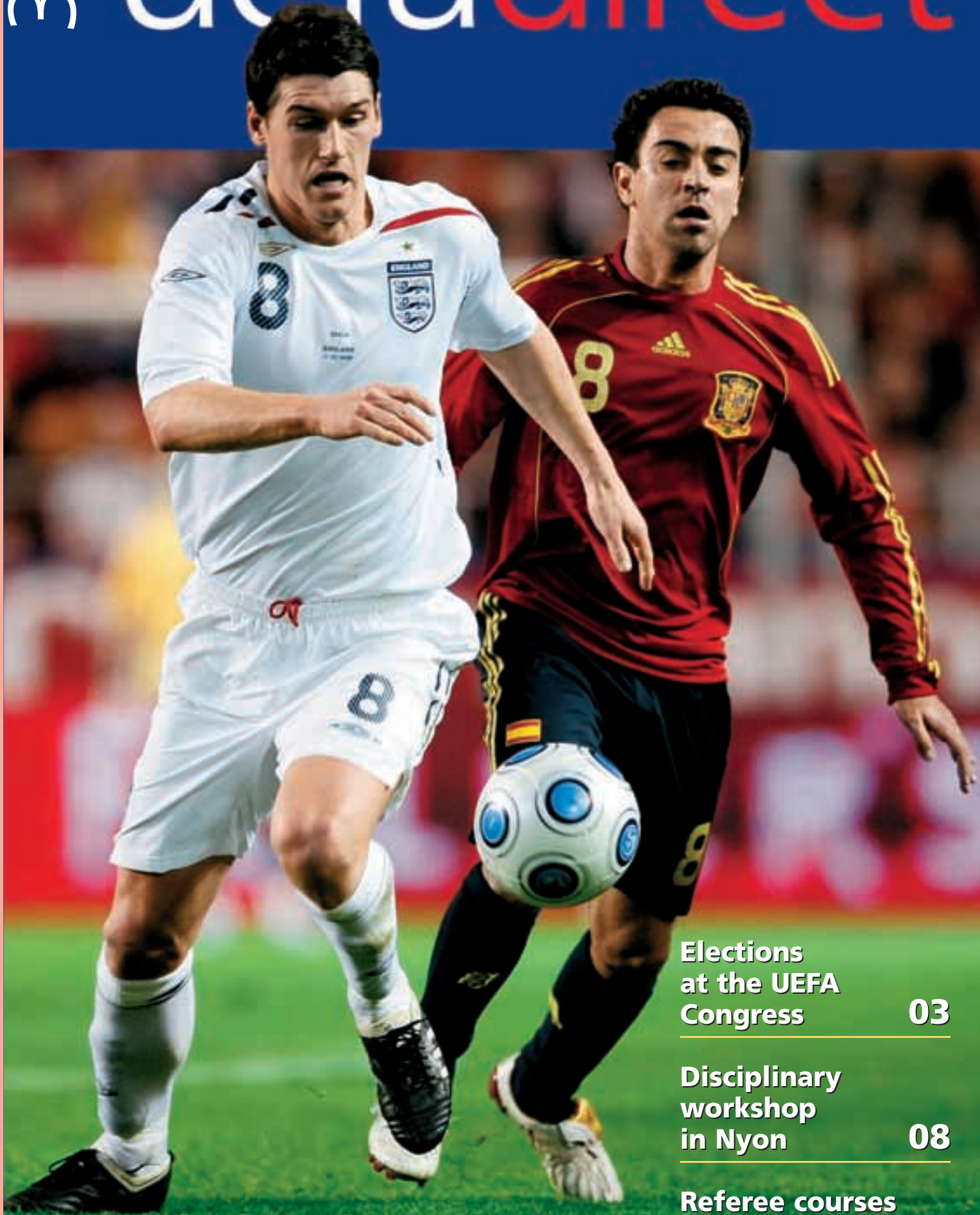


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uefa direct



**Elections
at the UEFA
Congress**

03

**Disciplinary
workshop
in Nyon**

08

**Referee courses
in Spain**

10



Photos: UEFA/plywoods.ch

Message of the president New blood and continuity

Whatever the outcome of the election at our forthcoming Ordinary Congress in Copenhagen, it is certain that the Executive Committee will see an unprecedented injection of new blood as at least seven new members are voted in. At the same time, it will say goodbye to a number of faithful servants who have devoted many years to keeping our organisation and football in general in good health.

These changes are caused by the kind of natural evolution that characterises every society, where one generation passes the baton to the next so it can continue the work that has been started. There will certainly be no shortage of work over the next few years and the Executive Committee, at its January meeting in Nyon, adhered fully to the three priorities that I put to it: financial fair play in the UEFA competitions, the restriction of international transfers of minors and the organisation of EURO 2012.

The guidelines for the months ahead have therefore been set out for both the existing and newly elected Executive Committee members. Clearly, however, I do not want this to limit their freedom of action and thought. On the contrary, I am expecting the new members to bring new impetus to the table, to submit ideas and suggestions, to join our search for appropriate solutions to the problems facing European football and, in particular, to help us successfully address the three aforementioned priorities.

Dialogue, the exchange of ideas and dynamism are indispensable tools if we are to achieve our objectives, but we also need clearly defined objectives and continuity in our work, which we must pursue without ever losing sight of the goal.

This is how our executive body should continue to operate with its new members, whom I look forward to welcoming when the time comes, as it has done with their predecessors, whom I sincerely thank once again for their contribution and commitment in the service of European football.



Michel Platini
UEFA President

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COVER

In February the national teams were preparing to resume their 2010 World Cup qualifying campaigns. In Seville, Spain lived up to their European title by beating England 2-0.

Photo: Getty Images

Elections at the Copenhagen Congress

Twelve candidates for nine seats

Copenhagen is the venue for the next ordinary UEFA Congress.

hemis.fr/APF

ON 25 MARCH, THE DANISH FOOTBALL UNION (DBU) IS HOSTING THE XXXIII ORDINARY UEFA CONGRESS.

A founding member of UEFA, the DBU was one of the first associations to host a UEFA general meeting. Led at the time by a Danish president, Ebbe Schwartz, UEFA held its third annual conference in Copenhagen on 28 June 1957.

The discussions at the 1957 meeting focused particularly on the possible creation of a European Nations' Cup, an idea that was not supported by everyone at the time. There were fears that the calendar would become overloaded, friendly matches would be abolished or even, in the eyes of Sir Stanley Rous, the competition could become too commercial. The competition was not launched until the following year, thanks to the persistence of

the general secretary, Pierre Delaunay, and the decisiveness of the president, Ebbe Schwartz.

A few months after the resounding success of EURO 2008, the current leaders of the national associations must be delighted that these pioneers took such an initiative. As well as making an enormous contribution to football's popularity, the European Championship has become an important financing tool for the national associations, particularly through the HatTrick programme, which is one of the items on the agenda at the Copenhagen Congress.

As required by the UEFA Statutes, activity reports and financial issues will also be covered during the

meeting, although the most eagerly anticipated part of the proceedings is probably the elections, which will change the face of the Executive Committee. The terms of office of seven members are due to expire, including that of Mathieu Sprengers, who died in spring last year. Furthermore, as a result of the decision to increase the number of Executive Committee members (from 14 to 16, including the president), two additional seats are available, one for a four-year term and the other for two years (this seat will be filled by the candidate elected with the fewest votes).

Two candidates for re-election

Four current Executive Committee members are not standing for re-election: vice-president Gerhard Mayer-Vorfelder and members Franco Carraro, Viacheslav Koloskov and

Per Ravn Omdal. Nine seats are therefore available and will be contested by 12 candidates. The two current members standing for re-election are vice-presidents Marios N. Lefkaritis and Geoffrey Thompson.



Geoffrey Thompson (England),

born on 23 August 1945, has been a member of the Executive Committee since 2000 and vice-president since 2002. He is chairman of the National Associations Committee and contributes to the work of numerous other UEFA bodies. His first UEFA position was on the Control and Disciplinary Body, which he joined in 1992. He has also been a FIFA vice-president since 2007 and is a member of various FIFA committees.

Geoffrey Thompson was chairman of The Football Association (The FA) from 1999 to 2008. He is currently first vice-chairman of The FA and chairman of The FA National Sports Centre Trust, The FA Youth Trust and The FA Benevolent Fund.

"I have always believed and indeed said many times that football is a power for good. As it embraces so much more than 22 players, a ball and a set of laws, it is important to see the larger picture if our football is to thrive and survive. Youth development, for example, is vastly important as it is the young people who will become the fans, coaches, referees, and indeed leaders of our future game. It is also about harmony, friendship and shared visions, combined with sound commercial management and a firm commitment to make those visions a reality.

Bringing hopes, aspirations, achievements and problems together for discussion through our TEP round tables throughout Europe, I have endeavoured to show, as chairman of UEFA's National Associations Committee, that our aim is to learn from each other and share our experiences, thereby achieving solidarity and respect. Europe is a diverse continent and the issues facing our national associations vary enormously. Ultimately, however, we are one big family with a responsibility to work together for the good of European football.

To be elected onto the UEFA Executive Committee in 2000 was for me both a great honour and privilege and it has been a responsibility which I have not taken lightly. I believe that I can still make a contribution to European football and therefore, I am seeking re-election."



Marios N. Lefkaritis (Cyprus),

born on 28 November 1946, joined the UEFA Executive Committee in 1996 and became a vice-president in 2007. He is chairman of the Finance Committee and has sat on many other UEFA bodies since 1992. He is also a member of the FIFA Executive Committee and other FIFA committees.

Having been president of the Cyprus Football Association from 1991 to 2001, Mr Lefkaritis was made honorary life president and still sits on the association's board and executive committee.

"I am seeking re-election because lots of things have changed very quickly at UEFA over the last two years and I feel that the experience I have gathered during my previous terms in office could be particularly valuable in this context, to help us to push forward harmoniously.

We are also entering a new cycle in the HatTrick programme and as chairman of the UEFA Finance Committee I want to dedicate myself fully to this project, which perfectly symbolises UEFA's principle of solidarity. It is equally important to me to keep UEFA in robust financial health, as the wider world experiences such financial turmoil.

I think it is good that the smaller national associations are represented on our Executive Committee and participate in the dialogue that is vital to the balance and success of European football."

Ten other candidates stand for election alongside the two current members:

Giancarlo Abete (Italy),

born on 26 August 1950, became president of the Italian Football Federation in April 2007 after having been vice-president and held various other positions since 1988, including those of technical director and head of Italy's 1998 and 2006 World Cup delegations. At UEFA, he is first vice-chairman of the National Associations Committee.



"I have been encouraged to seek election by all the stakeholders in Italian football, on the basis that a big federation has a duty to share with UEFA and its other member associations the structures, human resources, skills and experience gathered in its day-to-day management of the complexities of modern football. My entrepreneurial and parliamentary activities, as well as the numerous positions I have held in the Italian Football Federation over the last 20 years, have reinforced my philosophy of dialogue and mediation, in order to bring together the diverse forces at work in football, with a view to achieving broad consensus on the most important matters. Standing for this election is a logical step in my career, to help in the strengthening and harmonious development of European football and enhance ties between all the national associations – small, medium and large. I want to encourage solidarity and cooperation between them, reinforcing their role and autonomy at home and establishing a special relationship between them, UEFA and FIFA, repairing national identity, the development and protection of young players, the importance of national teams and the social and moral responsibility shouldered by football."



Nodar Akhalkatsi (Georgia),

born on 14 January 1976, has been president of the Georgian Football Federation since June 2005, having held various positions in the federation since 1992. He is a vice-chairman of the UEFA National Team Competitions Committee and a member of the FIFA organising committee for the 2010 World Cup.

"In my opinion, the development of European football is only possible by means of a frank exchange of opinions between all its stakeholders.

The specific situation within western Europe and the EU is decisive for the whole of European football. On the other hand, the specificity of our sport in the countries of central and eastern Europe is also very important.

During my sports management career, I have been lucky enough to become acquainted with both perspectives. This is why I have decided to stand for election to the UEFA Executive Committee: being a member of European football's executive body opens new doors and offers better chances of bringing the countries of central and eastern Europe closer to those of the west and taking part in an open dialogue at the highest level about the development of European football."

Tomás Gea (Andorra),

born on 7 March 1966, is general secretary and former vice-president of the Andorran Football Federation. He has sat on UEFA committees for the last 12 years and is currently a vice-chairman of the Futsal and Beach Soccer Committee. He is a member of the equivalent FIFA committee as well.

"My main motivation in standing for election is a desire to use my experience and professional skills to the benefit of football."



"My career, starting as a player, then coach and finally administrator, has given me a very broad vision and the necessary skills to be a good candidate to represent European football."

"What is more, coming from a small national association I have a different perspective on the problems and difficulties facing football, which would help us to take the right decisions to improve the game."

"Also, my career at national level, and at international level as a member of various UEFA committees, has introduced me to all areas of the sport, from grassroots football to the professional game, via futsal, beach soccer and more besides."

"So, with my professional experience, youth and motivation, I look forward enthusiastically to this next challenge with UEFA."



Allan Hansen (Denmark),

born on 27 February 1949, has been president of the Danish Football Association since 2002, having held many administrative positions in Danish football since 1984. He is also first vice-chairman of the UEFA Referees Committee and a member of FIFA committees.

"European football has been developing immensely for a number of years and is surrounded by great potential, but we cannot ignore the fact that football on our continent and in the world at large is going through a phase in which it also faces many threats and challenges."

"Therefore, in view of the propensity in political and financial circles to exert a growing influence on the world of football and interfere with it, our common commitment must be to safeguard its purely ethical and sporting features, defending values such as the autonomy of football associations, mutual solidarity and national identity."

"We need all the European associations to demonstrate maximum cooperation and common goals in order to tackle these issues and reconcile the interests of big and small member associations, big and small clubs, west and east, and the professional and amateur game."

"Having spent more than 25 years working for my club, the Danish FA, UEFA and FIFA, I have gained experience in precisely this field and it has whetted my appetite to work on behalf of European football and entirely in its service as a member of the UEFA Executive Committee."

"I consider myself an advocate for both top-level and grassroots football because I'm convinced that neither can survive, let alone flourish, without the other, and I offer my personal commitment and that of the Danish FA to contribute our expertise and experience to this end and to a continuous development of the game in Europe and at a global level."

Frantisek Laurinec (Slovakia),

born on 19 August 1951, has been president of the Slovak Football Association (SFZ) since 1999, having held various positions in the Czechoslovakian Football Federation and, later, the Slovak FA.

He has been a member of various UEFA committees since 2000 and is currently first vice-chairman of the HatTrick Committee. He also sits on FIFA committees.



"I am proud of the support that I feel I have from the SFZ, and also from the clubs, in my position as president of the largest sports organisation in Slovakia. I believe that I have experience in international football, working, with pleasure, on various UEFA and FIFA committees and panels, and acting as a UEFA match delegate and FIFA commissioner too."

"Establishing mutual understanding between the so-called big and small, west and east, old and young, professionals and amateurs is one of the most crucial questions currently facing football in Europe. UEFA has showed understanding, respect and responsibility to our federations. Now it is time to show our understanding, respect and responsibility to UEFA."

"Bolstered by my ten years' experience as the president of a medium-sized federation and having performed various functions on UEFA committees and panels, this is the where I see myself and where UEFA can benefit from my knowledge and skills."



Abraham Luzon (Israel),

born on 24 April 1955, began his sports management career in 1988 with Maccabi Petah-Tikva FC. He was club chairman from 1991 to 2005. Having joined the Israel Football Association (IFA) executive committee in 2004, he was elected president in 2007. He has also been chairman of the IFA's tenders and finance committees, and a member of the media committee.

At European level, he is first vice-chairman of the UEFA Players' Status, Transfer and Agents and Match Agents Committee.

"It is with excitement, pride and a great sense of humility that I am putting forward my candidacy. I came to football as a spectator, out of pure love for this wonderful game."

"As the years have gone by, I have succeeded in having an impact on Israeli football, starting with a small team, Maccabi Petah-Tikva, where I learned that even small places can have an amazing influence to the benefit of all."

"Later, with the personal support of the Israel Football Federation, I managed to introduce changes and make a difference. Now I would be delighted to dedicate my time, my energy and my experience to European football as a whole."

"In Israel, we have used football as a means for promoting peace. The Israel national team has joined forces with the Palestinian Authority national team to play peace promoting matches throughout Europe, showing the world at large and not just politicians how Israeli and Palestinian players, Jews and Arabs, can cooperate together and demonstrating through the game that coexistence is possible. Do you know any tool better than football for this? I believe in football as a game, but also as a vital educational tool. It is on this basis that I want to promote educational programmes that integrate football, as well as programmes that promote football among the youth."

"In the current economic crisis, I also believe that my 30 years of experience at one of the biggest banks in Israel can help UEFA and its member associations to plan and raise money for football."

"I attribute great importance to the family of European football taking the smaller associations

→ under its wing and entrusting them with the organisation of events that can take football in such countries to new heights, encouraging their governments to invest more in the sport and its infrastructure.

"Football can certainly change people's lives. I am submitting my candidacy so that I can make a difference and bring about change, out of a belief in the power of the game and an admiration and love for the game."



Peter Rees (Wales),

born on 15 November 1943, has been president of the Football Association of Wales since 2006, before which he worked for Treharris Athletic FC, the Welsh Premier League and the Welsh association, as treasurer and vice-president.

For UEFA he is first vice-chairman of the Club Licensing Committee. He is also a member of the FIFA Disciplinary Committee.

"In over 12 years as an office bearer of the third oldest football nation, I believe I have gained the necessary experience to be able to bring something to the table. While Wales has been in existence since 1876, we are one of the medium-sized nations in UEFA, which in turn means I can relate to both the needs of small and big nations."

I believe UEFA needs to be served by a strong Executive Committee, a committee that caters for the needs of all 53 nations. While it is important that the major countries are represented, it is equally important that small and middle-sized ones are also included."



Michael van Praag (Netherlands),

born on 28 September 1947, was elected president of the Dutch Football Association (KNVB) last year, after having sat on the KNVB board, been a member of the league board and, beforehand, been chairman of AFC Ajax from 1989 to 2003.

He is first vice-chairman of the UEFA Stadium and Security Committee.

"My main ambition is to continuously stress the social impact of football. This urgency dates back to my days as chairman of Ajax when I was strongly committed to solidarity, respect, social responsibility and fair play in football. Today, European football faces many modern challenges. The specificity of sport, the protection of youth development, the role of players' agents, integration and fair play are just a few. These challenges can only be faced successfully when clubs and national associations are aware of their positions and are willing to stand together, side by side. I strongly advocate firm protection of clubs' youth development programmes. Furthermore, I suggest increasing the importance of financial fair play in order not to widen the gap between smaller and larger clubs on the one hand and smaller and larger national associations on the other."

Liutauras Varanavicius (Lithuania),

born on 17 March 1970, has been president of the Lithuanian Football Federation since 2000 and is also a member of the Lithuanian Olympic Committee.

He has sat on UEFA committees since 2002 and is currently a vice-chairman of the HatTrick Committee. He is also a member of the FIFA Goal Bureau.



"I have the support of my national association and many others and I have many ideas about how to contribute to the promotion of football and UEFA on the basis of my first-hand knowledge of the current situation in most eastern European associations and the international experience I have gathered working on various football bodies. My management skills also stand me in good stead and I am determined to work intensively for European football by aiming for mutual benefit and a balance of interests between UEFA and all its member associations. Our success lies in permanently consulting all parties involved and seeking to reduce the gap between the Executive Committee and the daily needs of football."



Theo Zwanziger (Germany),

born on 6 June 1945, began his sports management career as president of the Rhineland football association from 1992 to 2001 and treasurer for the German Football Association (DFB). He became executive president of the DFB in 2004 and, two years later, its sole president.

He is currently also a vice-chairman of the UEFA National Team Competitions Committee.

"By declaring, via the DFB board, its unanimous support for my candidacy, our association has made clear that, with its 6.5 million members, it still feels it should be represented by its president in the highest, most important organs of European football. Like Egidius Braun and Gerhard Mayer-Vorfelder before me, I see similarities between the situation at UEFA and our situation at the DFB. In both organisations, we need to make a serious commitment to bringing together and holding together the different interests of professionals and amateurs, big associations and small."

In addition, I want to help ensure that UEFA, with its strengths, integrity and influence, sets social and political examples and strengthens the unique position of sport in the EU. By actively dedicating myself to football unity, with an even bigger role for women's and girls' football and an active policy of integration, I hope to follow in the footsteps of the exemplary Egidius Braun and Gerhard Mayer-Vorfelder on the UEFA Executive Committee, with the understanding that UEFA can continue to rely on the loyal partnership of the DFB and myself."

FIFA Executive Committee elections

The Congress is also due to elect four FIFA Executive Committee members, with the terms of office of Michel D'Hooghe, Senes Erzik, Viacheslav Koloskov and Marios N. Lefkaritis all coming to an end.

Three current members are standing for re-election:
Michel D'Hooghe (Belgium)
Senes Erzik (Turkey)
Marios N. Lefkaritis (Cyprus)

A fourth nomination has been received by the UEFA administration:
Vitaliy Mutko (Russia)



Michel Platini and Joseph S. Blatter led the discussions.



A gathering of renowned specialists.



Workshop for technical directors

Youth development debate in Paris

FROM 26 TO 28 JANUARY, THE FRENCH FOOTBALL FEDERATION HOSTED A UNIQUE EVENT – A JOINT FIFA/UEFA EXTRAORDINARY WORKSHOP FOR EUROPEAN TECHNICAL DIRECTORS LED BY THE TWO PRESIDENTS, JOSEPH S. BLATTER AND MICHEL PLATINI, WITH UEFA’S GENERAL SECRETARY, DAVID TAYLOR, ALSO IN THE FRONT LINE.

They were by no means the only familiar faces. A photograph of the 120 participants reveals that it would have been quite easy to arrange an all-star match between former internationals who are currently in the technical director role. Many associations had two representatives: specialists in youth competition and player development.

They added up to a unique gathering with an agenda that was as simple as it was important: to review and discuss the current format of age-limit competitions along with related topics such as player development and coaching issues. The event was based on short presentations and lengthy, in-depth discussions in various groups. It was a brainstorming rather than decision-making exercise – which is why there was no media conference in Paris, bearing in mind that no conclusions could be presented.

Review of the structures

The parameters of youth football have undoubtedly changed during the last two decades – hence the desire to examine structures, to highlight problem areas and to address

some interesting issues, such as the positioning of the Under-21 competition between adult and youth development categories and, for that matter, its relationship to Olympic football, bearing in mind that the Under-21 finals currently provide Europe’s Olympic qualifiers.

The technical directors also debated a number of coaching issues, not least their own status and role in terms of establishing national training centres and ensuring that they are run in an effective way. Another more specialised discussion point was the type of coaching qualifications required in the crucial youth development phases.

Competition structures

However, competition structures were the main concern, with FIFA and UEFA events discussed in detail. At the moment, UEFA’s age-limit tournaments give most youngsters their first taste of international competition and one of the other points on the debating table was whether there should be more opportunities for international contact at club level. Another interesting point was whether the final tournaments of UEFA’s age-limit competitions should be further exploited as platforms for educational events. Anti-doping sessions are already pegged to these events, but the question is whether other sectors – such as coach or referee education – could make use of the annual finals.

Paris was an open-ended event with several layers of follow-up to come, the first of which will be a debriefing session in Nyon with UEFA, FIFA and the leaders of the discussion groups – Sir Trevor Brooking, Jerzy Engel, Fernando Hierro, Gérard Houllier, Michel Sablon and Matthias Sammer – pooling feedback and helping the governing bodies to pick up any suggestions that warrant being taken a step further.



Photos: UEFA



Michel Wuilleret, chairman of the Appeals Body.



Jean-Samuel Leuba, disciplinary inspector.



Gerhard Kapl, chief disciplinary inspector.

Fourth Disciplinary Workshop

Integrity at the centre of discussions

SHOULD SANCTIONS STILL BE IMPOSED FOR SIMULATION AND, IF SO, IN WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES? ARE FINES THE MOST APPROPRIATE SANCTIONS AGAINST CLUBS IN CASES OF DISCRIMINATORY ACTS BY FANS? WHAT SHOULD THE RESPONSE BE TO THE GROWING THREAT OF MATCH-FIXING, WHICH IS ENDANGERING FOOTBALL COMPETITIONS AT ALL LEVELS? HOW CAN UEFA PUNISH CLUBS INVOLVED IN CORRUPTION AND EXCLUDE THEM FROM ITS COMPETITIONS? THESE FOUR QUESTIONS WERE TACKLED BY PARTICIPANTS IN THE FOURTH UEFA DISCIPLINARY WORKSHOP, WHICH WAS HELD IN NYON ON 19 AND 20 JANUARY.

The workshop was attended by the majority of members of the two UEFA disciplinary bodies and disciplinary inspectors, both active and retired.

By way of introduction, the UEFA president, Michel Platini, reminded the participants of the principle of separation of judicial, executive and legislative powers within UEFA, a principle on which the functioning of its disciplinary bodies was based, as well as the values that football should continue to promote. He asked the disciplinary bodies to continue safeguarding these values, since their decisions were public demonstrations of UEFA's objectives.

Sanction for acts of simulation

The chairman of the Appeals Body, Michel Wuilleret, kicked off the

opening debate by explaining the current legal circumstances in which acts of simulation could be punished and the related case law. It emerged from the subsequent discussion that there were no plans to introduce a "video tribunal" to correct a referee's decisions after the event. Indeed, the relevant case law limited very strictly the conditions under which a sanction could be issued for simulation under Article 10 (1c) of the UEFA Disciplinary Regulations. Since this article was added in 2006, the disciplinary bodies had only issued one sanction for simulation (penalty awarded and converted after an indisputable act of simulation during a EURO 2008 qualifying match). Following these explanations, the participants unanimously agreed

that simulation should continue to be treated as a disciplinary offence, since it constituted a form of cheating that demonstrated a complete lack of respect for opponents, referees, spectators and, in some cases, television viewers.

However, the participants recognised that it was up to the disciplinary bodies to specify the conditions under which this provision should apply. They were also sure that the presence of cameras around the stadium was a useful deterrent for those who practised simulation. The participants thought that offside could never be considered simulation: this was a technical rule that applied automatically rather than a referee's sanction of unsporting conduct.

Discriminatory and racist acts

The UEFA general secretary, David Taylor, began by highlighting the principle of zero tolerance against racism and the impact of UEFA decisions in this area on the national associations, which were bringing their own practices into line with those of UEFA. The subsequent discussions centred on the fact that, unfortunately, the phenomenon of racism inside sta-



The UEFA president addresses the disciplinary workshop.

diums was rising steadily in spite of the prevention campaigns and the heavy fines imposed for such offences.

However, was fining a club an appropriate way of punishing acts of discrimination by its supporters? The participants thought that the sanctions issued in such cases should be appropriate, i.e. they should punish the perpetrators of the acts more directly. Of course, UEFA could not punish supporters directly, but there might be indirect ways of penalising the actual offenders.

If a racist or discriminatory act was committed by home supporters, the participants thought that a strong message should be sent to those responsible, for example by closing all or part of the stand in which the discriminatory acts had taken place.

The participants also called on UEFA to encourage clubs to hand over to the authorities any supporters who were guilty of racist acts. In this regard, they urged UEFA to continue its two-pronged approach to the fight against racism, comprising firm sanctions and an educational campaign.

Match-fixing and illegal betting

Gianni Infantino, UEFA deputy general secretary, described the current situation, which he said was alarming. He reported that there were currently more than 25 cases involving UEFA competition matches and that the whole appeal of football competitions, which were based on the uncertainty of results, was at stake. He explained that, in response to this serious problem, a special section was currently being set up within UEFA's disciplinary services.

Although the existing legal framework was sufficient to punish proven cases of match-fixing, the disciplinary bodies were not currently well enough equipped to detect such cases and gather all the evidence required to issue a sanction. The UEFA Executive

Committee had therefore taken various measures to strengthen the disciplinary services and take additional action.

UEFA's chief disciplinary inspector Gerhard Kapl described the difficulties faced by disciplinary inspectors when trying to gather evidence in this field. The participants also noted that, since this problem was not a priority for the public authorities, it was up to the sports authorities themselves to take action first, and the state authorities would then follow. The idea of an international convention like the 1985 Convention on spectator violence and misbehaviour at sports events and in particular at football matches was suggested as a way of supporting the efforts of sports governing bodies.

Admission of clubs involved in corruption

Jean-Samuel Leuba, disciplinary inspector, mentioned the problem posed by the controversial admission to the 2007/08 UEFA Champions League of a club which, at the time of its application, had been the subject of a disciplinary procedure for corruption at national association level. He summarised the decision issued by the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) in this case, which addressed the following questions: who can dispute before the CAS the decision of whether or not a club is admitted to a European competition? What criteria and elements

should be taken into consideration when a club is admitted to a European competition? What procedural rules and principles should be respected in such a procedure?

It should be added in this regard that a specific new provision is currently being discussed, aimed at clarifying how a club may be denied admission to a UEFA competition on such grounds.

One of the issues discussed in relation to this problem was the extent of UEFA's jurisdiction. The participants accepted that UEFA should examine whether all the admission criteria were met when the request for admission was submitted. It was noted, in relation to the need for integrity, which was recently added to the sporting and financial conditions for admission to UEFA competitions (the club "must not be or have been involved in any activity aimed at arranging or influencing the outcome of a match at national or international level"), that UEFA often relied on the decisions of national bodies. The participants thought that it would be better if UEFA had a certain level of control over corruption procedures opened at national level against clubs wishing to participate in its competitions.

The participants agreed to meet again at the next workshop in 2011.





Hugh Dallas

Sportsfile



Urs Meier

Sportsfile



Sportsfile

Referee courses in Benalmadena

Uniformity as a goal

STORM CLOUDS DARKENED THE SKY AT THE START OF THE MID-SEASON GATHERING OF EUROPE'S LEADING MATCH OFFICIALS IN BENALMADENA BUT UEFA'S DETERMINATION TO ENSURE THE HIGHEST POSSIBLE REFEREEING STANDARDS WAS CLEARLY VISIBLE.

There were 51 referees present at the 17th UEFA Advanced Course for Elite and Premier Referees in southern Spain and they received praise for maintaining the im-

pressive performance

levels shown at EURO

2008 during the first half of the European club campaign. *"I think the standard of refereeing in Europe, particularly at the top level in the UEFA Champions League and UEFA Cup, has been particularly high this season,"* said UEFA Referees Committee member Hugh Dallas.

At the same time, however, the referees were reminded of their responsibility to get the big decisions in the penalty box right. Courage, concentration and correct positioning were the requisites spelt out by Dallas and his fellow instructor Vlado Sajn, who together advised the delegates on other areas of concern. The chief priority remains protecting the players, especially against the threat of dangerous challenges. *"We want to make sure the referees are very strong on tackles where two feet are off the ground with studs coming in, which can endanger the safety of the players,"* said Dallas.

Holding and pushing

The referees also received instructions to be strict on simulation

and to continue taking strong action against holding, pulling and pushing in the penalty box. The Referees Committee believes progress has been made on the latter front – citing two penalties awarded for this offence during EURO 2008 – yet match officials must remain vigilant. *"Ten or fifteen years ago, it was the tackle from behind that we were talking about but now it is holding and pushing in the penalty area,"* Dallas said.

Top quality player management was the focus of one of several workshops where the referees reviewed clips from recent UEFA matches on video. The men in the middle remain under orders to issue at least one caution per side for mass confrontations – and a yellow card for any player who rushes from a distance to join in – and must adopt a zero-tolerance approach towards players waving an imaginary card in an attempt to get an opponent booked. *"If he waves a card, give him a card,"* said Dallas.

The three-day course for the leading referees ran from 3 to 5 February and also featured a presentation on leadership by UEFA's technical director, Andy Roxburgh. Drawing on his own experiences in the coaching sector, Roxburgh listed the qualities required to succeed as a referee: power responsibility, optimism, communication, emotional intelligence, courage, passion, adaptability, curiosity, humility. *"At the top level, leadership qualities often make the difference,"* he said. *"When you referee a match, you have the authority – but have you got the personal power, the character, the personality, the knowledge to do the role?"*

Fitness tests

Professor Werner Helsen oversaw the FIFA fitness tests taken by both the senior referees and their junior counterparts attending the 18th UEFA Introductory Course for Interna-



In the club competitions, the referees have maintained the excellent standards set at EURO 2008.

Empics Sport/PA Photos



Fitness tests and mental preparation are two of the cornerstones of the referee courses.

tional Referees, which ran from 2 to 5 February. The test comprises a series of six 40m sprints under 6.20 seconds, followed by an interval test comprising 20x150m tempo runs, each within a 30-second limit. Thirty-two of the 37 new referees passed the test with the five unsuccessful referees due to get another chance in Nice, France, in March.

Helsen was delighted by the performance of the older group but found room for improvement with the introductory course referees, citing the wide gap in standards among the group members, who came from 28 different countries. To help narrow this gap, Helsen will send each referee a specially tailored interval-training schedule – which should prove of particular benefit to those who receive only limited support from their home associations. Uniformity is the goal for these match officials and not just in terms of fitness, but in decision-making too. In a workshop entitled 'Correct judgement of physical challenges', Vlado Sajin told them: "We ask you to leave behind the differences in applying the laws in your own countries."

In a departure from previous years, the introductory course began with individual medical, physical and mental examinations for each referee, in addition to first-day group sessions on injury prevention and mental preparation. This allowed more time for the Referees Committee to get to know the new intake, and vice versa. The course also included a presentation by former Swiss international referee Urs Meier on the importance of tactical awareness, with Meier advising the participants that they should learn to understand the tactical flow of a game. And it concluded with Hugh Dallas encouraging them to make the most of their "fantastic opportunity". He said: "You have a fantastic opportunity ahead of you to be involved in top-quality European competition. You have to be strong and courageous and take the big decisions."



The last season of Mike Riley

An international referee since 1999, Englishman Mike Riley is now in his final year on UEFA's elite list. He attended his last advanced course in Benalmadena and praised UEFA for the support he has received during his decade of officiating across the continent.

"Being an international referee has exposed me to different types of football and different management skills. It is not like refereeing two English teams and the experience of handling an Italian or Spanish team versus a Scandinavian team gives you a real contrast in styles which presents a distinct challenge.

"I was in the first batch of referees on the talent programme in 2000/01 and that was a great support mechanism. I was assigned Bo Karlsson as my mentor – I learned from his experience and had a series of games over a year to build up my skills before stepping up to the next level.

"My first ever match was an Under-16 qualifier between Portugal and Albania in March 1999. Five years later I was refereeing at UEFA EURO 2004 in Portugal – I did the Sweden v Bulgaria and Latvia v Germany matches and that was a real highlight for me.

"Along the way, the UEFA courses for the referees have always been something I have found really beneficial. The quality of the teaching materials is first-class – we review a lot of different incidents from matches on video and they have access to all the big games. We also have instructors like Vlado Sajin and Hugh Dallas from the UEFA Referees Committee who have so much experience.

"The key issues change over time and it helps that these courses give you a chance to learn also from the experiences your fellow referees have had since you last met. It is a valuable opportunity to sit down, share experiences and pick the brains of your colleagues."





The Executive Committee held its first meeting of the year in Nyon.

UEFA-pjwoods.ch



UEFA-pjwoods.ch

Meetings and other activities

2011 and 2012 final venues announced

THE UEFA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HELD ITS FIRST MEETING OF 2009, THE PENULTIMATE ONE IN ITS CURRENT COMPOSITION, IN NYON ON 29/30 JANUARY, WITH MICHEL PLATINI IN THE CHAIR.

During this meeting, which was interrupted so that the Executive Committee members could attend the laying of the foundation stone of UEFA's new office building (see page 22), the venues for the 2011 and 2012 finals of the UEFA Champions League and Europa League were decided.

The UEFA Champions League finals, each to be played on a Saturday evening, will be held at London's Wembley stadium (90,000 capacity) in 2011 and at the Fussball Arena, Munich (66,000 capacity) in 2012.

The UEFA Europa League finals will be staged at Lansdowne Road, Dublin in 2011 and the National Stadium in Bucharest in 2012.

The Executive Committee members also fully endorsed the priorities set by Michel Platini for the next few months, i.e. improving financial fair play in the UEFA club competitions, protecting minors from international transfers and the organisation of EURO 2012.

Draw in Poland

As far as EURO 2012 is concerned, the Executive Committee noted the current state of progress of preparations for the tournament and confirmed that the 2010-12 European Championship qualifying group draw would take place in Poland on 7 February 2010. It also discussed the commercial strategy and media rights policy for EURO 2012.

In the shorter term, UEFA is holding its annual Congress on 25 March and the Executive Committee approved the agenda for this meeting, which is to be held in Copenhagen. It also noted the list of candidates for the election of UEFA and FIFA Executive Committee members (see pages 4-6).

With reference to the Hat-Trick solidarity payments which it had already discussed at its meeting in December, the Executive Committee approved the proposal for payments to improve national associations' good governance. The maximum payment of EUR 100,000 for improving governance will be linked to a questionnaire that the associations will need to fill in and return to UEFA by the end of April.

The Executive Committee also approved a document laying down the key organisational and financial principles for EURO 2016. This document will be distributed to the national associations as part of the first phase of the bidding procedure for the 2016 tournament.

The Executive Committee also heard an update on the Top Executive Programme, as part of which five round tables had been organised since October 2008, in Geneva, Rome, Frankfurt, Istanbul and Amsterdam. Regarding technical matters, the Study Group Scheme that was launched last year has met with universal approval.



The new Wembley Stadium is hosting the 2011 UEFA Champions League final.

Getty Images

Referee Convention – Seven new members

At the proposal of the Referees Committee, the Executive Committee admitted seven new national associations to the *UEFA Convention on Referee Education and Organisation*.

The associations concerned are those of the Faroe Islands, Northern Ireland, Iceland, Malta, the Netherlands, Slovakia and Sweden.

The experts' evaluations and reports demonstrated that they had met all the criteria. Membership of the convention will guarantee them a bonus of CHF 200,000 on signature plus annual payments of CHF 100,000 for as long as they continue to meet the convention's requirements. The signing ceremony will take place on the occasion of the UEFA Congress in Copenhagen.



The European Under-21 Championship draw in Aarhus.



Per Kjærbye / www.footballbilder.dk

U21 draw in Aarhus

The final round of the 2007-09 European Under-21 Championship is being held in Sweden from 15 to 29 June. For the 2009-11 edition, the competition is once again heading north, to Denmark this time.



The first step towards the next competition was taken in Aarhus on 4 February with the draw to determine the qualifying group formations.

Each of UEFA's member associations has entered a team. As the hosts, Denmark are guaranteed a place in the final round. The 52 remaining teams have been divided into two groups of six and eight groups of five for the qualifiers:

Group 1	Group 2
Russia	Turkey
Romania	Switzerland
Moldova	Armenia
Latvia	Rep. of Ireland
Faroe Islands	Georgia
Andorra	Estonia
Group 3	Group 4
Italy	Spain
Wales	Finland
Hungary	Netherlands
Bosnia-Herzegovina	Poland
Luxembourg	Liechtenstein
Group 5	Group 6
Germany	Israel
Czech Republic	Sweden
Northern Ireland	Bulgaria
Iceland	Montenegro
San Marino	Kazakhstan
Group 7	Group 8
Serbia	France
Croatia	Ukraine
Norway	Belgium
Slovakia	Slovenia
Cyprus	Malta
Group 9	Group 10
England	Austria
Portugal	Belarus
Greece	Scotland
FYR Macedonia	Albania
Lithuania	Azerbaijan

The group matches will be played between the end of March this year and the beginning of September next year. Afterwards, the ten group winners and best four runners-up will contest the play-offs to decide which seven join hosts Denmark in the final round.

UEFA Futsal Cup semi-finals in April

The draw for the UEFA Futsal Cup semi-finals is being held in Ekaterinburg on 28 February.



The final stage of the competition takes place in Ekaterinburg from 24 to 26 April, when the locals, Viz-Sinara Ekaterinburg – who also happen to be the titleholders – play host to Dinamo Moskva, Kairat Almaty and Interviú Madrid.

The semi-finals are scheduled for 24 April and the final two days later, with the third-place play-off that same day.

Doping control officer seminar in Nyon

On 2 February, the House of European Football was the venue for UEFA's fourth seminar for doping control officers.

The meeting, which was opened by Dr Michel D'Hooghe, chairman of the Medical Committee, was attended by 45 medical doctors responsible for doping controls in connection with UEFA competitions.

It was an opportunity to review UEFA anti-doping activities over the last decade. Special attention was drawn to the success of the EURO 2008 anti-doping programme, which was also presented as an excellent example of cooperation between all concerned.

A presentation by Dr Katharina Grimm, head of the FIFA medical office, about the new World Anti-Doping Code helped the seminar participants to appreciate the impact of its implementation on the world of football.

Participants were informed of the changes made to the UEFA Anti-Doping Regulations and the impact these changes would have on their activities as doping control officers (see uefa.com).

They were also given an informative presentation on the biological passport, a tool introduced by the International Cycling Union (UCI) to combat doping by producing a real biological profile of each athlete.



Doping control officer seminar in the auditorium at the House of European Football.

UEFA/pjwood.s.ch



Former players' retraining brings them to Nyon.

UEFA-pjwoods.ch



The trophy awarded to UEFA.

UEFA-pjwoods.ch

From player to administrator

From 2 to 4 February, UEFA hosted a seminar at its HQ for a group of former footballers and players of other team sports who have opted for a career in sports management.

These former athletes are studying with the Centre de Droit et d'Economie du Sport in Limoges, France. Their course – a master's for future general managers of sports clubs – consists in a series of seminars.

The session in Nyon was dedicated to topics such as the particular nature of professional sport's economic sector, how to manage and organise sports events with all their various facets, and stadium security, where the focus was primarily on the organisation of UEFA Champions League and French top-flight games.

Norway lead fair play league

At the end of 2008, Norway topped the fair play table, which, under the umbrella of the UEFA Respect campaign, ranks teams according to behaviour in UEFA competitions.

On the basis of these rankings, the three national associations whose representatives – national teams and clubs – show the greatest respect for the fair play criteria are given an additional place in the UEFA Europa League. The clubs are selected on the basis of performance in their domestic fair play competition and enter the first qualifying round of the Europa League. The additional places automatically go to the three best-placed national associations in the UEFA Respect Fair Play rankings, provided they attain an average of 8.0 points or more. This means that, contrary to previous editions, there will not be a draw to determine which two national associations join the outright winner.

The final rankings will be drawn up on 30 April.

In the intermediate end-of-year table, Norway, with 8.325 points, lead Denmark (8.201), Scotland (8.186),

Netherlands (8.132), Wales (8.122), Sweden (8.104) and France (8.101). England, Kazakhstan, Switzerland, Germany, Iceland and Spain were also on averages of more than 8.0 points at the end of 2008.

A fair play award for UEFA...

UEFA has won the International Committee for Fair Play (CIFP) Willi Daume World Fair Play Trophy.

UEFA received the award for its Respect campaign initiated by the president, Michel Platini, ahead of EURO 2008 and demonstrating UEFA's determination to combat all forms of discrimination in football.

UEFA's first vice-president, Senes Erzik, received the award on behalf of UEFA at a gala ceremony in Istanbul on 26 January, organised by

the Turkish National Olympic Committee under the auspices of the CIFP, UNESCO and the IOC.

... and for the associations of Armenia and Turkey

The Armenian and Turkish football associations have won the FIFA Fair Play Award for 2008.

The award, presented at the FIFA World Player Gala 2008 in Zurich on 12 January, was in recognition of the symbolic and historic handshake between the two associations' presidents when their national teams met in a World Cup qualifier in the Armenian capital of Yerevan on 6 September last year.

Maik Kiss

He devoted almost half of his life, which was tragically cut short, to UEFA. When he joined the UEFA General Secretariat in Berne in December 1985, he was one of only 20 employees. Team spirit and a family atmosphere were key principles to which Maik remained faithful throughout his career. Most of his work was dedicated to youth football and, never one to do things by halves, he was quick to put in extra hours out on the pitch, devoting much of his free time to coaching youngsters in the Berne suburbs and later on the shores of Lake Geneva after Maik and his family followed UEFA to its Nyon headquarters in 1995.



UEFA

Maik adapted superbly to this new environment, as he did to the rapid expansion of the UEFA administration. In 2002 his career took a new direction as he took charge of the UEFA Events Unit, and in particular the organisation of the Champions League final. In this highly responsible role, as in all the others he held, Maik never wavered from his positive, helpful attitude and the sense of teamwork that made him an extremely popular colleague and a friend to many. He was also a persistent fighter who never let anything get in his way, but a sudden, devastating illness got the better of him on 16 January, when he died aged 49.



AUSTRIA

• PETER KLINGLMÜLLER •

More than 400 attend coaching seminar

This year's coaching seminar of the Austrian FA (ÖFB) was held in Maria Enzersdorf (presentations and panel discussions) and Wiener Neudorf (sports complex/practical exercises) from 23 to 25 January. More than 400 coaches, including some from abroad, attended this three-day event, which attracted prominent names such as Dietmar Constantini (former Austrian national team coach), Frenk Schinkels (SK Austria Kärnten coach), Stanislav Cherchesov (former Spartak Moskva coach), Klaus Lindenberger (LASK Linz coach), Heinz Peischl (former St. Gallen coach), Peter Schöttel, Peter Stöger, Petar Segrt (Georgian technical director), Lars Söndergaard and Alfred Tatar (joint coach of Lokomotiv Moskva). A number of UEFA Pro licence certificates were awarded at the opening of the seminar on the Friday. Recipients included current SV Mattersburg coach Franz Lederer. This was immediately followed by the presentation of several ex-professional players who have received UEFA A licences, for



An audience of more than 400 coaches listened to Karel Brückner and Andreas Herzog.

example former international Dietmar Kühbauer and new Austrian national team goalkeeping coach Franz Wohlfahrt, who was appointed to his new post at the end of January. In addition, the ÖFB's sport director, Willi Ruttensteiner, presented a detailed analysis of EURO 2008, while the association's head coach, Karel Brückner, and assistant coach, Andreas Herzog, participated in a fascinating panel discussion looking back at the last European Championship.

On the Saturday morning, Thomas Janeschitz (director of basic and advanced coach education), Roger Spry (ÖFB fitness coach) and Piet Hamberg (technical director of the Liverpool FC football academy) gave talks entitled "Thoughts on basic and advanced coach education", "Effective football coaching" and "Individual coaching in professional football". In the afternoon, Spry, Hamberg and Ginez Melendez (coach education director of the Spanish Football Association) presented some practical exercises at the Wiener Neudorf sports complex.

On the final day of the seminar, the star guest of the event, Turkey's coach Fatih Terim, spoke about EURO 2008 from the perspective of a participating head coach. ■



AZERBAIJAN

• FIRUZ ABDULLA •

Football and solidarity

The Association of Football Federations of Azerbaijan (AFFA) continues to organise activities aimed at increasing the popularity of football in the country and generating greater interest in the sport among youngsters.

In connection with Azerbaijan's solidarity day on 31 December last year, when the country marked its solidarity with Azerbaijanis the world over, the AFFA launched a new campaign, which actually started on 26 December and lasted into the evening of 31 December, by which time AFFA representatives had visited the streets and yards of Khatai, Nizami, Yasamal, Sabayel and other districts in Baku. Football veterans also joined the campaign. Over the six days, which passed under the motto "Let's play football and be healthy",



The distribution of footballs caused a great deal of excitement.

AFFA executive committee members, football veteran Alakbar Mammadov, and international referee Rustam Rahimov presented footballs to children in the different parts of Baku.

The AFFA delegation also visited secondary schools, boarding schools and a young offenders' institution, handing out balls and sportswear, celebrating Azerbaijani solidarity and wishing the children a happy new year. ■



BELARUS

• YULIA ZENKOVICH •

International Under-17 tournament in Minsk

From 10 to 18 January, Minsk hosted the fifth edition of an international indoor youth tournament that has become a popular tradition and is well known in Belarus and beyond. In spite of the cold winter weather, many young fans came to the football hall to watch some very interesting games. The opening ceremony was a great show of music and greetings from special guests. The tournament was opened by UEFA's general secretary, David Taylor, by means of a video message sent to all the participants and football fans. The president of the Belarus Football Federation, Gennadiy Nevyglas, and the authorities of Minsk also participated in the opening ceremony.

This year, eight teams came to Minsk in the hope of winning the trophy. Four of them (Belarus, Belgium, Finland and Italy) had already made it into the elite round of the European Under-17 Championship. The other four (Latvia, Lithuania, Russia and Ukraine) were determined to prove that their elimination in the qualifying round was just bad luck. For seven of the eight countries, this was not their first time in Minsk. Finland were the only newcomers. Belarus, Belgium, Lithuania and Ukraine were drawn into Group A, while Finland, Italy, Latvia and Russia formed Group B. The group matches were spread across three days. The teams that finished their groups in fourth (Lithuania and Latvia) played for seventh place overall. Lithuania, who came to Minsk with their class of 1993, eventually beat Latvia in a penalty shoot-out. Fifth place was decided in a match between Belgium and Finland, who finished third in their groups. Once more the fans had to endure a penalty shoot-out, which Belgium won thanks to the incredible skills of their keeper, Kaminsky. Belarus and Italy did battle for third place,

which the Azzurrini took in superb style. The stands were full for the final between Ukraine and Russia. The struggle was equal and tense, but in the end it was to be Ukraine's day.

Even though the footballers were young, they played like professionals. Seniors could even learn a thing or two from them, some of whom are clearly destined to make a name for themselves in European football and play for their national A teams. Italy's Simone Sini won the award for best defender; Tomas Kaminsky of Belgium was named best goalkeeper; the best midfielder award went to Alexey Legchilin of Belarus; Filip Budkovskiy of Ukraine was voted best forward; and Nikolay Ivannikov of Russia was crowned player of the tournament.

There is no doubt that this international Under-17 tournament has become a regular and significant fixture in the winter football calendar. It is a place where new stars begin to shine and new friendships are born. The Belarus Football Federation hopes that next year the event will attract more teams and looks forward to seeing participants and fans back in Minsk in January 2010. ■



Belarus and Italy played off for third place.



BELGIUM

• PIERRE CORNEZ •

Axel Witsel wins Golden Shoe

The Golden Shoe, a prize awarded at the end of each calendar year to the best player in the Belgian championship, as voted by the national press and numerous Belgian football personalities, was presented on 21 January.

Everyone had predicted that the winner would be a R. Standard de Liège player and they were proved right. Nobody was sure which player it would be, but in the end Axel Witsel pipped Milan Jovanovic at the post. The young Belgian international won 204 points, four more than his Serbian team-mate.

Marouane Fellaini, who was well ahead after the first round of voting, but who left Standard at the start of the season to join English club Everton, finished in third place,



Axel Witsel shows off the prestigious Golden Shoe.

as well as receiving the trophy for the best Belgian player abroad.

As expected, current Belgian champions Standard featured prominently at the Golden Shoe ceremony, with five of their players in the top six, including Steven Defour (last year's winner) and Dieumerci Mbokani, who came fifth and sixth respectively. RSC Anderlecht's Mbark Boussoufa was the only non-Standard player to break into the top six, finishing in fourth place.

Although all of the above could stake a claim for this highly coveted trophy, Axel Witsel was a more than deserving winner,

having steadily improved as a player since making his first team debut for Standard during the 2006/07 season. This meteoric rise enabled the young midfielder to win his first full international cap in a friendly with Morocco on 26 March 2008, when he made an immediate impression by scoring Belgium's only goal.

At just 20, Axel Witsel, who has been performing superbly in Standard's UEFA Cup run this season, has already won seven full caps and has become one of the linchpins of the national team. He can also already pride himself on an impressive trophy haul since, as well as winning the Belgian championship last season, he won the 2008 Super Cup and was elected Young Professional Footballer of 2008.

This Golden Shoe trophy is certainly a wonderful tribute to Standard's excellent youth development programme, since Axel Witsel is a product of the club's academy, proving once more that Belgium has a breeding ground of young talent that should enable our country to regain its place among the international elite. ■



BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

• FUAD KRVAVAC •

Youth competition in Sarajevo

A festival for young footballers, organised by the "junior champions" football school and sponsored by the FA of Bosnia-Herzegovina, took place in Sarajevo under the slogan: "Stop racism, no nationalism." There were 32 teams of players born in 1996, 1997 and 1998 from Bosnia-Herzegovina and neighbouring Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro. With a wonderful atmosphere throughout the three-day event, the young footballers showed that they could play and practise together and that football had a bright future in this region.

Five hundred extremely talented young players put in a great performance in front of lots of spectators. Zarkovo from Belgrade, Serbia, were the best in the Under-13 category, Omladinac of Split, Croatia, beat the other Under-12s, and in the lowest age category, Under-11, the team from Zagreb, Croatia, came out on top.

The first month of the year was all about youth football. The Medjugorje sports centre once again hosted a winter youth camp, where the head coaches of the Under-17 and Under-19 national teams, Velimir Stojnic and Zoran Bubalo, worked with players who could potentially help them qualify for the 2009/10 European Championships in Liechtenstein (Under-17) and France (Under-19).

Also in Medjugorje, the current Under-19 squad started preparing for the elite round of their European Championship, in the hope of making it to Ukraine for the finals in July. Last autumn, Zoran Bubalo's team,



No to racism and nationalism.

together with Greece, qualified for the elite round from a group that also included Poland and Montenegro. They are playing their elite round matches in Group 6 with England (mini-tournament hosts), Scotland and Slovakia between 27 May and 1 June. ■



BULGARIA

• BORISLAV KONSTANTINOV •

Borislav Mihaylov gets second term as BFU president

At its traditional end of January congress, the Bulgarian Football Union (BFU) this year re-elected its president, Borislav Mihaylov, for a second term. Mr Mihaylov (46) was one of the country's most prominent international players during his professional career as a goalkeeper and he holds the country's record for international caps (102). In addition to being president of the BFU, Mr Mihaylov currently serves as a vice-chairman of the UEFA Referees Committee. Mr Mihaylov was re-elected with 316 votes for, 9 against and 13 ballot papers spoiled. Mr Mihaylov ran unopposed and has been elected for a second four-year term.

After securing the presidency, Mr Mihaylov named the 14 members of his executive committee, which was then approved by the

congress delegates. Nine are returning members, including three of Bulgaria's golden generation that came fourth in the 1994 FIFA World Cup in the USA: Yordan Lechkov, Nasko Sirakov and Emil Kostadinov. Among the five new members of the executive committee are a couple of top-division club owners, Grisha Ganchev (Litex Lovech) and Nikolay Gigov (Lokomotiv Sofia), a top magistrate and some business leaders.

After the congress, the BFU's re-elected president named the new national team coach, Stanimir Stoilov. Stoilov is a 42-year-old ex-footballer who played for Levski Sofia and the Bulgarian national team. Highlights of Stoilov's coaching career so far include taking Levski Sofia to the UEFA Champions League group stage a few years ago. He also had a brief caretaker role with the national side for two EURO 2008 qualifiers against Belarus in 2007. Bulgaria won both matches (2-0 in Minsk, 2-1 in Sofia). Stoilov, also known as Murray to fans from his playing days, is currently in charge of top-division side Litex Lovech. He will continue to manage his club side and take charge of the national team at the same time. ■



CROATIA

• ANTE PAVLOVIC •

Joining forces against violence

The winter school break is the most suitable time to organise camps for all the talented young players involved in the Croatian Football Federation's (HNS) youth activity programme. This year the programme has been extended and the Under-17 national team has also been preparing. We have high hopes for them at the forthcoming European Under-17 Championship elite round mini-tournament in Luxembourg. In the next category up, our famous ex-international goalkeeper and former A team goalkeeping coach Drazen Ladic has again been entrusted with preparing the Under-21 national team for their next European Under-21 Championship qualifiers.

Our general secretary, Zorislav Srebric, has been awarded the Croatian Olympic Committee's most important trophy, the Matija Ljubek lifetime achievement award, in recognition of



the continuity of his work, his diverse activities and, last but not least, his success. This special figure in Croatian football is exemplary in his promotion of fair play. Being a lawyer and senior football coach means he is aware of social and specialist areas of activity. For a number of years he was the Croatian Football Federation's most outstanding amateur official. He was a member of various bodies and committees and served as head coach for different Croatian national teams. In 1994 he took overall charge of all Croatia's national teams and in 1998 was appointed general secretary of the federation. With the full support of the federation's president, Vlatko Markovic, he has improved the operations and functioning of the federation. Currently he is also a member of the UEFA National Team Competitions Committee.

The HNS is appreciated for its implementation of projects assigned by UEFA. The next step is to organise a UEFA Study Group Scheme session for the football associations of Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Armenia. At the UEFA KISS workshop, entitled "Change and Stakeholder Management" and held in

Warsaw, Ivancica Sudac, head of the Croatian Football Federation's international department, presented COMET HNS, the IT system we use to manage competitions and the registration of players.

While most Croatian supporters are praised for the way they cheer their national team and clubs at international competitions, for many years several groups have provoked incidents. This places a financial and sporting burden on our federation and clubs. It is therefore with pleasure that we can announce that the Croatian government has forwarded a proposal to the parliament for urgent and significant changes to the law to prevent violence at sports events. Education of supporters is also being conducted in parallel. In cooperation with the official fan club, Always Faithful, the Croatian Football Federation is organising a seminar on fan culture. ■

The referees attending the course were keen to tap The FA team's knowledge during the classroom-based sessions, which included a mixture of presentations and group discussions. The referees also spent time on the pitch, which provided them with the opportunity to put their training into practice.

The FA returned to South America a week later, this time to Ecuador, to deliver another refereeing workshop and it is due to visit again in the spring.

In March The FA is delivering two workshops in Chile, the first of which centres on its Respect campaign, which aims to stamp out unacceptable behaviour at every level in football. The second course, which runs between 23 March and 3 April, focuses on women's football coaching.

The fifth course of the year will be delivered in April when The FA visits Peru to conduct a five-day coaching seminar.

These courses are part of a memorandum of understanding between The FA and CONMEBOL that was signed in 2002. Since then more than 20 workshops have been delivered on topics including marketing and administration, stadium security and coach development. ■



DENMARK

• STEEN KLINGENBERG •

Women's football on the rise

Danish women and girls have taken football to their hearts. More than 60,000 of them play and football is now the biggest women's sport in Denmark among the under-19s. It is also a big spectator sport, with the majority of women aged 40 and under choosing football as their favourite sport to watch on TV.

This positive growth and interest in women's football demands great efforts from Danish clubs to develop their organisational and management structures. The development of clubs in the top leagues is essential for maintaining and enhancing the high level of the leagues and the national teams.

In August 2007, the Danish FA started a three-year project with the main aim of improving the organisation of women's football clubs. The project involved ten premier league clubs (known as the 3F league in Denmark) and ten first division clubs.

The top women's clubs in Denmark are generally amateur and semi-professional. Likewise, the players are generally amateur, with a few semi-professionals. There are not many foreign female players in Denmark at the moment, but the number has increased in recent years. Also, more and more Danish players go abroad, primarily to play in Sweden, Norway and Germany.

The long-term goal is to professionalise both the clubs and the players. The starting point is to improve the organisation of the clubs to make them better at generating money and other basics such as more media coverage, more sponsors and, very importantly, more spectators. Also their infrastructure, for example stadiums, has to be upgraded in order to attract more spectators.

A project coordinator, working exclusively on these issues, cooperates very

closely with the leaders of the 20 clubs via individual visits, ad hoc projects, seminars for all the clubs, etc.

The main topics at the three seminars in 2008 were media, sponsors and spectators. All the clubs have been participating in the seminars.

Another way of exchanging know-how is through dedicated mailings (news and information emails) sent by the coordinator to the relevant club representatives. The ten premier league clubs have also started networking using a web-based networking tool on the Danish FA's homepage. They use this network to communicate ideas, activities, events, and more.

The Danish FA and the top Danish football clubs agree that to develop women's football in Denmark, one of the most important strategic tools is very close cooperation between the Danish FA and the clubs. ■



ENGLAND

• LUCIA SANCHEZ •

Workshop for referees in Colombia

Premier League referee Chris Foy and an FA team led by the association's regional referees manager, Ray Olivier, visited Colombia at the end of January to deliver a week-long advanced referees workshop to 84 Colombian officials.

Foy and Olivier were accompanied by The FA's referees development officer, Dean Mohareb, to Pereira, approximately 300 km west of the capital, Bogota.

It was the first of five sessions to be delivered this year by The FA to countries within CONMEBOL.

Foy (46) is one of England's most experienced referees, having joined the Football League in 1996 and graduated to the Premier League in 2001.

He has been appointed for this year's League Cup final between Manchester United and Tottenham Hotspur at Wembley Stadium.



A practical session in exotic surroundings.



FRANCE

• YANN PERRIN •

FFF supports league and district association recruitment

Since the 2005/06 season, the French Football Federation (FFF), through the Amateur Football League (LFA), has been giving financial support to leagues and district associations to help them create posts for local grassroots football advisers. Thanks to this amateur football assistance fund, which replaced the investment aid fund, the LFA is now stepping up its support by enabling the leagues and district associations to recruit administrative directors and development officers by means of fixed payments of EUR 15,000 per season (for the 2008/09 and 2009/10 seasons).

The aim is to improve the life of the leagues and district associations and help them improve their structure so that they can ultimately offer the clubs a better service. This is a key objective which the LFA has been pursuing for several seasons now,



In the last three years, 97 local grassroots football advisers have been appointed or kept on.

→ particularly through its league and district association employment assistance programme. Launched in 2005/06, the first part of this programme helped district associations to recruit or continue to employ 97 local grassroots football advisers. Three seasons later, in view of the success of this initiative, the LFA decided to extend the funding available to cover the creation of two types of post: regional or local development officer and district administrative director. "By building on something that was already working, we wanted to move up a gear by granting financial support to cover some of the costs of these two types of post," explained Fernand Duchaussoy, president of the LFA. "These will have to be new posts rather than existing ones that are simply converted, since we have a social role to play." ■



GEORGIA

• LASHA GODUADZE •



Giorgi Merebashvili voted player of the year

In an opinion poll conducted by the World Sport newspaper, Giorgi Merebashvili, one of Dinamo Tbilisi's star players, was voted Georgia's footballer of the year, thereby retaining the title he had won last year for the first time.

Merebashvili received 1,312 votes (41.7%). In second place was the WIT Georgia midfielder Irakli Klimiashvili with 1,153 votes (36.6%), followed by David Siradze (PFC Spartak Nalchik) in third place with 345 votes (10.9%).

Merebashvili, who has made three appearances so far for the senior Georgian national team, was also named player of the year by the Sarbieli newspaper and the professional football league.

"I am pleased to start the year on this high note. Every achievement is extremely important for me. I'll do my best to win even more in the future, to fulfil the hopes of the supporters and professionals," he said.

World Sport conducted its first footballer of the year poll in 2006, when it was won by Levan Tsikitishvili. ■



GERMANY

• NIELS BARNHOFER •

Aiming to break European attendance record

A new European record is in the offing. More spectators than ever seen before at a women's football match in Europe are expected to flock to the match between Germany and Brazil on 22 April at the Commerzbank Arena in Frankfurt.

This is the lofty ambition that the organisers have set themselves. Wolfgang Niersbach, general secretary of the German FA (DFB), said: "I think we are offering our fans a very attractive match and we are naturally hoping that this will be reflected in the attendance figures. We want to set a new European record for women's football." The Commerzbank Arena has a capacity of 52,300.

According to UEFA's website, the current record stands at 29,092, which was achieved at the opening match of the UEFA Women's EURO 2005 final round on 5 June between England and Finland at the City of Man-

chester Stadium. At club level, 1. FFC Frankfurt hold the European record. The top German club attracted a crowd of 27,640 for the return leg of the UEFA Women's Cup final on 24 May 2008 at the Commerzbank Arena, thereby breaking the record that had been achieved only a couple of weeks earlier, on 5 May, at the FA Women's Cup final in England between Arsenal LFC and Leeds United, which drew a crowd of 24,582.

To date, the best attendance figure for a German women's national team match was achieved back on 2 July 1989, for the European Women's Championship final between Germany and Norway in Osnabrück, when 22,000 lucky fans watched from inside the stadium while many more were forced to watch outside the gates because the match was a sell-out and there were no more tickets to be had. Demand was also high for the match on 22 February 2006 between Germany and China, when 20,000 supporters filled the Homburg Waldstadion.

For the time being, the world record for a women's football match is more than safe. It was set at the Women's World Cup final in 1999, when a crowd of 90,185 watched the USA play China at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, California. ■



HUNGARY

• MARTON DINNYÉS •

Security to serve the fans

The Hungarian FA (MLSZ) recently organised a large security meeting at its headquarters in Budapest. Participants included the head of the Hungarian national police, the local government secretary, the ministry of justice secretary and the security chiefs of the Hungarian football clubs and local police forces.

"It shows a commanding presence by the FA that they are not waiting for action by the government or the police but they are taking responsibility for improving security in the stadiums themselves," said József Bencze, Hungary's national police chief.

The meeting in the middle of January was a new step in a process the MLSZ launched a few years ago, with a view to reducing all kinds of violence in Hungary's football stadiums.

"Our aim is simply to serve our fans, to provide them with a peaceful and friendly atmosphere in the stands," said the president of the MLSZ, István Kisteleki, who led the meeting. "The number of spectators at national team matches was up 30% last year and there was no significant violence. To maintain this standard all parties must think and work together."

The president of the Hungarian FA also said that the government and the city councils must understand their responsibility for improving facilities.

"The fans deserve better stadiums and sports centres, but it would also be much easier for the police and the stewards to do their jobs in modern arenas," he added. ■



The security officers in front of the headquarters of the MLSZ.



ISRAEL

• NIMROD SUZIN •

Children's football camp

While Israel was waging military operations in the south, the Israel Football Association (IFA) arranged a three-day camp for about 100 children, aged 13 to 15, from various children's and youth teams from the affected area.

On the first day of the camp the young footballers participated in a mini-tournament. They were joined by national team coaches, who served as referees for the matches and coached the youngsters. The best players in this tournament were awarded signed footballs by Avi Luzon, chairman of the IFA.

The second day's activities included a FIFA Soccer 09 PlayStation tournament, involving players from the senior and U21 national teams, TV stars and other celebrities from the world of entertainment.



Camps for young footballers from the regions affected by the military operations.

Liran Shtrauber, Itay Shechter and Yoav Ziv of the senior team joined Under-21 players Almog Cohen, Snir Gueta, Dela Yampolsky, Orel Dgani and Dudu Biton. They competed against the camp participants on the PlayStation, signed autographs and had countless photos taken with the children.

The IFA fully funded the hotel rooms, meals and transport involved.

The IFA also offered the teams from the south the opportunity to use the training facilities of Israel's national teams, as well as offering them transport to and from football matches all over the country. ■



KAZAKHSTAN

• ALEXANDR KEPLIN •

New head coach for the national team

On 30 January, a press conference was held in Almaty to introduce the new head coach of the Kazakhstan national team, Bernd Storck, a 46-year-old German. Until now Storck has been in charge of FC Alma-Ata and, since July last year, the Kazakhstan Under-21 team, who played two qualifiers for the 2009 European Under-21 Championship under his leadership. They beat Poland 3-0 in the first, but then lost 2-1 at home to Spain. Storck also took FC Alma-Ata to the final of the 2008 Kazakhstan



Bernd Storck and the general secretary, Sayan Khamitzhonov.

Cup. Since October 2008, he has also been acting head coach of the national team after ex-coach Arno Paajpers resigned. In this caretaker capacity, Storck was in charge of the national team for its 2010 World Cup qualifier against England at Wembley (5-1).

As a player, Storck played for VfL Bochum 1848 and BV Borussia Dortmund, appearing in a total of 171 Bundesliga matches. He then worked as assistant coach for Borussia, VfB Stuttgart, Hertha BSC, VfL Wolfsburg, and also FK Partizan of Belgrade, Serbia.

"First of all, I would like to thank the federation for its confidence in me. This is a great honour for me, and I am very proud of the opportunity I have been offered to create an efficient team. I know it will not be easy, but I hope we will succeed. I want to achieve much more than I did with the Under-21 team and the national A team in England. My aim is to create the optimal combination of young and experienced football players in the team. 2009 will be the time for us to gain the necessary experience. At this stage, the results are not very important to me. The aim is to form a team that plays good football," Bernd Storck said.

■ The traditional CIS and Baltic States Champions Cup was held in Moscow from 17 to 25 January. Kazakhstan was represented for the fourth time by FK Aktobe, who lost no matches and finished runners-up, having finally yielded to Moldova's FC Sheriff in a penalty shootout.

■ Futbolnye Vesti, the new, official publication of the Football Federation of Kazakhstan (FFK), was unveiled in Almaty on 30 January. The magazine will be published every fortnight.

"On the threshold of the new football season, our association is launching a new project," the FFK's general secretary, Sayan Khamitzhonov, said. *"The first issue of our official magazine, Futbolnye Vesti, has been released. In this publication we wish to give objective coverage of our operations and extensive activities, competitions, national representative teams and top footballers. The main objectives of the magazine concept are to increase the popularity of domestic football and promote a healthy lifestyle. The magazine is for professionals and the football fan community."* ■



LATVIA

• MARTINS HARTMANIS •

Latvia brings in complete management system

The Latvian Football Federation (LFF) has signed a deal with an American company to implement a new IT project – a complete federation management system (FMS). It is basically a database management program, designed with the needs of football administration in mind. At present, the program can be used for player registrations (including youth), and to manage referee appoint-

ments, it has a competition department module and can be used by the disciplinary committee. The LFF is starting with these basic challenges, as a full implementation of the whole system and all FMS modules could be too much all at once.

Next season, the system will be tested on the top Latvian championship, the LMT Virsliga 2009, in the hope of later extending it to the other divisions (men's, women's and youth). In this way, the LFF hopes to get a clear view of Latvian footballers, statistics, players' movements and careers from the age of eight and other information that could be useful in future.



The new home of the Latvian Football Federation.

"We are establishing the project with a clear understanding that most of the benefits will be felt in the future. It could take some time for our employees to get used to the new environment and computers, new electronic information flows and computerised documents. But we've moved into our new office at the Olympic sports centre in Riga and this is the best time to improve our work and make changes. And I am sure that it is for the best," said Janis Mezeckis, general secretary of the LFF.

In other news, for the first time in LFF history, mid-March marks the beginning of the new LMT Virsliga. The first matchday is on 14 March, the earliest the championship has ever started. ■



MALTA

• ALEX VELLA •

Useful activities for coaches and administrators

Maltese coaches and club administrators have started a busy period of activity geared towards improving their contribution to the game in their respective sectors.

As part of a UEFA initiative intended to increase the knowledge of coaches through an information-sharing exercise, three groups of Maltese coaches recently visited Belgium, Wales and England. These visits also helped coaches from Malta and elsewhere to familiarise themselves thoroughly with technical aspects of the game.

In light of UEFA's standards on the proper administration of football at all levels, the Malta FA has also maintained the tradition it initiated a few years ago of organising its own courses for club administrators.

This season has been a busy one in this respect for club officials. The importance of having a professional approach to ad-



A course for administrators.

→ ministrative matters can never be overestimated and the courses that are currently being held are bound to have the desired effect.

The positive response to these activities from the majority of clubs in Malta is an encouraging sign of the willingness of club officials in the country to improve the quality of their contribution to the game. ■



MOLDOVA

• VICTOR DAGHI •

Sheriff take the trophy

FC Sheriff of Tiraspol, Moldova, started 2009 by winning the 17th CIS and Baltic States Champions Cup, which took place from 17 to 25 January in Moscow. It is only the second time in the history of this friendly competition, which brings together the champions of the former Soviet republics, that a Moldovan team has finished on top (the first being in 2003). The FIFA president, Joseph S. Blatter, and UEFA's president, Michel Platini, attended the tournament and met the presidents and general secretaries of the 16 participating national associations.

The Moldovan champions started the tournament with a comfortable 4-0 win against Shakhtar of Ukraine. After that Sheriff beat Regar-Tadaz of Tajikistan (2-1) and drew 0-0 with Levadia (Estonia) to finish top of Group C. In the quarter and semi-finals, both of which went to penalties, Sheriff beat Ventspils (Latvia) 5-4 and Pakhtakor (Uzbekistan) 4-3. In the final against Aktobe of Kazakhstan, Sheriff won 5-4 after penalties. The winner's trophy was presented to the captain, Vazha Tarkhnishvili, by Vitaly Mutko, president of the Football Union of Russia.

The tournament has been won by Spartak Moskva of Russia (6 times), Dynamo Kyiv of Ukraine (4), FC Sheriff of Moldova (2), Dinamo Tbilisi of Georgia, Lokomotiv Moskva of Russia, Neftchi Baku of Azerbaijan, Pakhtakor Tashkent of Uzbekistan and Khazar Lankaran of Azerbaijan. ■



Another trophy for FC Sheriff.



NETHERLANDS

• ROB DE LEEDE •

Bert van Marwijk underlines need for initiative

The Dutch national team coach, Bert van Marwijk, was the most renowned speaker at the 13th national coaching day in Zeist on 28 January. Every year youth coaches working at the highest national level come together to address a general topic and work on related subjects in smaller groups. At this year's session, Van Marwijk reminisced about his days as a schoolboy, when he used to play football in the streets for hours on end. There were no parents to watch, no coaches present and no spectators to cheer them on. Still, Van Marwijk and his friends enjoyed themselves and learned how to play the game.

"Today," he said, "children have little to worry about. When they arrive at the clubs there is a trained coach, a well prepared



Bert van Marwijk.

pitch, balls, bibs and so on. The coach signals when the training is over and the players can go home. There is very little for them to think about." Van Marwijk suggested that coaches occasionally leave the initiative up to the players. "Make sure that everyone is there, provide the balls and kit and just leave. The leading figures in the group will stand up and organise something. That will tell you a lot about the characters of the players."

In his words of welcome, Foppe de Haan, twice European Under-21 champion, talked about different aspects that have become part of the profession of the youth coach. After the introductory speeches, all 300 youth coaches attended workshops on six different subjects.

Aad de Mos, a successful Dutch coach who has worked in several countries, led a workshop on scouting and the recognition of talent. Other workshops focused on the rules of the game in relation to youth development and the life of a young professional. Among the participants were 30 representatives of the national associations of Albania, Greece and Slovakia who were in the Netherlands as part of the UEFA Study Group Scheme.

Overall, the 300 youth coaches spent a useful day together and the Dutch Football Association is optimistic about retaining its leading position in the development of players and coaches and preparing them to perform at top level. ■



NORTHERN IRELAND

• SPIKE HILL AND GEOFF WILSON •

The role of the analysts

Most countries and clubs have them but in different guises, from performance analyst to video guy. A small group of like-minded professionals recently got together in Northern Ireland to exchange information and ideas on this ever growing area. Organised by resource manager Spike Hill, team analysts from Belgium, Netherlands, Scotland, Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland were joined by representatives of Rangers FC.

Nigel Worthington, a manager who was in attendance both days, said: "For me, to be invited was a great opportunity not only to listen, but to learn. What was unique about the whole experience was the fact that everyone who attended was very open and honest in sharing their experiences."

Before the major debates began, each gave a presentation on the work that they did. It was apparent that, although their job titles were different, their core roles were very similar: to film, analyse and give feedback on the performance of teams. We chose to bring countries together and share experiences, much as the UEFA Technical Study Groups do, as it is very clear that we need to get away from being viewed as "the video guy". The role of each of the analysts is to provide feedback on performance to the coaching staff and players. This is a profession, and one that is now recognised throughout sport as being an integral part of any serious coaching programme.

In 2005 the Irish FA undertook a review of its critical business systems and processes. The results of this highlighted a number of inefficiencies and risks to the business. The immediate need was for a robust player registration system to replace the paper-based process. After a review of its operating structure, the association found that many departments used similar paper-based processes and maintained separate databases with little interdepartmental data transfer. The Irish FA consequently searched the marketplace for an all encompassing football management system. FSI (First Sports International) was selected largely due to the pedigree of its existing clients, its market-specific expertise and the extensive, robust nature of its software.

The Irish FA now operates an integrated football software solution which touches all areas of the business. Data is maintained by all departments using a single database. This has allowed for focused and productive marketing strategies, in-house sales and distribution of tickets, maximised revenue and a complete picture of each member's involvement in the Irish FA at all levels. ■



Analysts are now recognised as being an integral part of any serious coaching programme.



NORWAY

• YNGVE HAAVIK •

Association covers flight expenses to promote development of the game

The Football Association of Norway (NFF) is covering the flight expenses of the clubs in its second women's division and third highest men's.

For many years, long travel distances for many of the clubs in these two divisions have placed a heavy burden on the clubs' budgets.

A new partnership agreement between the NFF and Scandinavian Airlines for the next four years has made it possible for the NFF to cover the cost of clubs' flights to away games. Each club pays a participant's fee and a travel fee; all other flight costs are covered.

The level below the Tippeligaen and Adeccoligaen (for men) and Toppserien (for women) is an important platform for young players' development and the quality of the training grounds and the pitches is of vital importance both for the top clubs and the national teams.

With this new model for travel support, the clubs can focus more on developing the game. In addition, the NFF has renewed its partnership agreement with the national lottery in Norway – Norsk Tipping – which also provides for a yearly payment to the clubs in question. ■



REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

• FRAN WHEARTY •

FAI continues to invest in football development officers throughout Ireland

Since the first three co-funded football development officers were appointed in Ireland in November 2005 in conjunction with Dublin city council and Fingal county council in the Dublin area, the Football Association of Ireland (FAI) has rolled out the programme across the country in partnership with local authorities. At present there are 52 officers already in place in 36 local authority areas.

The latest appointments for Limerick city were made in conjunction with the Limerick regeneration agencies. The four development officers – Barbara Bermingham, Pat Halpin, Tommy Barrett and Michael McCarthy – will all work with the four regeneration areas in the city, using sport, and in particular football, to promote social inclusion in the affected areas.

The FAI development officers will play a vital role within the Limerick community. They will provide individuals, including children, with an opportunity to meet and develop their social skills, and promote active citizenship by encouraging volunteering and community involvement. They will also provide new immigrants coming into



Elaine O'Connor, project manager, introduces the four new football development officers from Limerick.

the county with a good opportunity to integrate into their new communities.

The officers will benefit Limerick city by ensuring the FAI's development plan is implemented, promoting social inclusion through football and delivering football development programmes in regeneration areas. ■



SWITZERLAND

• PIERRE BENOIT •

Kids Festivals to continue

The Kids Festivals project that was successfully launched two years ago by the Swiss Football Association (SFV) will be continued over the next four years, thanks in no small part to the support of sponsors PUMA and Swiss Life. A total of 63 clubs have applied to hold the ten Kids Festivals that will be organised each year in 2009 and 2010. This number demonstrates the high level of interest among the clubs.

A total of 16 teams in the Under-16 and Under-13 categories will be able to take part on each tournament day (either Saturday or Sunday), with no more than two teams per club eligible to play in each age category.

Although the main focus at the Kids Festivals is on fun and enjoyment, these events also play an important role in the SFV's efforts to develop up-and-coming players by helping to spread the SFV's football philosophy at grassroots level. Thanks to a detailed manual and training provided by the SFV, the clubs are taught how to organise their own children's football events in the future. ■



The children's programme is all about having a good time.



TURKEY

• TÜRKER TOZAR •

Antalya hosts mid-season seminars

It has become customary for Antalya to play host to hundreds of football clubs from across Europe that want the best possible mid-season preparations in the mild climate of the Turkish city.

Antalya, which is generally regarded as the capital of football in January/February, also hosted a series of football-related seminars at the start of the new year.

The first seminar, entitled Çözümüne Doğru II ("Through The Solution II") and held on 3/4 January, was the second part of an initiative created by Turkish Football Federation and the country's general directorate of security to prevent violence and promote fair play in football. Hundreds of high-level police officers and club representatives participated in the seminar, where they discussed possible improvements with presentations and working groups. A final statement was issued, which included advice to all parties involved in Turkish football.



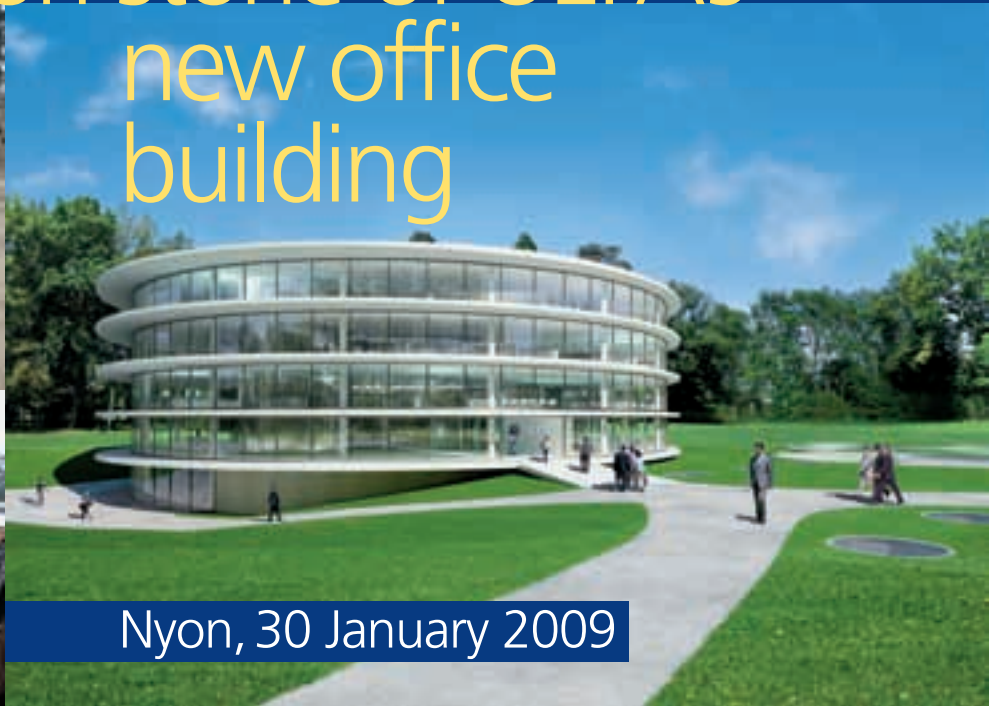
A top-level coaching congress.

The second and arguably most popular event was the International coaching development congress held on 12/13 January and attended by Turkey's coach Fatih Terim, England coach Fabio Capello and Fenerbahçe coach Luis Aragonés. All coaches active in Turkey were obliged to participate in order to get their licences renewed for next year.

Terim, Capello and Aragonés contributed to a technical analysis of EURO 2008 and gave their views on the prestigious competition. Terim and Aragonés also shared their own experiences of EURO 2008 and answered questions from participants from Turkey and elsewhere.

The final new year seminar brought together the Turkish FA's referees committee and its match delegates and referee observers committee, as well as elite referees, coaches and club presidents. The main purpose of this event was to review the first half of the season in refereeing terms, assess efforts to minimise errors and create a platform for discussion between Turkey's referees and clubs. There were also participants from abroad, such as Jaap Uilenberg, member of the UEFA Referees Committee, and Jorn-West Larsen, a UEFA referee observer responsible for helping Turkey become a party to the UEFA Convention on Referee Education and Organisation. ■

Laying of the foundation stone of UEFA's new office building



Nyon, 30 January 2009



Photos: UEFA-@woods.ch

Communications

Birthdays – Calendar

Birthdays

Match delegates Dusan Maravic (Serbia) and Alexis Ponnet (Belgium) celebrate their 70th birthdays on 7 and 9 March respectively. Member of the Circle of former UEFA committee members Wilfried Straub (Germany) reaches the same landmark on 26 March. Hendrik Kesler (Netherlands), member of the Legal Committee, turns 60 on 9 March, as do match delegate Jean-François Crucke (Belgium) on 12 March and doping control officer Franz Krösslhuber (Austria) on 23 March. Meanwhile, Damir Vrbancic (Croatia), member of the Club Competitions Committee, is 50 on 2 March. Birthday greetings also go out this month to:

- Benny Jacobsen (Denmark, 1.3)
- Sergey Tatulyan (Ukraine, 1.3)
- Gerhard Mayer-Vorfelder (Germany, 3.3)
- Zbigniew Boniek (Poland, 3.3)
- Dragan Stojkovic (Serbia, 3.3)
- Esa Antero Palsi (Finland, 4.3)
- Boris Durlen (Croatia, 6.3)
- Liana Melania Stoicescu (Romania, 6.3)
- Pedro Maria Aurtencheche Vinegra (Spain, 7.3)
- Kenneth Scott (Scotland, 7.3)
- Tomás Gea (Andorra, 7.3)
- Josep Lluís Vilaseca Guasch (Spain, 8.3)
- Giorgio Crescentini (San Marino, 8.3)
- Juraj Obložinský (Slovakia, 8.3)
- Vladimir Aleshin (Russia, 9.3)
- Ruben Hayrapetyan (Armenia, 9.3)
- Joseph S. Blatter (Switzerland, 10.3)
- Mateo Beusan (Croatia, 10.3)
- Lucien Kayser (Luxembourg, 11.3)
- Olga Zhukovska (Ukraine, 11.3)
- Vlastibor Minarovec (Slovakia, 13.3)
- Thomas Partl (Austria, 13.3)
- Ivan Curkovic (Serbia, 15.3)
- Markus Merk (Germany, 15.3)
- Michel Verschueren (Belgium, 17.3)
- Liutauras Varanavicius (Lithuania, 17.3)
- Christakis Skapoullis (Cyprus, 18.3)
- Marcello Nicchi (Italy, 18.3)
- Andreas Georgiou (Cyprus, 18.3)
- Marina Tashchyan (Armenia, 18.3)
- Steve Williams (England, 19.3)
- Luigi Agnolin (Italy, 21.3)
- Antal Dunai (Hungary, 21.3)
- Jim Boyce (Northern Ireland, 21.3)
- Chris Georghiadis (Cyprus, 22.3)
- Michail Kassabov (Bulgaria, 22.3)
- Andrea Lastrucci (Italy, 23.3)
- Outi Saarinen (Finland, 23.3)

- Fernando Ruiz Hierro (Spain, 23.3)
- Daniel Prodan (Romania, 23.3)
- Maurizio Laudì (Italy, 24.3)
- Kemal Kapulluoğlu (Turkey, 26.3)
- Konstantin Vikhrov (Ukraine, 27.3)
- John McClelland (Scotland, 27.3)
- Anton Ondrus (Slovakia, 27.3)
- Joseph Gauci (Malta, 27.3)
- José Antonio Casajus (Spain, 27.3)
- Armen Minasyan (Armenia, 27.3)
- Pavel Cebanu (Moldova, 28.3)
- Mario van der Ende (Netherlands, 28.3)
- Edgar Obertüfer (Switzerland, 29.8)
- Ian Beasley (England, 29.3)
- Alan Snoddy (Northern Ireland, 29.3)
- Bernadette Constantine (France, 29.3)
- Juan V. Dura (Spain, 29.3)
- Miriam Malone (Republic of Ireland, 29.3)
- William Hugh Wilson (Scotland, 30.3)

Forthcoming events

Events

3/4.3.2009, Warsaw

Unite Against Racism Conference

9.3.2009, Nyon

Professional Football Strategy Council

16-20.3.2009, Hamburg

UEFA Grassroots Workshop

17.3.2009, Nyon

Draw for the 2009-11 European qualifying competition for the Women's World Cup

20.3.2009, Nyon

Draws for the quarter-finals and semi-finals of the UEFA Champions League and UEFA Cup

23/24.3.2009, Copenhagen

Executive Committee

25.3.2009, Copenhagen

Ordinary UEFA Congress

31.3.2009, Nyon

Anti-Doping Panel

Competitions

10/11.3.2009

UEFA Champions League: round of 16 (return legs)

12.3.2009

UEFA Cup: round of 16 (first legs)

18/19.3.2009

UEFA Cup: round of 16 (return legs)

Match agents

Three new UEFA match agent licences have been granted:

Siegmar Kreisern

Waidach 14, 6345 Kössen, Austria
Tel./Fax: +43 5375 6711, Mob: +43 650 6711 111
siegmar_kreisern@gmx.at

Timucin Egirtmen

Metternicher Strasse 1, 50969 Cologne, Germany
Mob: +49 1786 721 953
Timucin_Egirtmen@web.de

Serdar Akaydin

aQuasun Tourism Management
Zerdalilik Mah. 1385 Sokak No. 20/1-4
07100 Antalya, Turkey
Tel.: +90 242 322 61 76, Fax: +90 242 322 61 80
aquasun@aquasun.com

New publications

DAS LEXIKON DER FUSSBALL IRRTÜMER Über die Flügel zum Erfolg

Football abounds in sayings that are supposed to bring success, of the type "You don't change a winning team" or "You've got to avoid careless mistakes". But is there really any truth in these statements, so often heard from coaches, players and the media? To find out, Roland Loy, author of numerous football-related research studies, analysed more than 3,000 matches. The result of his observations, conveyed with a great deal of humour, shows that such assertions do not always guarantee results. (www.cbertelsmann.de)

QUE VAUT LE SPORT FRANÇAIS EN 2008 FACE A L'EUROPE?

The annual Legisport study on sport and nationalities produced by the law firm of Serge and Michel Pautot starts by presenting the results of French national teams in the main international competitions, those of French clubs in European competitions, and the domination of foreign sportsmen and women in the major French competitions. It then shows the percentage of foreign players in the French championships. The second part of the study focuses on European football: its power, the cosmopolitan nature of clubs, and the number and importance of foreign players. It also addresses questions such as "Should quotas on foreign players be reintroduced?" and "Does the construction of Europe favour the influx of foreign players?" (www.legisport.com).

Obituary

Pablo Porta Bussoms, president of the Spanish Football Federation from 1975 to 1984, died on 27 January aged 85. From 1976 to 1992, he was a European member of the FIFA Executive Committee, while at UEFA level, as well as being a match delegate, he served on the European Football Championship Organising Committee from 1986 to 1990, having previously been a member of the Youth Football Committee from 1974 to 1976 and of the UEFA Study Committee on Football during a Crisis Period from 1984 to 1986. He was also a member of the circle of former UEFA committee members.

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UEFA
Route de Genève 46
CH-1260 Nyon
Switzerland
Phone +41 848 00 27 27
Fax +41 848 01 27 27
uefa.com

Union des associations
européennes de football

