetings with the people who actually created or experienced at first hand the football history under review, whether as players, managers or spectators. Discussions were also had with the descendants of central characters, who shared lots of information and photos.

We also benefited from the support of FIFA, UEFA and the International Federation of Football History and Statistics (IFFHS).

We would also like to thank the Romanian clubs that provided us with photos (particularly recent ones) and Nicolae Profir, the official FRF photographer, who provided colour photos from the last 20 years as well as photocopies of libraries’ newspapers and old magazines.

A tale of two halves

Once a clearer picture of the last 100 years of Romanian football had been uncovered, we decided to structure the book in two volumes, one on the period from 1909 to 1944 and the other from 1944 to 2009.

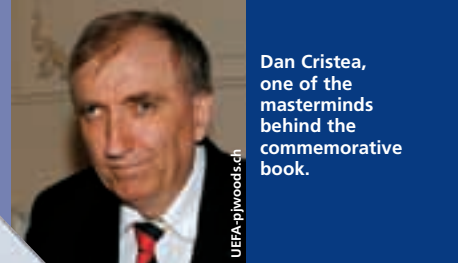
We decided to include an exhaustive presentation of each significant period in Romanian football. Volume

one has five chapters, each of which contains a general overview, profiles of the people who marked the period and competition information – i.e. each of the national team’s matches, complete with match factsheet and a brief résumé; the national championships, with some background information and, since the introduction of the league system in 1932, synoptic tables; the national cup competition since 1993/94; and Romanian clubs’ performances in the Mitropa Cup. There are also some very interesting appendices, including the history of the people and structures of the federation.

Volume two comprises seven chapters plus appendices and, in addition to the above information about the national team, championships and cups, presents Romania’s youth football scene, its participation in the Olympic Football Tournament and a full account of its clubs’ participation in UEFA competitions.

These two volumes provide an opportunity to better get to know the heroes of Romanian football, of which there have been many alongside Gheorghe Hagi, Gheorghe Popescu, Dan Petrescu and Florin Raducioiu, big names of the 1990s.

Dan Cristea



Dan Cristea, one of the masterminds behind the commemorative book.

UEFA-pjwwoods.ch

A selection of milestones and anecdotes

■ Legend has it that the first football was brought to what was then the kingdom of Romania by Mario Gebauer (probably born in 1880), when he was studying in Lausanne, Switzerland. He played for SC Olympia Bucharest, winners of the first national cup [Romanian athletics association cup (ASAR)] in 1909/10.

On 1 December 1914, Gebauer was elected chairman of the national football committee.

■ On 1 December 1912, the Romanian federation of sports associations (FSSR) was founded to represent all existing sports associations, including the ACFR (Romanian football clubs association, as the ASAR is now known). The FSSR comprised 12 sports committees, one of which was dedicated to football.

■ The main Romanian football competition is the national championship. There have been three distinct periods in its history:

1) The cup years (1909-21, with a break from 1916-19 while Romania was involved in the first world war).

2) The national championship years, with regional competitions and final tournaments played under the knockout system from 1921 to 1932. The most famous team from this period was Chinezul Timisoara, who notched up six consecutive championship titles between 1921/22 and 1926/27.

3) The period of the league system, introduced in 1932/33 and still in place today.

■ On 20 May 1923, Romania, represented by the FSSR's football committee, was accepted as a member of FIFA at the world body's congress in Geneva. The Romanian delegate was Mario Gebauer.

■ Gebauer was thrown out of the FSSR and forced to resign as chairman of the football committee for trying to establish an independent football association.

■ As a FIFA member association, Romania was able to participate in the 1924 Olympic Football Tournament in Paris, where they were thrashed 6-0 by the Netherlands.

■ The Romanian national team's first match was against Yugoslavia in Belgrade on 8 May 1922, to celebrate the marriage between Princess Maria of Romania and King Alexander I of Yugoslavia. Romania won 2-1. Its team was made up entirely of Transylvanian players (Hungarians, Germans and Jews, with just one Romanian, the right-winger Aurel Guga – team captain and scorer of the winning goal).

■ In September 1929, the Romanian parliament voted a new law on physical education which completely changed the status of Romanian football. Previously it had been a bastion of amateurism, at least officially, but it was not respected by the big clubs, particularly those in the east of the country. The new law made way for an independent association for each sport, united under the umbrella of the union of Romanian sports associations (UFSR), which succeeded the FSSR.

■ On 16 February 1930, the national football committee became the Romanian Football Federation (FRFA). Aurel Leucutia and Octav Luchide, chairman and general secretary of the committee respectively, assumed the same functions within the new FRFA.

■ Romania took part in all three World Cups in the 1930s, a record matched by only Brazil, Belgium and France. The only Romanian player who took part in all three was Nicolae Kovacs, a right-winger



Gheorghe Hagi, one of the heroes of Romanian football.

EMPICS

or inside-right and older brother of Stefan Kovacs, the famous AFC Ajax coach of the 1970s.

■ In May 1931, the FIFA Congress approved a proposal by the general secretary of the FRFA, Octav Luchide, to extend to three years the period for which a player that had changed nationality had to wait before playing for his new country. The first victims of the new rule were the Romanians themselves. In 1933, in a FIFA World Cup qualifier against Switzerland in Berne (2-2), Romania fielded Iuliu Baratky, a Romanian citizen of Hungarian origin who had played for Hungary in May 1933 against Sweden. The Swiss lodged a complaint with FIFA, who declared the match to be forfeited and awarded a win to Switzerland.



The same principles are applied in the classroom as on the pitch.



Decisions were immediately analysed on screen.



Talents and Mentors

Ninth seminar in Nyon

A SEMINAR FOR UEFA REFEREE AND ASSISTANT REFEREE TALENTS AND MENTORS WAS HELD FROM 29 APRIL TO 1 MAY IN NYON. IT WAS UEFA'S NINTH TALENTS AND MENTORS SEMINAR BUT THE FIRST TO INCLUDE ASSISTANT REFEREES.

The scheme, whereby up-and-coming referees (talents) are given expert guidance by former top referees (mentors), was introduced in the UEFA referee development programme in 2001. Since then it has gone from strength to strength. The mentors and talents are in constant contact, with the seasoned referees advising the young hopefuls not just on their performance on the field,

instructions and advice. *"The penalty area is the most important area of the pitch,"* David Elleray said. Decisions here could have a huge impact on the game. The participants were shown video clips of various scenes in which the referee made a good or bad call. They then went away in small groups to discuss which of the criteria – clear view, concentration, cooperation,

Practical sessions

There were also practical sessions, in which talented young footballers from the canton simulated contentious match scenes and the referees had to decide what to do. Afterwards, they were given an opportunity to analyse the action on film and were given feedback from the mentors. Special attention was paid to positioning, body language and concentration. The assistants were given exercises in areas such as running technique, use of flags and eye contact with the referee. Finally, all participants were given warm-up, running and stretching exercises and tips on avoiding injury.

Strategies to improve teamwork

Mattia Piffaretti, a sports scientist, gave an inspiring presentation on the psychological factors that come into play in a refereeing team. He explained how the relationship between the referee and his assistants had evolved. The main referee was no longer the undisputed leader, but rather a manager: he managed the decision-making powers delegated to the different members of the refereeing team, including the fourth official. This required a lot of mutual trust. The referee had to be able to rely fully on his assistants, in case of offsides for example. Team cohesion could be achieved, Piffaretti said, through collective physical and tactical training, clear allocation of roles, whereby the strengths of each member of the team were put to best possible use, in-depth pre-match team talks and a fixed team warm-up procedure. He said that referee communication was also important. The more coordinated and well-rehearsed the team, the more convincing they were as a unit. This, too, was reflected in their performance.



Photos: UEFA-plivoods.ch

but in other areas too. Angel María Villar Llona, chairman of the UEFA Referees Committee, summed up the philosophy behind the concept: *"The future is in young people. But young people also need good guidance, from good guides and instructors."* This year's seminar was attended by 17 referee talents (13 men and 4 women), 8 assistant referee talents (10 men and 4 women) and 9 mentors.

Penalty area situations and physical challenges

The UEFA Referees Committee used part of the seminar to impart

confidence and courage – were or should have been brought to bear in each decision.

On the topic of excessively physical challenges, Marc Batta singled out tackles and the use of arms. In each case, he told the referees how important it was to distinguish between players who were genuinely just trying to get the ball and those who were willing or even intended to injure their opponent in the process. Once again, the participants were shown various scenes from UEFA matches, which invited different verdicts.



New members Allan Hansen, Abraham Luzon, Liutauras Varanavicius, Theo Zwanziger, Michael van Praag, Frantisek Laurinec and Giancarlo Abete attend their first Executive Committee meeting.



News from Brussels

European elections are being held between 4 and 7 June in the 27 member states of the EU. The time has come for European citizens to select the people they want to represent them in the European Parliament until 2014. This is an exciting occasion for us all because members of the European Parliament carry considerable political weight and have shown a distinct interest in football over the last few years.

Representing the people of Europe

The European Parliament is a representative assembly for the citizens of the EU member states and, as such, a vital source of democratic legitimacy. Its members have been elected by direct universal suffrage since 1979. It has seats in two cities: 12 plenary sessions a year are held in Strasbourg and all additional sessions and parliamentary committees meet in Brussels.

MEPs do not sit in national delegations, but form transnational political groupings. Two of the biggest are the Party of European Socialists and the European People's Party.

Greater powers with each new treaty

Due to its democratic legitimacy, the European Parliament has seen its powers steadily increased with each treaty signed, from the founding Treaty of Rome to the current Treaty of Nice. It now has an active role in regulatory matters by virtue of the codecision procedure, which gives it genuine legislative powers. And were the

Meetings and other activities

EURO 2012 host city decisions

ON 12/13 MAY IN BUCHAREST, THE UEFA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HELD ITS FIRST MEETING IN ROMANIA AS THE ROMANIAN FOOTBALL FEDERATION CELEBRATES ITS CENTENARY.

Under the stewardship of the UEFA president, Michel Platini, this was also the Executive Committee's first meeting since the elections in March (apart from a brief constitutive meeting following the congress in Copenhagen). The committee discussed topical European football matters and dedicated day two of its meeting to EURO 2012, with the designation of the host cities on the agenda.

After carefully examining the situation, not just in terms of stadiums, but also airports, transport and accommodation, the Executive Committee confirmed Warsaw, Gdansk, Poznan and Wroclaw as host cities in Poland. In Ukraine, it was decided that Kiev would host group, quarter-final and semi-final matches, while Donetsk, Lviv and Kharkiv were given until 30 November

to meet specific stadium, transport, airport and accommodation requirements. Kiev also has until 30 November to demonstrate that it is in a position to host the final. The Executive Committee will take a decision on these cities in December.

A firm stand against racism

Sharing the UEFA president's indignation at racist incidents in various stadiums in Europe, the Executive Committee approved a recommendation, based on the Laws of the Game, to allow the referee to stop, suspend or ultimately abandon a match. Concrete measures will be defined at the next Executive Committee meeting in Vilnius, Lithuania, in July.



Photos: UEFA-pjwoods.ch

The first Executive Committee meeting in Bucharest.

→ Treaty of Lisbon to enter into force, the European Parliament would become a co-legislator, with the Council of the European Union, in 90% of EU laws. What is more, Article 165 of the Lisbon treaty takes the historic step of introducing sport as an area of EU competence and names the European Parliament as one of the decision-makers when it comes to EU action in this field (see *uefadirect No 70*). That is a satisfaction guarantee because MEPs are aware of the concerns and expectations of the sports movement. They are our natural discussion partners at European level, thanks, in particular, to the Sports Intergroup, a European Parliament working group dedicated exclusively to sports matters.

A substantial contribution to football

Over the years, UEFA has worked hard to establish a relationship of mutual trust with a hard core of MEPs that meet regularly in the informal Friends of Football working group. They communicate UEFA's position on the specificity of sport and its structures to the European Parliament. Their valuable contribution has materialised in recent years in the form of three important resolutions based on the Belet report on the future of professional football in Europe (see *uefadirect No 59*), the Mavromatis report on the White Paper on Sport (see *uefadirect No 75*) and the Schaldemose report on the integrity of online gambling (see *uefadirect No 85*).

As half of the faces in the European Parliament are expected to be new after the ballots in June, UEFA will have to resume its efforts to establish a group of natural allies within the institution and identify new discussion partners that are receptive to the idea of good football governance for the future.



Michel Platini presents the UEFA Cup to the mayor of Istanbul, alongside FC Zenit St. Petersburg's Anatoliy Tymoshchuk.



The cup handover ceremony in Rome.

Workshop for EURO 2016 candidates

Representatives of the four candidates to host UEFA EURO 2016 (France, Italy, Turkey and Norway/Sweden) were invited to a seminar at the House of European Football in Nyon, Switzerland, at the end of April.

The aim of the meeting was to give the candidates a general overview of how a European Football Championship final tournament is organised and to provide them with more detailed information about the bid requirements.

In small groups and plenary sessions, the participants considered topics such as security, transport, accommodation, legal matters and TV broadcasting.

Other meetings will follow to help the associations flesh out their bid dossiers and benefit from the experience UEFA has gathered in previous tournaments. They have until 15 February 2010 to submit their bid dossiers to the UEFA administration. These will be examined and the UEFA Executive Committee will make a final decision around the end of May 2010.

From one UEFA club competition season to the next

The UEFA Champions League final between Manchester United and Barcelona in Rome on 27 May marks the end of the 2008/09 UEFA club competition season.

There is less than a month, however, before the start of the next. On 22 May, the draws in Nyon for the first two UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa League qualifying rounds kick off the 2009/10 season. What is more, they signal the start of a new three-year club competition cycle featuring a new UEFA Champions League access list and the all-new UEFA Europa League in place of the UEFA Cup, with 12 groups of 4 teams in the group stage and no more UEFA Intertoto Cup feeding into the qualifying stage.

FIFA Women's World Cup – Teams look to Germany

While the 12 qualifiers eagerly await the final round of the European Women's Championship in Finland from 23 August to 10 September, the other European women's teams are already turning their attention to the 2009–11 qualifying competition for the next FIFA Women's World Cup.

The draw for the European qualifying competition was held in Nyon on 17 March, resulting in the following seven groups of five and one group of six:

Group 1	Group 2
France	Norway
Iceland	Netherlands
Serbia	Belarus
Northern Ireland	Slovakia
Croatia	FYR Macedonia
Estonia	
Group 3	Group 4
Denmark	Ukraine
Scotland	Poland
Greece	Hungary
Bulgaria	Romania
Georgia	Bosnia-Herzegovina
Group 5	Group 6
England	Russia
Spain	Republic of Ireland
Austria	Switzerland
Turkey	Israel
Malta	Kazakhstan
Group 7	Group 8
Italy	Sweden
Finland	Czech Republic
Portugal	Belgium
Slovenia	Wales
Armenia	Azerbaijan

The group matches start in mid-September this year and will continue until August next year. Play-offs between the eight group winners will then be held on 11/12 and 15/16 September 2010, to decide which four qualify for the final tournament, which is being held in Germany, home of the current world champions, from 26 June to 17 July 2011.



Representatives of the bidders with the Henri Delaunay trophy.

Fair play – Final rankings confirmed

Norway, Denmark and Scotland have finished first, second and third in the UEFA 2008/09 fair play table (part of the Respect campaign). Having topped the table at the end of 2008, they managed to maintain their positions to the last, earning the right to enter an additional team in the first qualifying round for the 2009/10 UEFA Europa League.

The rankings are based on fair play assessments from all UEFA club and national competition matches played between 1 May 2008 and 30 April 2009, but only associations represented in at least 30 matches are included in the table. This threshold was established by dividing the total number of UEFA matches by the number of member associations.

Norway, Denmark and Scotland must each allocate their additional UEFA Europa League place to the winner of their national fair play competition. If the winner has already qualified for a UEFA competition, the place goes to the runner-up, and so on.

The top five in the final rankings:

- | | |
|-------------|-------|
| 1. Norway | 8.372 |
| 2. Denmark | 8.189 |
| 3. Scotland | 8.169 |
| 4. Sweden | 8.155 |
| 5. France | 8.098 |

Special Olympics in Nyon

Special Olympics Europe/Eurasia, a UEFA partner organisation, held its ninth international football week from 25 April to 3 May. Right across Europe, some 50,000 players with intellectual disabilities got involved.

Traditionally, the men and women of the UEFA administration like to mark the occasion with a UEFA-Special Olympics unified match, for which mixed teams are formed of players with and without disabilities.

This year was no exception – the showcase match was held on 27 April at Colovray Stadium, opposite UEFA's headquarters in Nyon, Switzerland.

The hosts then invited the visitors back to the House of European Football for some post-match refreshments.



President's Award for Sir Bobby Charlton

The UEFA President's Award was introduced in 1998 to honour outstanding individuals who have made a significant contribution to football in various areas. In April, Sir Bobby Charlton, former Manchester United player and England international, became the latest recipient.

Sir Bobby was presented with his award at Old Trafford on the day of the UEFA Champions League first leg semi-final between Manchester United and Arsenal. In keeping with last year's choice of Alfredo di Stefano, the UEFA president wanted to pay tribute to a former player turned European football legend, not just for the results he had achieved throughout his brilliant career but also for his impact on the game, his charisma and his exemplary attitude. "Around Europe, [Sir] Bobby Charlton's name means respect. He showed great respect for his opponents and for the public in his conduct," said the UEFA president.

Those defeated in the play-offs will contest another series of two-leg ties for a place in the UEFA-CONCACAF play-off – their last chance to enter the 2011 Women's World Cup.

Women's Under-19 finalists line up

The six group winners (Iceland, Norway, France, Germany, Switzerland and England) and the best runners-up (Sweden) in the second qualifying round of the 2008/09 European Women's Under-19 Championship have made it through to join the hosts, Belarus, in the finals from 13 to 25 July. This is the first time Belarus has hosted the final round of a UEFA competition.

Last year's champions, Italy, will not be defending their title, having been knocked out in the second round of qualifying. Germany, however, will be doing all they can to win back the trophy they won in 2000, 2001, 2002, 2006 and 2007. The same goes for Sweden, who won the championship in 1999, and France, who took the title in 2003. Of course, the five other finalists will also be hoping to add their names to the European Women's Under-19 Championship honours list.

This final round will also decide which four countries represent Europe in the 2010 FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup alongside Germany, who qualify automatically as hosts.

A draw was held in Minsk on 12 May to determine the final round groups:

Group A: Belarus, Switzerland, France, Germany

Group B: Sweden, England, Iceland, Norway

The group matches will be contested from 13 to 19 July, with the semi-finals on 22 July and the final on 25 July.



Special Olympics players and the UEFA administration come together for a unified match.



AUSTRIA

• PETER KLINGLMÜLLER •

Leo Windtner elected ÖFB president

The Austrian Football Association held an extraordinary general meeting in Vienna on 28 February. The main points on the agenda were the election of a new president and structural reforms within the association. Leo Windtner (58) was unanimously elected by acclamation.



Windtner was previously ÖFB vice-president and president of the Upper Austria regional association that successfully hosted the 2007 European Under-19 Championship finals. His election in February followed the surprise resignation last November of Friedrich Stickler, now ÖFB honorary president. The new president entered office full of ambition and announced to the 100 or so present at the general meeting (including UEFA vice-president Senes Erzik) *"an energy boost for Austrian football and renewed national passion"*. With a majority of more than 84%, structural reforms to the ÖFB were also approved, to strengthen the administration. The association's daily business will no longer be run by the president and executive committee. Instead it will be the full responsibility of the general secretary, or chief executive as he will now be known (currently Alfred Ludwig). He will then appoint directors in charge of different domains.

A board has also been created, comprising six members with voting powers (the ÖFB president, one representative each of the east, west and central regional associations, the Bundesliga president and one other Bundesliga representative). The ÖFB chief executive and Bundesliga executive will also have seats.

The board will be responsible for on-going controlling of budget preparations, the joint ÖFB-Bundesliga agendas and the appointment of head coaches, sporting directors and chief executives. It can call in outside experts in different fields as necessary.

The executive committee will act as a control and supervisory body and, as such, will take sports-political decisions and supervise the whole administration. Naturally, the committee will be led by the ÖFB president, but it was unanimously agreed to dispense with the positions of vice-president (currently four) as part of the structural reforms. ■



AZERBAIJAN

• MIKAYIL NARIMANOGLU •

Qualifying matches completed for an international tournament

Qualifying matches for the next Danone Nations Cup have been held in Azerbaijan. The final stage of the competition will take place in September in Brazil.

Ten teams from nine regions within the northwest regional football association participated in the latest stage of the qualifying competition. The teams were divided into two groups of five. Gabala and Mingachevir-2 qualified for the play-off, which Mingachevir-2 won 2-0 to enter for the final qualifying round. After the matches, the AFFA presented

all the teams with football kits and sponsor's products.

Mingachevir-2 are the fourth team to qualify for the final qualifying round. The other three are the team from Imishli, winners of the qualifying round held within the central regional football association; Tokhuju, winners of the tournament organised by the Ganja regional football association; and Pambigchi, winners in the Garabag region. The next regional qualifying matches are being held on 25/26 April in Aghstafa, within the west regional football association.

The Danone Nations Cup qualifying matches in Azerbaijan involve 11-12 year-olds from all parts of the country. The final qualifying tournament in Baku will involve the winners from the regions and premier league club youth teams. The winners of this tournament will be the first team from Azerbaijan to compete in this international tournament. ■



Fun first.



BELARUS

• YULIA ZENKOVICH •

Visit to rehabilitation centre

Football is not only about kicking the ball and making big money. On the eve of their 2010 World Cup qualifier against Kazakhstan, four players from the Belarus national team (Alexandr Hleb, Vitaliy Bulyga, Aleksandr Yurevich and Igor Shitov), alongside the national team assistant coach, Harald Irmsher, paid a visit to a rehabilitation centre for children who have problems with their musculoskeletal system. The visit began with an improvised press conference, where the youngsters proved to be very curious and asked lots of questions. Then the footballers got a chance to see the centre's facilities and talk to its little patients. The children were, for their part, extremely happy to have their pictures taken with their idols. It seemed that the line of those wishing to get an autograph would never end. Shirts, cards, pieces of paper... every single patient got a cherished autograph.

The visit was very emotional. Player Vitaliy Bulyga was very touched and said: *"I've visited so many children's hospitals, but this place is something special. If we win in Kazakhstan I'll dedicate our victory to all the patients at this rehabilitation centre."* Belarus went on to win their qualifier 5-1, and there is no doubt that every patient who met the national team that day felt that they were part of that brilliant victory. When the visit was over, the children's eyes were shining with happiness and the guests left hoping that this little gesture that was so



The visit brought a smile to the faces of the youngsters at this rehabilitation centre.

important for the patients would help them to overcome their serious health problems.

■ In other news, two important seminars were organised by the Belarus Football Federation (BFF) in April: one dedicated to safety and security, with the participation of UEFA experts, and the other a medical seminar.

Although Belarus fans are not aggressive, it is always better to prevent a problem before it occurs. Therefore, the BFF organised a seminar where European and Belarusian experts could share best practices and discuss common issues.

The medical seminar was attended not only by football doctors but by other sports medicine specialists as well. Jens Dehmelt, a German physiotherapist who works with the Belarus national team, shared his valuable experience with his Belarusian colleagues.

April also marked the start of a new football season. The fans were anxious to resume supporting their teams and going to the stadiums. The season is going to be very interesting. Will BATE Borisov defend their title? Will Dinamo Minsk and other clubs be able to challenge the titleholders? The fans are impatient to know the answer and are expecting some exciting football. ■



Philippe Vande Walle (left) and Gilles De Bilde when the announcement of the creation of a national beach soccer team was made.



BELGIUM

• PIERRE CORNEZ •

Beach soccer is a hit in Belgium

A second edition of the Belgacom Beach Soccer Championship @ Citibank City is being organised in various towns and villages in Belgium this summer. The events, which run from June to August, are free and beach soccer takes centre stage, but there are lots of other activities on offer too, with the aim of achieving a clever mix of sport and entertainment.

In 2008, all FIFA member associations were given the task of organising a national beach soccer competition and creating their own national team. This was the launch pad for the Belgian Beach Soccer League, an official body that has been responsible, since its creation last year, for coordinating and organising all beach soccer activities in Belgium, with a view to promoting the sport as effectively as possible.

The Belgian league enters its second season this year and its summer campaign is the perfect way to bring the traditional football season to a close. Beach soccer is considered young, trendy, energetic, dynamic and entertaining.

This time around, a division B has been set up to complement the year-old division A. As the official Belgian championship, division A is supported by the Belgian Football Association. This year, 12 teams compete for the title, won last year by SKDB Braine.

Below division A, division B is supported by the Belgian Beach Soccer League and is open to anyone who wants to give beach soccer a go. The club that finishes the season bottom of division A is automatically relegated and the winners of division B are promoted. Meanwhile, the second-to-bottom club in division A and the runners-up in division B must compete for the last remaining slot in Belgium's premier beach soccer league.

On the fringes of this year's national competition, various events are being organised, including a cheerleading competition, stage shows and activities for children and adults. At division A matches there will be courses and introductory sessions for 8 to 14-year-olds, where the youngsters are invited to participate in skills training led by professional coaches from the Belgian Football Association and top-level players.

Belgium also has a national beach soccer team, which is heading to Castillon (Spain) in June to compete in a qualifying mini-tournament for the 2009 FIFA Beach Soccer World Cup in Dubai from 16 to 22 November. The best players from division A have joined forces with former Red Devils such as Gilles De Bilde, Gert Verheyen and Philippe Vande Walle to form an impressive side that is aiming for equally impressive results. ■



BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

• FUAD KRVAVAC •

Successful football spring

Football has again become a number one topic in Bosnia-Herzegovina, thanks to two wins against Belgium in the 2010 World Cup qualifiers. Head coach Miroslav Blazevic and his squad have restored faith in football and hope that the autumn will see us in second place in the standings and thus qualified for the play-offs for a place in the finals in South Africa.

The Bosnia-Herzegovina national team beat Belgium 4-2 at the Crystal Arena in Genk, and just four days later, at Bilino Polje in Zenica, the Bosnians were again better than Belgium, this time winning 2-1. The hero of both matches was Edin Dzeko, who scored three of the six goals in both matches.

The Under-21 national team have also started preparing for the beginning of their qualifying campaign for the 2011 European championship in Denmark. The young Bosnian 'hopefuls' are in the same group (Group 3) as the favourites, Italy, along with Hungary, Luxembourg and Wales. The first gathering of Branimir Tulic's squad has taken place in Velika Kladusa and their first qualifying match is scheduled for 4 September, when they play host to Luxembourg. Before the end of the year they will play three more matches, with two away – in Wales and Italy – before welcoming Wales at home. The rest of the matches will be played next year.



BULGARIA

• PAVEL KOLEV •

Anti-doping seminar

For the fourth year in a row, the medical committee of the Bulgarian Football Union has organised an international seminar on medicine and football. The focus of this year's event, held in Sofia, were the latest improvements in UEFA's anti-doping campaign. Marc Vouillamoz, head of competition administration at UEFA, made a very useful and educational presentation to the gathering of more than 80 team doctors from Bulgaria, Poland, Romania and Azerbaijan. "The future of testing will definitely lie in collecting blood material in spite of the

fact that most prohibited substances are currently detected in urine. It will take some years but we are confident that, in the future, blood will be the major material used to detect prohibited substances," Marc Vouillamoz said. The main goal of the UEFA anti-doping programme in 2009 is to continue the testing programme but also to stay focused on education and prevention by developing a lot of tools, including internet platforms. The UEFA representative had the opportunity to meet colleagues from the Bulgarian national anti-doping committee and to exchange information and ideas with them. "I think the level of the Bulgarian anti-doping programme is very well established but there are definitely a few steps forward that can still be made. We will cooperate and coordinate the testing programme with the Bulgarian national anti-doping committee when it comes to testing Bulgarian football teams," he said. ■



The seminar on medicine and football.



F. Kravac



CYPRUS

• [KYRIAKOS GIORGALLIS](#) •

20th national title for Apoel Nicosia

Apoel Nicosia FC claimed their 20th division A title on Saturday, 25 April, securing the point they needed against last year's champions, Anorthosis Famagusta FC. Ivan Jovanovic's men have now opened up a seven-point gap over second-placed Omonia Nicosia FC with two matchdays still to go, giving them the chance to start the celebrations without further ado.

Apoel, with the title already under their belts, can now fully turn their attention to overturning their 2-0 deficit in the Cypriot Cup semi-final at home to APOP/Kinyras Peyias FC on 6 May. On the same day,



The youth competitions are still in full swing.

Apollon Limassol FC face AEL Limassol FC, both teams having a lot to do in Limassol after a 1-1 draw in the first leg.

March was a significant month for the coach education department of our association as Howard Wilkinson, member of UEFA's

Jira Panel, visited our association for a three-day preparatory visit and final discussions for the implementation of our first UEFA Pro diploma. Now we have the pleasure and honour of preparing to host our first ever UEFA Pro licence course (phase A) from 18 to 30 May in Nicosia.

During the course, Jerzy Engel, on behalf of UEFA, will be present as mentor. He is well known and popular in Cyprus from the days when he served as head coach of various local clubs. Howard Wilkinson and Jerzy Engel, representing UEFA, as well as John Bilton and Martin Hunter, will be the main instructors for the course.

Meanwhile, the Cyprus FA football development championships are still under way, with more than 1,300 children competing in four age-group divisions, i.e. born after 1997, born after 1998, born after 1999 and born between 2000 and 2001. These competitions started regionally and now all the qualified teams are playing their matches in Nicosia to determine the champions. ■



DENMARK

• [PIA SCHOU NIELSEN](#) •

More women, please!

In Denmark, girls' and women's football is booming, now the biggest sport for girls under the age of 19. But the growing number of players is, unfortunately, not reflected in the boardrooms around Denmark.

Therefore, the Danish FA has started a campaign to also recruit more women to political posts in Danish football clubs and the FA. One of the objectives is to train more women to be prepared for the challenges in a still male-dominated area.

"Women's and girls' football is growing very fast in Denmark. We have never had so many girls playing our sport, and it is only

natural, that this also should be reflected in the number of women in other areas such as management and political boards, where men still dominate. This will give a better and more healthy balance," said the president of the Danish FA, Allan Hansen, as he opened a conference aimed at recruiting women in particular for a new training course in political management. And the president of the Danish FA had a very clear personal goal: *"When I finish my term as Danish FA president, my hope is that there will be three or four women on the board of the Danish FA. That is my clear aim!"* He also made it clear to the 100 or so men and women attending the conference that networking is a very, if not the most important way to ensure the success of the campaign.

At the conference, only the second woman to have been appointed to the board of the Danish FA, Mette Bach Kjaer, elected in February 2009, told of her experience as a woman in a man's world, while Hege Leifall from Norway gave an insight into the situa-

tion in Norway. The conference also produced many discussions and constructive debates about how to get more women interested in football, not only as players, but also to influence the development of Denmark's favourite sport. ■



A conference to encourage more women into football administration.



ENGLAND

• [DERMOT COLLINS](#) •

Respect course

The FA staged its first ever international Respect course last week in Santiago, Chile. Following a request from the Chilean governing body and CONMEBOL, the FA sent out Dermot Collins, FA Respect manager; Lucia Sanchez, international relations; and Lee Mason, Premier League referee, to deliver a seminar sharing the experience of the first year of the Respect programme in England.

Delivering to an audience of referees, club captains, coaches and journalists, the FA tutors soon discovered that football in Chile faces many of the same behavioural problems as in England. Based on the English experience, the seminar allowed the Chilean delegates the opportunity to design their own version of the Respect programme. The Chilean referees in particular revelled in the practical sessions delivered by Lee Mason

based on his experience of taking control of some of the Premiership's fiercest matches.

While in Santiago, the English delegation were able to witness first-hand the difficulties experienced by referees as guests at the crucial Chile v Uruguay World Cup qualifier.

The seminar received a positive response, with a commitment from the Chilean FA to develop a similar initiative as part of its ongoing education programme. The visit concluded with a final presentation to an elite group of 80 referees.

The Respect seminar is the third course to be delivered by The FA in South America this year as part of its commitment to CONMEBOL to assist the development of football in South America. ■



The course run by The FA in Chile.



FAROE ISLANDS

• [INGI SAMUELSEN](#) •

Irishman at the helm in the Faroe Islands

On 6 April, the Faroe Islands FA (FSF) appointed Brian Kerr (56) as the new national coach. The Faroe Islands national A team has been without a head coach since October, when Jógvan Martin Olsen decided to stand down to take up the position of club coach with local team Víkingur instead.

Brian Kerr is familiar with Faroese football from his time as national coach of the Republic of Ireland, which he served in this capacity from 2003 to 2005. The Republic of Ireland and the Faroe Islands met each other in the qualifying competition for the 2006 FIFA World Cup, in which Kerr's team won both matches.

From 1996 to 2002, Brian Kerr was responsible for the Irish national youth teams, including the Under-17 and Under-19 teams

which won their respective European championships in 1998 for the first time in the history of Irish football. As manager of St. Patrick's Athletic from 1986 to 1996, Brian Kerr twice won the domestic championship.



Hogni í Stórustovu, president of the FSF (left), and Brian Kerr, the new national coach.

The FSF president, Hogni í Stórustovu, is looking forward to working with the Irishman:

"Brian Kerr's record shows that he can be successful and achieve results as well as building foundations for the future. We have no doubt that he will bring his enthusiasm and passion to the national team and we are delighted that he has agreed to become the coach," he said. ■



FRANCE

• XAVIER THÉBAULT •

Women's team uncovered

At the beginning of March, the French Football Federation (FFF) kicked off a big media campaign involving the French women's team, who have qualified for the UEFA Women's EURO 2009. Women's football in France has a woefully low profile and this campaign is designed to give it a boost.

The FFF's head of communication joined forces with Hémisphère Droit et Pauce, a professional photography agency, to organise a special photo shoot: four members of the national women's team agreed to pose for a series of high-class nude photos. The aim is to increase media coverage of the women's team, change the public image of women's football and, ultimately, get more spectators in the stands.

The photos are accompanied by the slogan: *"Do we have to go to these lengths so you come to watch us play?"* It challenges and criticises a real lack of interest from the media and public. *"We are asking if we really have to get naked to attract a bit of attention,"* said



A charm offensive for women's football.

Gaétane Thiney, midfielder. *"Clearly the answer is yes, because this is what it has come to. I hope it isn't the only thing people remember. I wanted to do these photos because they are the starting point for a campaign that could do a lot for our sport."* Sarah Bouhaddi, goalkeeper for Les Bleues said: *"I was very anxious about posing nude. In the end it was a great experience."* Team-mate Corinne Franco, who also plays for Olympique Lyonnais, agreed: *"We know it will take a lot more than photos to get 30,000 people to a stadium but it's a start. We just want to encourage people to take an interest in women's football, our team and our games."*

Sandrine Soubeyrand, team captain, added: *"A good performance at the EURO would be the best thing to accompany this media campaign."*

Let's hope we see Les Bleues on the front page of a big sports daily soon, fully clothed this time. ■



GERMANY

• NIELS BARNHOFER •

New women's football spectator record

There was a celebration of women's football on 22 April, when the 2007 FIFA Women's World Cup final was recreated for 44,825 spectators in Frankfurt's Commerzbank Arena. This time the runners-up, Brazil, held the world champions, Germany, to a 1-1 draw and the spectators set a European record for the women's game. The previous best was from the opening match of Women's EURO 2005, when 29,092 watched England beat Finland at the City of Manchester Stadium.

The sellout in Frankfurt was a dream come true for the 2011 Women's World Cup organising committee in particular. You could already sense the World Cup atmosphere at this first test, 795 days before the opening match. *"It was a giant step towards the 2011 World Cup. It was the best possible advert, not just for the World Cups next year and in Germany the year after, but for women's football as a whole,"* said Steffi Jones, who chairs the FIFA 2011 World Cup Organising Committee.

Theo Zwanziger, president of the German FA (DFB), added: *"I'm a fan of women's and girls' football, but I'm also a realist and know full well that it's not easy to get that many spectators at a women's international. It didn't just meet our expectations; it far exceeded them. I think this match attracted people you wouldn't normally see at the stadium for men's games. This is an interesting, new audience for the DFB."*

The DFB general secretary, Wolfgang Niersbach, who watched the match alongside Franz Beckenbauer, member of the FIFA Executive Committee, said: *"The best thing for me about this brilliant evening was the realisation that we really can look forward to another fairytale summer in two years' time. The children's enthusiasm, the peaceful, joyful, trouble-free atmosphere, the packed stands and our team's excellent performance – it all reminded me of the fantastic spirit of summer 2006. We need to keep this up as we count down to the 2011 World Cup!"* ■



ISRAEL

• NIMROD SUZIN •

Grassroots activity

Thirty teams comprising hundreds of young football enthusiasts aged 10 and 11 participated in the annual children's football festival organised by the Israel Football Association (IFA) as part of the children's national cup competition.

The children's cup competition attracts a large crowd every year, and this festival was no exception, with parents, families and children turning up to watch the matches staged at the Israeli national team training ground.

The seven-a-side football tournament took place in an excellent spirit. Four matches were played concurrently on two football pitches (35 minutes each half), to determine who would go through to the next round.

At the end of May, at the Ramat Gan national stadium, the IFA will for the first time hold all the finals – in five age groups – in succession, at a festive event for children and families that will be open to the general public.



The children's football festival was enjoyed by all.

The IFA is continuing to work with children and young people to draw them into the game and thereby increase the number of active players. The IFA also runs a fair play competition that ranks individual players and youth teams, and a sports sociologist lectures teams on the relationship between parents, players and coaches. ■



KAZAKHSTAN

• ALEXANDR KEPLIN •

Youth talents' festival

From 25 to 30 April, the second edition of the Republic of Kazakhstan president's cup – an international youth tournament – was held in Almaty, the country's former capital. For five days, talented Under-17 footballers from football academies such as Rubin, CSKA, Spartak (all Russia), Ole Brazil (Brazil), Ado Den Haag (Netherlands), Abdysch-Ata (Kyrgyzstan), Academia (Azerbaijan) and Semey-93, the winners of last year's Kazakhstan Under-17 championship, competed for the trophy.

The inaugural tournament was held last year and was won by Besiktas from Turkey.

"The main result of last year's tournament was that the Kazakhstan Under-17 team

reached the elite round of their European championship for the first time ever. These youngsters are our future prospects. First of all, this tournament will help to increase the popularity of football, as well as enabling our boys to play against strong competitors and giving them more confidence," said Adilbek Dzhakysbekov, president of Football Federation of Kazakhstan, on the eve of the tournament.

A guest of honour at the event was the FIFA president, Joseph S Blatter, accompanied by a FIFA delegation. They arrived in Kazakhstan on the morning of 29 April. The first part of the day was devoted to a meeting with federation representatives, while in the afternoon, the FIFA president met the president of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, who presented the FIFA president with the Dostyk order for the development of football, support of football and active international activity. This is the highest government award for foreign citizens.

After visiting the head of state's residence, Mr Blatter held a press conference, and in the evening he attended the president's cup match between Semey-93 and Rubin.

The FIFA president congratulated Kazakhstan and its football federation on their efforts to develop the game. "Football in Kazakhstan is on the right track. The federation has done a great deal for football development in recent times," he said.

The eight participating teams were divided into two groups. At the end of group stage, the teams' places were determined in play-offs. In Group A, there turned out to be no equals to CSKA from Russia, while in Group B, it was Ole Brazil who went through to the final, in which prize money of USD 10,000 was at stake. At the central stadium in Almaty, the Brazilian team scored the only goal of the match to lift the trophy. ■



Semey-93 with the FIFA president, Joseph S. Blatter, and the president of the FFK, Adilbek Dzhakysbekov.



LATVIA

• MARTINS HARTMANIS •

Computerisation of everyday work

The Latvian Football Federation (LFF) has been constantly improving its IT database and hardware since moving to new premises. Thanks to financial support from UEFA and bright minds at the federation, the LFF has bought a server, computers for each workspace and software, and as much as possible uses free, open-source programs for internal work. The next step is to make effective use of all these possibilities.

In cooperation with FirstSports International, the LFF is involved in an enormous rolling project called the federation manage-



Going digital.

ment system (FMS), which will electronically store details of all LFF registered players in one database and create their player profiles, which, once generated, will follow them throughout their careers. Clubs, matches, cards, different kinds of statistics, fixtures and disciplinary sanctions – all this information can be tracked and found if the system is properly run. The FMS is not only about players; it can also hold other databases such as referee profiles and appointments, and media modules, while a special part of the system can be allocated for club use.

The LFF realises that there are unlimited possibilities for using IT effectively in everyday work and these IT systems are winning over more supporters every week. Internal communication, an internal calendar for tasks, holidays and business trips, twitter – these are just a few applications for which open-source programs can be found and used effectively in the organisation.

Another important IT project is the LFF online souvenir shop. The LFF has established and fully owns the Football Agency limited liability company that runs the business. Shortly, the LFF will launch its internet ticket-sale outlet for national team matches. "Hopefully we are not running ahead of the train but preparing the ground for future generations. I am fully in favour of this," said the LFF general secretary, Janis Mezeckis. ■



LIECHTENSTEIN

• ANTON BANZER •

Bodensee Cup

Four teams from Liechtenstein took part in the first edition of the Bodensee Cup on 14/15 May in Vorarlberg, Austria. The teams comprised Special Olympics athletes and sports students, and the Liechtenstein Football Association was responsible for their tournament preparations.

The Bodensee Cup is a four-year project involving Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Liechtenstein. It was sparked off by the 2008 Special Olympics Football Cup, the idea being to bring together people with disabilities and those without.

On 14/15 May, two-day competitions in various sports were organised in the four countries. One of the sports was football, or rather seven-a-side unified football. The Liechtenstein Football Association was, once again, delighted to have the opportunity to bring the binding force of football to bear and help bring together



Daniel Hasler, former Liechtenstein international, running a training session.

people who, in other circumstances, would perhaps never have met. Under the guidance of former Liechtenstein international Daniel Hasler, Special Olympics athletes and young talents from Schaan secondary school met for weekly training sessions and joint preparations for the tournament in Vorarlberg.

Both the training and tournament were such a great experience for the players that the excitement is already mounting ahead of next year's Bodensee Cup. ■



LUXEMBOURG

• JOËL WOLFF •

New national football stadium

The wait is finally over for Luxembourg football fans, whose dream of a new national football stadium is actually going to become a reality.

Details were unveiled at a joint press conference given by the ministry of sport and the Luxembourg Football Federation (FLF):

- The new stadium will be in Livange, about 10km from the city of Luxembourg.
- It will form part of a new business park.
- It will have 10,000 covered seats.
- It will be easy to reach by both public and private transport.

■ Work on the new stadium, which will meet all FIFA and UEFA requirements for international matches, is expected to begin in 2011. ■



A scale model of the new national stadium.



FYR MACEDONIA

• ZORAN NIKOLOVSKI •

New buildings

In September, the Football Federation of FYR Macedonia, with support from UEFA and the government of FYR Macedonia, will start building a new training centre and administrative building.

After the visit of the UEFA president, Michel Platini, to FYR Macedonia and his meeting with the prime minister, Nikola Gruevski, the government immediately committed itself to investing in the project.

"The project is ready and work will begin in a few months' time," said a satisfied Nikola Kostov, general secretary of the Football Federation of FYR Macedonia.

This project will be completed by the end of 2010. It consists of three grass pitches, one with artificial turf and a mini-stadium with electricity and 5,000 seats.



The plan of the new training centre.

There will be a kit building, mini-hotel, spa centre, etc.

"It is very important for us that UEFA has already approved our project and we can use money from the HatTrick programme," said Haralampie Hadzi-Risteski, president of the federation. ■



MALTA

• ALEX VELLA •

Catching them young

Conscious of the importance of preparing footballers properly from a tender age, the Malta FA has been devoting itself fully to the development of youngsters on a wide basis for several years, through its grassroots programme and on the initiative of UEFA.

The recently set up regions project for nurseries, which is aimed at coordinating the development work of these establishments in various parts of the country, is reaping the desired results in that talent is being identified and monitored on a national scale.



The school futsal festival was a great success.

The footballing skills of youngsters in schools are also being tapped through various other initiatives, the most recent being a futsal festival which attracted the participation of several schools on the island and hence a handsome number of budding footballers.

This nationwide five-a-side activity, made possible thanks to the joint efforts of the technical department of the Malta FA and the parliamentary secretariat for youth and sport within the ministry of education, was such an unqualified success that it is planned to hold this festival on a bigger scale next year.

In this way young footballers, besides being given the opportunity to express their talents while enjoying themselves, can be spotted at an early age and their qualities developed along proper lines.

The Maltese association is aware that it is this policy of 'catching them young' that lies at the core of a sound and holistic preparation of future footballers. ■



MOLDOVA

• VICTOR DAGHI •

Visit of the FIFA president

After the visit of the former famous player and now president of UEFA, Michel Platini, on 5 March, another important person, Joseph S. Blatter, the FIFA president, visited Moldova from 30 April to 1 May at the invitation of Pavel Cebanu, president of the Football Association of Moldova (FAM).

It was the second visit to our country by the FIFA president, the first being in August 2002, when he inaugurated an artificial turf pitch laid at the Vadul-lui-Voda technical centre.

During his short stay, the FIFA president, accompanied by Pavel Cebanu, met Vladimir Voronin, president of Moldova. Their discussions focused on the football achievements of recent years, FIFA projects which had been implemented in Moldova and possibilities for the development of Moldovan football. At the end of their meeting, Vladimir Voronin received the FIFA presidential medal in recognition of his contribution to the development of Moldovan football.

Next stop for the FIFA delegation was the Moldovan Orthodox Church for a meeting with Metropolitan Vladimir, head of the metropolis of Chisinau and all Moldova. The FIFA president was awarded with the order of Stefan cel Mare si Sfint, the highest distinction of the Moldovan Orthodox Church. This distinction was conferred on the FIFA president for his special contribution to the creation of a world of peace through football.

The FIFA president's visit also included stops at the FAM offices, where he met the staff and FAM executive committee members, and the Vadul-lui-Voda technical centre, now restored after the 2008 summer floods.

"It was a pleasant surprise to see how the technical centre looks now! And, believe me, not a lot of associations have such facilities for their national teams as you do. You can be proud of it and FIFA is also proud to have invested funds in this centre," Mr Blatter said at the press conference for Moldovan journalists. ■



Left to right: Pavel Cebanu, president of the FAM, Vladimir Voronin, president of Moldova, and Joseph S. Blatter, president of FIFA.



MONTENEGRO

• IVAN RADOVIC •

First women's competition

The Football Association of Montenegro (FSCG) has introduced its first ever women's competition. It will be a pilot for the creation of a domestic women's championship. Our association has helped the development of women's football in our country through many friendly football and futsal tournaments, but this is the first to be officially organised by the association.

Four teams are participating in the tournament: Palma from Podgorica, Ekonomist from Niksic, Durmitor from Zabljak and Sport Uno from Bijelo Polje. The competition will consist of six rounds, one every Sunday until the end of May.

The women's teams are among the first – besides the national teams – to use the pitches at the FSCG's training ground in Podgorica. All the competition expenses are being covered by the FSCG, including transport, food and water, and officials.

After the first round, it seems that the title fight will be a two-team race, with Palma having defeated Sport Uno 8-0 and Ekonomist winning 7-0 against Durmitor.

On the subject of the FSCG training centre, we are proud to announce that the new floodlights have been installed around the main pitch and that they will be used for the first time at the final of the national Under-19 cup in a couple of weeks' time. ■



Action from the match between Palma and Sport Uno.



NORTHERN IRELAND

• SUEANN HARRISON •

Sammy backs summer schools' programme

Northern Ireland's Sammy Clingan is calling on all budding young footballers to get ready for a summer full of football fun! The 25-year-old, who has been capped 21 times by the senior national team and played for his country at all levels, has given his backing to the Irish FA's Nutty Krust Summer Soccer Schools Programme which will run during July and August.

Coordinated by the Irish FA's grassroots development officers and staffed by qualified coaches, the schools are the ideal way to get children active over the summer months.

"The Irish FA Nutty Krust Summer Soccer Schools provide boys and girls with an excel-



Two youngsters eager for the football schools to start, pictured with Lee Carrol (head of grassroots football at the IFA), Ireland international Sammy Clingan and Michael Murphy (sponsor's representative).

lent opportunity to learn new skills and develop as players," said Sammy. "The programme is a vital component in the Irish FA's grassroots strategy and introducing children to the game at an early age and providing them with a fun and positive experience will hopefully in turn generate an interest which will keep them involved in football for life."

Encouraging budding young players from across the country to take part in this year's programme, the international midfielder said: "I would encourage all boys and girls to go along to their local Summer Soccer School. The coaches will help you improve all aspects of your game like dribbling, control and shooting. To improve as a player it is important that you listen to the coaches on schemes like this, as they have the experience and knowledge on what is needed to make you a better player."

Lee Carroll, Irish FA head of grassroots football, said: "We really encourage all parents to get their kids along to one of our summer schools. The kids are guaranteed to learn new skills, make new friends and, most importantly, have a great time." Michael Murphy, Irwin's commercial controller, added: "Irwin's Bakery is proud to enter into the third year of sponsorship with the Irish FA for the Nutty Krust Summer Soccer Schools. We are looking forward to a great summer with more than 5,000 kids expected to have a great time developing their football skills, fuelled by Northern Ireland's favourite grocery product."

The Summer Soccer Schools, which are for children aged six and above, will run at venues across Northern Ireland and will be attended by thousands of boys and girls. ■



PORTUGAL

• FILIPE FÉLIX •

Embracing sport

The second stage of the mini-pitch construction project in Portugal is proving to be a huge success, demonstrating that the country warmly embraces all projects connected with the promotion of sport, physical health and social inclusion.

After the first stage of the project – a partnership between UEFA (through its HatTrick programme), the Portuguese government/IDP (Portuguese sports institute) and the Portuguese Football Federation – during which more than 100 grounds were built, the second stage involves the construction of approximately the same number again, so that mini-pitches will reach every corner of the country.

"The great readiness and interest shown by the municipalities make us very proud and pleased to be part of this promotion chain in

favour of sport and, in particular, football," says the Portuguese Football Federation general secretary, Ângelo Brou, who has been making numerous trips in the last two years to inaugurate these amenities.

"Unfortunately, but understandably, it has not been possible to meet all the requests, as the number of bids has been five times higher than the supply available. Therefore, we have been undertaking, in close cooperation with the government/IDP and the regional football associations, a rigorous selection process, taking into particular consideration the specific needs of each region and trying to choose the most deprived ones," he explained.

Ângelo Brou has no doubts that Portugal is now "a country which is more aware of the importance of the role of sport in youth development and in enhancing physical and psychological wellbeing. Our commitment to implementing this mini-pitch project is not only in order to try to find Cristianos Ronaldos. Above all, we want to accomplish our mission as an association to make young people aware of the benefits of playing sport and, ultimately, to help future generations to grow up healthier and happier," he concluded.

Mention should also be made of the support from our sponsor, BES, which has invested in the construction of 13 mini-pitches and intends to continue in 2010, with a new facility already having been allocated. We hope that, in the context of social responsibility, other sponsors will join this programme. ■



Practising on the mini-pitches.



REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

• FRAN WHEARTY •

Retirement of Vincent Butler

The Republic of Ireland's youth manager, Vincent Butler, has retired from international management after 16 years of service for the Irish U15 and U16 sides. Having managed the U16 side for four years in the 1970s and 1980s, Butler returned to the fold in 1996 and had been in charge of the U15s and U16s for the last 12 years, during which time he has seen 19 players go on to become full internationals while 79 have been capped at U21 level. The recent U16 invitational Gradisca tournament in Italy was Butler's last official assignment as Ireland U16 manager before he handed over the reins to the newly appointed U15 and U16 manager, John Morling, who had already started work managing last season's U15 group. John Morling, the current player development manager for the Football Association of Ireland (FAI) is an ex-Norwich trainee who had a long and successful spell with Peterborough United, where he held a number of coaching positions, including first-team coach and reserve manager.



Vincent Butler retires after many years spent coaching Irish youth teams.

■ Also, last month saw the announcement of a new pilot Stay Active league initiative for the unemployed that will be rolled out in Dublin over the coming weeks. The initiative, the first of its kind to be implemented by a sports governing body in Ireland, is aimed at men and women over the age of 18 who are currently unemployed and would like to stay active and engaged through football.

The leagues, which will be held in four locations in Dublin throughout May and June, are organised by FAI development officers, who are co-funded by Dublin City Council, Fingal County Council and South Dublin County Council, and will also offer coaching and referee courses to those interested so that they can continue to be active within their communities. Depending on the success of the pilot schemes, the initiative may be extended throughout the country. ■



UKRAINE

• IVAN DYVAK •

Perfect present for schoolchildren

Although preparations for EURO 2012 are naturally the main focus of its attention at the moment, the Football Federation of Ukraine (FFU) is still running its many social programmes, one of the most important of which targets the development of youth football.

Thus, within the framework of the national Our Future programme, a new multipurpose pitch with artificial turf has been opened in the town of Borodyanka, near Kiev, and, in keeping with the programme, it was presented to the nearby secondary school. Vitaliy Pylypenko, head of the Ukrainian student football association and a member of the FFU executive committee, was the major investor in the project.

"It's not the first time we've started to develop football infrastructure in our town," he said. "Borodyanka already has the specialised Borex football complex, for example, which is a potential training base for EURO 2012. In fact, the new pitch is a structural part of the complex, even though it belongs to the secondary school, giving more than 200 children the chance to play their favourite game in excellent conditions."

Commenting on the modest 40 x 40m dimensions of the new pitch, Oleksandr Lekhno, director of the Borex complex, said: "Originally we planned to build a pitch 30m wide and 60m long, but then we met the wishes of the school's PE teachers, who wanted to use the pitch for handball as well. In its existing size, it can easily be divided into two handball courts."

The FFU will continue to pay close attention to the development of the Our Future programme (more than 800 pitches in all regions of the country have been built within its framework), as well as to other social projects aimed at promoting children's/youth and grassroots football. It is well known that Ukraine is considered one of the world's leaders in this area. Last year UEFA awarded Ukraine five-star status within the UEFA Grassroots Charter. ■

Communications

Birthdays – Calendar

Birthdays

Referee observer Franz Wöhrer (Austria) turns 70 on 5 June. On 6 June, security officer Francesco Tagliente (Italy) celebrates his 60th, followed the next day by Sandor Berzi (Hungary), a vice-chairman of the Control and Disciplinary Body, and on 11 June by referee observer Nathan Bartfeld (Moldova). Jean-Jacques Schonckert (Luxembourg), a member of the Players' Status, Transfer and Agents and Match Agents Committee, celebrates his 50th birthday on 24 June.

UEFA also wishes many happy returns to:

- Wilfried Gerhardt (Germany, 1.6)
- Ivaylo Ivkov (Bulgaria, 3.6)
- Klara Bjartmarz (Iceland, 3.6)
- George Courtney (England, 4.6)
- Rolf Haugen (Norway, 4.6)
- Alastair L. Cox (England, 4.6)
- Jean-Samuel Leuba (Switzerland, 4.6)
- Marie-Claire Maney (Northern Ireland, 4.6)
- Ludovico Micallef (Malta, 5.6)
- Jaap Uilenberg (Netherlands, 5.6)
- Leon Straessle (Switzerland, 6.6)
- Michael Joseph Hyland (Republic of Ireland, 6.6)
- Theo Zwanziger (Germany, 6.6)
- Stefano Braschi (Italy, 6.6)
- Lars-Åke Björck (Sweden, 7.6)
- Kenneth J. Hope (Scotland, 7.6)
- Michel Sablon (Belgium, 7.6)
- Sondre Kåfjord (Norway, 7.6)
- Yury Dupanau (Belarus, 7.6)
- Johannes Scholtz (Netherlands, 8.6)
- Robert Anthony Boggi (Italy, 8.6)
- Bryan Drew (England, 8.6)
- Jesper Møller Christensen (Denmark, 9.6)
- Hans Bangarter (Switzerland, 10.6)
- Alun Evans (Wales, 11.6)
- Leonardo Grosso (Italy, 11.6)
- Kyros Georgiou (Cyprus, 11.6)
- Thórir Hakonarson (Iceland, 11.6)
- Alain Courtois (Belgium, 12.6)
- Jørn West Larsen (Denmark, 12.6)
- Sergejus Sliva (Lithuania, 12.6)
- Arben Bici (Albania, 12.6)
- Roland Coquard (France, 13.6)
- Ante Vucemilovic-Simunovic Jr (Croatia, 13.6)
- Giulio Campanati (Italy, 15.6)
- Viacheslav Koloskov (Russia, 15.6)
- Pavel Mokry (Czech Republic, 15.6)
- Muhittin Bosat (Turkey, 15.6)
- Michael Joseph Maessen (Netherlands, 17.6)
- Stephen Thomas (England, 17.6)
- Markus Nobs (Switzerland, 17.6)
- Philippe Piat (France, 18.6)
- Hannelore Ratzburg (Germany, 18.6)
- Elkhann Mammadov (Azerbaijan, 18.6)
- Gaiosz Darsadze (Georgia, 19.6)

- Brian Barwick (England, 21.6)
- Michel Platini (France, 21.6)
- Peter Peters (Germany, 21.6)
- Zoran Cvrk (Croatia, 21.6)
- Keith Stuart Hackett (England, 22.6)
- Zvi Rosen (Israel, 23.6)
- Vladimir Antonov (Moldova, 23.6)
- Leslie Irvine (Northern Ireland, 23.6)
- Georg Pangl (Austria, 23.6)
- Rene J. Temmink (Netherlands, 24.6)
- Emanuel Zammit (Malta, 24.6)
- João Rocha (Portugal, 24.6)
- Jeannette Saarinen (Finland, 24.6)
- Reinhard Walser (Liechtenstein, 25.6)
- Marcel Lica (Romania, 25.6)
- Foppe de Haan (Netherlands, 26.6)
- Barry W. Bright (England, 27.6)
- Sigurdur Hannesson (Iceland, 27.6)
- Wim Koevermans (Netherlands, 28.6)
- Ivan Borissov Lekov (Bulgaria, 29.6)
- Joan Laporta i Estruch (Spain, 29.6)
- Orhan Erdemir (Turkey, 29.6)

Forthcoming events

Meetings

2/3 June, Nassau, Bahamas
Ordinary FIFA Congress

10 June, Nyon
Finance Committee

12 June, Donetsk
Draw for the final round of the 2008/09 European Under-19 Championship

22 June, Nyon
Draws for the first and second qualifying rounds of the UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa League

24 June, Nyon
Draw for the qualifying round of the UEFA Women's Champions League

Competitions

14–28 June, South Africa
FIFA Confederations Cup

15–22 June, Croatia
UEFA Regions' Cup final round

15–29 June, Sweden
European Under-21 Championship final round

22–25 June, Nyon
European Women's Under-17 Championship final round

30 June/1 July
UEFA Champions League first qualifying round (first legs)

Notice

In April the Turkish Football Association moved to:

Istinye Mah. Darüssafaka Cad. No. 45,
Kat 2, 34330 Sariyer Istanbul
Turkey
Tel.: +90 212 3622222
Fax: +90 212 3234968
intdept@tff.org

Match agents

Two new UEFA match agent licences have been granted:

Raymond Akakpo
ISM – 7, avenue Henri Becquerel,
93420 Villepinte, France
Mobile: +33 6 11 46 52 84
Fax: +33 1 48 60 15 68
ism.a@orange.fr

Behçet Menkaloglu
Boheme Travel Agency – Nilgün Sok. 11/2,
Çankaya, Ankara 06680, Turkey
Tel.: +90 312 427 67 74
Fax: +90 312 427 67 76
bmenkaloglu@superonline.com

Publications

Eat for Goals!

Produced by UEFA in collaboration with the European Commission and the World Heart Federation, this cookbook for 5 to 11-year-olds (see *uefadirect No 78*) is extending its reach. Originally published in the three official UEFA languages (English, French and German), it is now also available in Spanish, Portuguese, Polish and Russian. The aim of the book is to help young people better understand the importance of exercise and a healthy, balanced diet (see *uefa.com*).



Górník Zabrze

As part of their collection on football clubs, the publishers of the Encyklopedia Piłkarska FUJI have released a volume on the Polish club Górník Zabrze, which celebrated its 60th anniversary last year. The book contains the clubs' results, a list of all first-team players with information about their careers, and lots of photos, including one of the first team each season since the late 1950s (*wydawnictwo@gia.pl*).

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