



News

from member associations

Peter Persidis, Andreas Herzog and Josef Hickersberger watched nearly all the group matches involving European teams and by the final they had attended 40 matches in person altogether.

Barbara Kontner

ARMENIA



Wish a win for your school team

Coca-Cola and the Football Federation of Armenia (FFA) have organised the first inter-school tournament in Yerevan involving 12 schools. Over 160 boys and girls took part. The 16 teams were divided into four groups. Coca-Cola provided the balls and kit. Professional referees took charge of the tough and interesting matches. The FFA, the organisers and the local authorities thought it was very important to ensure that the tournament was a festival of football, so it was played on mini-pitches constructed with the aid of UEFA's mini-pitch programme. The final match was played on 9 June – the same day as the World Cup opening match – at the Pyunik stadium, home of the Armenian champions of the same name.



The proud winners of the tournament show their elation.

The tournament motto was "Wish a win for your school team". The young participants will remember the event for a long time, especially those that went away as winners.

Arayik Manukyan

AUSTRIA



Observation trip to Germany

During the World Cup in Germany, the Austrian FA sent a delegation to Germany from 8 to 26 June to witness such a massive event at first sight. Two



Gerhard Mayer-Vorfelder (centre, with Friedrich Stickler, president of the Austrian FA on his right) receives one of Austria's highest sporting distinctions.

years ahead of EURO 2008, which Austria is co-hosting with Switzerland, the Austrians were able to see for themselves the enthusiasm that such a tournament stirs up, enthusiasm and enjoyment that visitors to EURO 2008 should also experience in the two host countries.

The World Cup final round was a unique chance for the Austrian FA to show the host city authorities, politicians and colleagues what an incredible opportunity the staging of EURO 2008 represents for Austria and Switzerland.

As well as gaining experience, the delegation also attended matches in Munich, Stuttgart and Nuremberg, and, of course, were also able to convey their enthusiasm and eager anticipation about hosting the next European Championship final round.

On the day of the opening World Cup match, Gerhard Mayer-Vorfelder, president of the German FA, received one of the highest Austrian honours that can be awarded in sport from the state secretary for sports, Karl Schweitzer, at a reception hosted by the Austrian FA at Schloss Aufhausen. This was the Austrian FA and Austria's way of thanking Gerhard Mayer-Vorfelder for the personal and friendly cooperation with which he has always assisted the Austrian FA.

The sports department of the Austrian FA, headed by national coach Josef Hickersberger, was also busy at the World Cup. Willi Ruttensteiner,

BELGIUM



New president

24 June 2006 was an important date in the history of Belgian football as it was the day that the Belgian FA (URBSFA) elected a new president, following the announcement made by Jan Peeters a while ago that he wished to step down from the top office.

The many people present at the association's headquarters on election day were eager to know who was going to take over at the helm. However, they had to bide their time as a general meeting – the last with Jan Peeters in the chair – preceded the elections that were so eagerly awaited by the executive committee and the announcement of the new president of the association.

Apart from its usual business, the general meeting was also an opportunity for various figures, including Jacques Rogge, president of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), to look back at the outgoing URBSFA president's term in office and to praise his merits. In a crowning accolade, an emotional but composed Jan Peeters received the Great Order of Baron Lavel-eye, the highest award of the URBSFA.

Once the business of the general meeting was out of the way, the executive committee embarked on the process of electing the association's new president. The winning candidate was François De Keersmaecker. It is a fitting promotion for this 48-year-old lawyer from Mechelen who has been a member of the association for many



François De Keersmaecker is the new president of the Belgian FA.



years and who has already held important offices within the association for a long time, as well as enjoying the support of the amateur football sector. His enthusiasm was visible on his face, and his desire to modernise the association and to simplify the way it is run is more than heartening.

In other elections, Roger Vanden Stock, Jean-Pierre Notelteurs, David Delférière and Michel Preud'homme become vice-presidents, Antoine Vanhove is the new chairman of the technical committee, and Jean-Pierre Notelteurs takes charge of the futsal committee, replacing Pierre Schiepers, who had decided to step down from the executive committee.

We are confident that Belgian football as a whole will benefit from this new setup and continue to progress.

Pierre Cornez

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA



New season begins

The new Bosnia and Herzegovina premier league championship kicks off on 5 August. All the teams started their preparations for the new season at the end of June.



Amar Osim is one of the first holders of the Pro coaching licence in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

FK Zeljeznicar, NK Orasje and NK Posusje have hired new coaches, in the persons of Nenad Starovlah, Anton Josipovic, and Dragan Jovic respectively, and if past experience is anything to go by, there could be a few more changes by the time the new season starts.

NK Zrinjski were the first Bosnian team to get going in UEFA competition and they made it through to the second round of the UEFA Intertoto Cup, eliminating Marsaxlokk from Malta in the

first round, who they defeated 3-0 in the first leg in Mostar and achieved a 1-1 draw against in Malta. In the second round, NK Zrinjski came up against Maccabi Petach Tikva from Israel.

NK Siroki Brijeg contested the first preliminary round of the UEFA Champions League against FC Shakhtyor Soligorski from Belarus, while FK Sarajevo and NK Orasje played Ranger's from Andorra and NK Domzale from Slovenia respectively in the first preliminary round of the UEFA Cup.

The Bosnia and Herzegovina women's team played their last World Cup qualifying match against Malta, drawing 1-1, and finishing sixth in the group.

All the domestic junior, youth and women's competitions have finished. The NK Siroki Brijeg junior team followed their seniors and won the Bosnia and Herzegovina championship, beating their counterparts from NK Jedinstvo from Bihac 2-0 at the Pecara stadium in Siroki Brijeg. Third place went to NK Modrica Maxima, who beat NK Zrinjski 4-1.

The finals of the youth competition took place in Bijeljina. The winners in this category were FK Sarajevo, who beat FK Borac from Banja Luka 7-6 in a penalty shoot-out. The score at the end of regular time was 2-2. In the match for third place, FK Sloboda performed better than NK Zrinjski and secured a 3-2 win.

The women's finals were held in Travnik. For unknown reasons, ZFK Borac from Banja Luka did not show up, so the players of SFK 2000 from Sarajevo defended their title and beat ZNK Iris from Zenica 6-0.

At the training centre of the Football Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the first intake of trainee coaches completed the fourth term of the UEFA Pro licence programme, and sat their final exams. Subsequently, the first coaches to hold the Pro licence are Abdulah Ibrakovic, Ratko Ninkovic, Dragan Jovic, Ivo Knezevic, Husnija Arapovic and Amar Osim.

In a last friendly match before the beginning of the EURO 2008 qualifiers, the national team of Bosnia and Herzegovina will play France at the Asim Ferhatovic Hase Olympic stadium in Sarajevo on 16 August.

In Cetinje and Bar, the junior teams of Montenegro and of Bosnia and Herzegovina played the first inter-

national matches in the now independent country of Montenegro. In Cetinje, the result was 1-1, while the match in Bar ended goalless.

Fuad Krvavac

CROATIA



Sports act passed

Summer is always a busy time, with lots of different competitions going on, particularly in the youth sector. We are proud to have staged the 54th annual "Kvarnerska rivijera" youth tournament, the second oldest of its kind in Europe. This year the winners were the host team, NK Rijeka. We are also very happy that numerous other youth tournaments are being organised covering the U-10 to U-14 categories and that some of them are becoming international. It is interesting to follow the talent and performance of our boys and to compare them with the visiting teams.

This year we paid special attention to the clubs founded by Croats outside of the homeland. Everywhere where larger group of Croats emigrated, they founded football clubs. In some countries, especially overseas, they contributed greatly to the development of football. One of the most successful clubs – FC NK Metros-Croatia Toronto – came to Croatia to celebrate their 50th



FC Croatia Toronto visit the Croatian FA's offices in Zagreb.