

THE WEEKLY

FIFA

Football Association – Since 1904

COSTA RICA
REVIVAL IN
CENTRAL AMERICA

SEPP BLATTER
THE U-20 WOMEN'S
WORLD CUP BEGINS

CHINA
A DECADE OF
IMPROVEMENT

**TALES OF
SUMMER**

6

European tales of summer

The second half of the European summer is underway, heralding the approach of another football season across the continent. France's Ligue 1 kicks off on 8 August, with rising star James Rodriguez due to make his debut for Real Madrid in Spain two weeks later.

Our seven-page summer report samples the atmosphere in three major Mediterranean football nations.

19

Sepp Blatter

Ahead of the start of the U-20 Women's World Cup on Tuesday, the FIFA President emphasises the importance of both this tournament and women's football as a whole: "We will experience the future of football in Canada."

28

Pakistan

German Holger Obermann has worked in football on four different continents, and over the next four weeks we will be publishing extracts from his memoirs. This week, Obermann details his tireless work in Pakistan's crisis-hit areas.

30

The World Cup in Russia

"Football is part of Russia's soul," says 2018 World Cup CEO Alexey Sorokin in an interview about enthusiasm, money and football stadiums.



Tales of summer

Andrea Pirlo takes a dip: Our cover shows the Juventus talisman on holiday in Ibiza.

Dukas/Xposure



The FIFA Weekly Magazine App

The FIFA Weekly, FIFA's magazine, is available in four languages as an e-Magazine and on your tablet every Friday.



North and Central America

35 members
www.concacaf.com



South America

10 members
www.conmebol.com



23

Costa Rica

The euphoria sparked by this summer's World Cup continues in the small Central American nation.

37

Huib Stevens

A match on the evening of 11 September 2001 left its mark on the Dutch coach's professional life.



FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup

5 – 24 August 2014, Canada



Youth Olympic Football Tournaments

14 – 27 August 2014, Nanjing



Europe
54 members
www.uefa.com



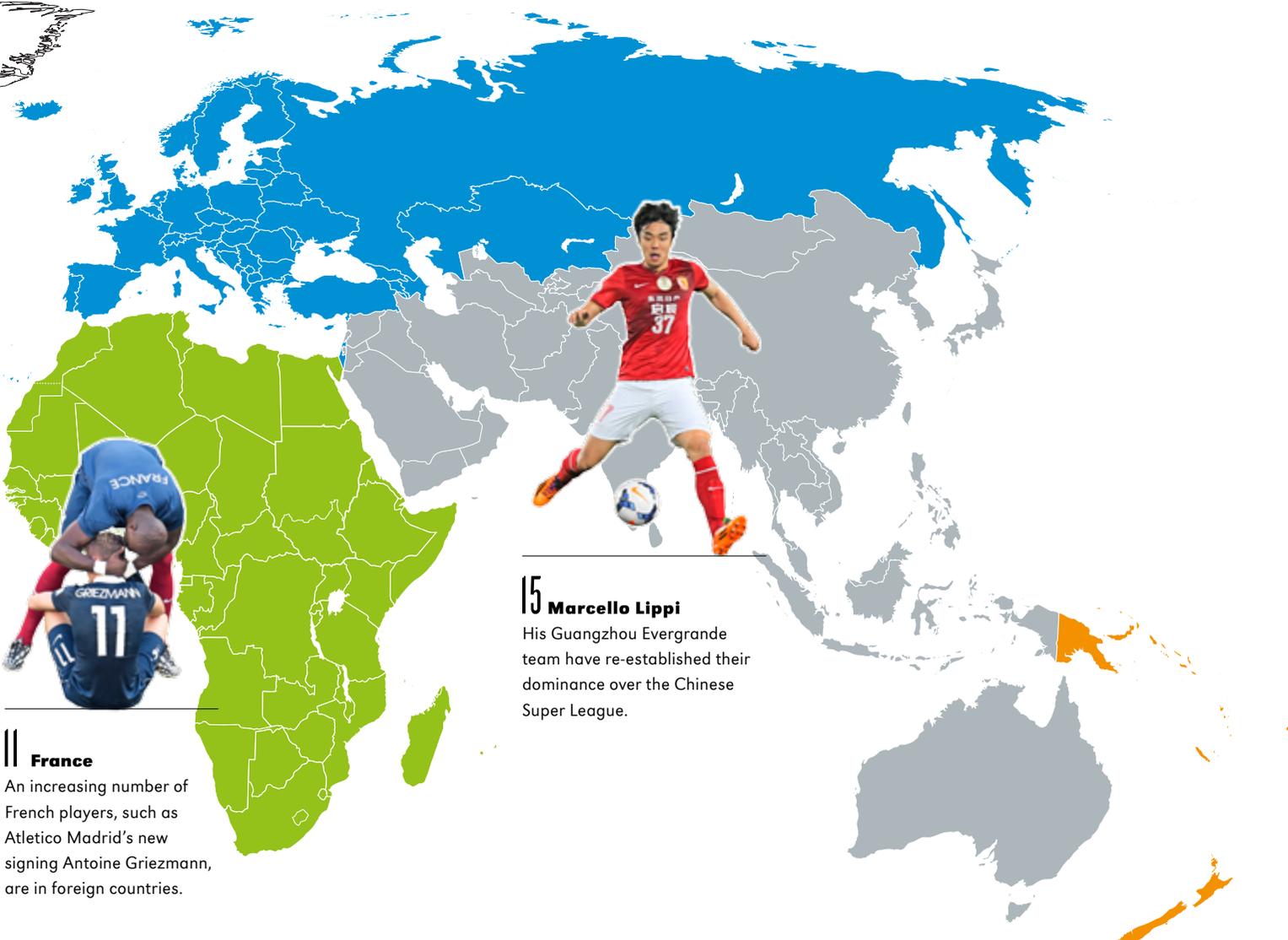
Africa
54 members
www.cafonline.com



Asia
46 members
www.the-afc.com



Oceania
11 members
www.oceaniafootball.com



France
An increasing number of French players, such as Atletico Madrid's new signing Antoine Griezmann, are in foreign countries.

15 Marcello Lippi
His Guangzhou Evergrande team have re-established their dominance over the Chinese Super League.



Julio H. Grondona (1931-2014)
FIFA Senior Vice President

FIFA-President Sepp Blatter: "Muy triste por la pérdida de un gran amigo. Julio Grondona nos dejó a los 82 años. Hoy abrazo a su familia. Descansa en paz."



FIFA Club World Cup
10 - 20 December 2014, Morocco



FIFA U-20 World Cup
30 May - 20 June 2015, New Zealand



FIFA Women's World Cup
6 June - 5 July 2015, Canada



Connecting every fan of the game

Make new friends and discover shared passions
in the Emirates A380 Onboard Lounge.

#AllTimeGreats
[youtube.com/emirates](https://www.youtube.com/emirates)

Hello Tomorrow



Beside the sea

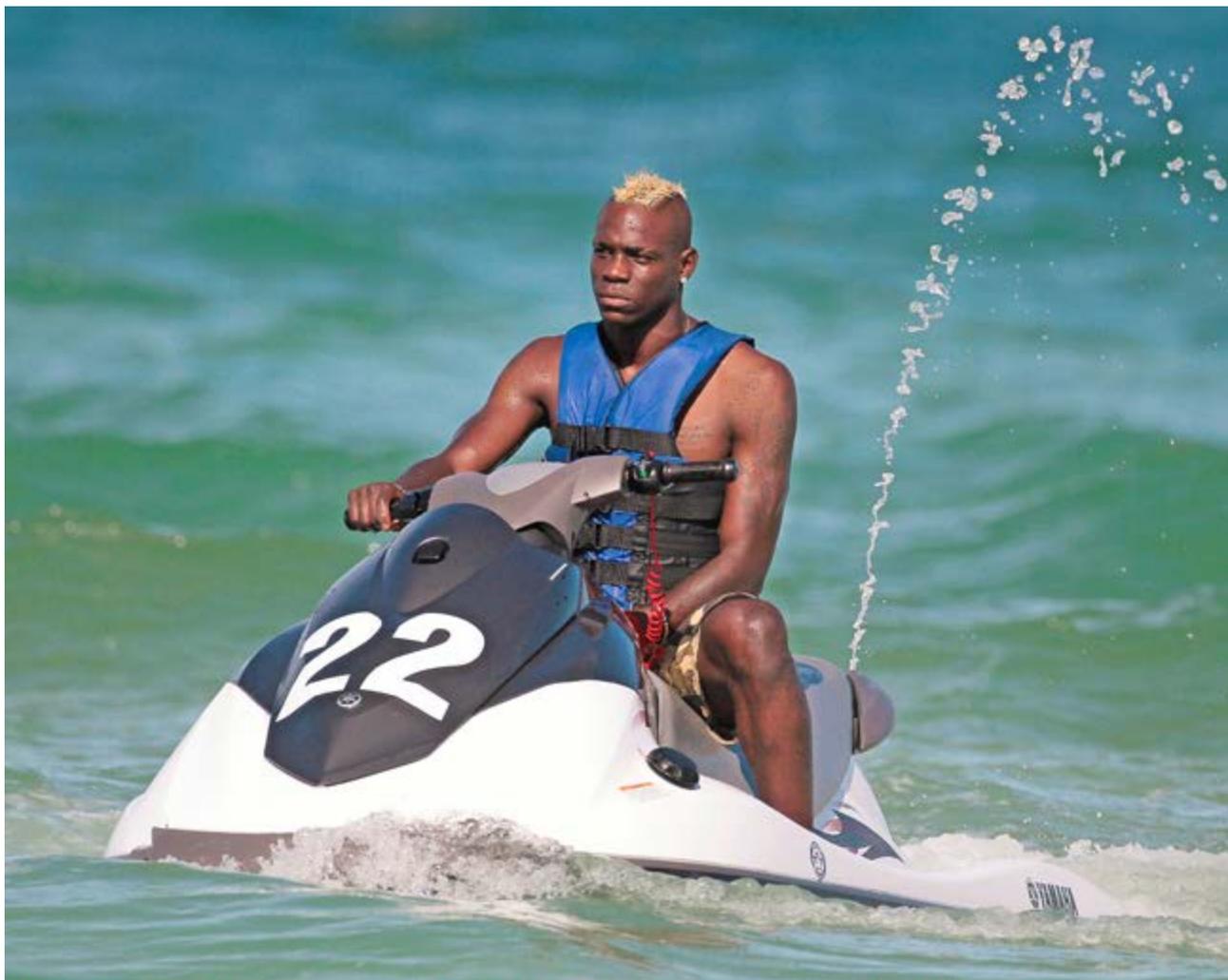
There is arguably no better feeling than eager anticipation, particularly when it comes to football. That's why we decided to capture the mood during a supposedly relaxed summer across Europe. The result was a seven-page piece of writing consisting of five articles and plenty of atmosphere from Spain, Italy and France.

In the meantime, football has received a major boost in the small Central American nation of Costa Rica. After the national team's surprising journey to the World Cup quarter-finals, eight of the domestic league's 12 top-flight clubs have been invited to overseas training camps, a situation that would have been unthinkable before this summer's tournament in Brazil. Henry Duarte, the man responsible for technical development in Costa Rica, explains why the success of this country of just 4.5 million people is no coincidence.

Somewhat further north in Canada, the U-20 Women's World Cup is due to begin on Tuesday. The fact that almost 40 million girls and women across the globe now play football is enough to make this youth competition exciting, but FIFA President Blatter emphasises that "in Edmonton, Moncton, Montreal and Toronto, we will experience the future of football."

On page 28 we begin with the first in a four-part series of extracts from the memoirs of Holger Obermann. This German coach has spent years working tirelessly overseas to give disadvantaged children hope through football – even in crisis-hit areas of Pakistan, where Obermann spent ten years. 🌍

Alan Schweingruber



Winding down AC Milan striker Mario Balotelli makes the most of his holidays.



Life's a beach
Young men enjoy a kickabout on the sand.



Recharging the batteries
Manchester United striker Robin van Persie.



THE LONG HOT SUMMER



A sleepy European summer separates the World Cup from the new season. But is it really so quiet? We bring you three reports from the Mediterranean coast.

The World Cup ended the way it began - with a bang. Images from Brazil are burned into our subconsciousness. When we think about football and our favourite players and teams, the first thing we think of at the moment is the World Cup and thrilling matches with teams going all out to win. Here in the European summer these fond memories meet and mix with expectations of another action-packed new season full of memorable matches at national and international level. But in many cases we will have to wait a little. The Premier League season begins on 16 August, the Portuguese Liga ZON Sagres a day later, and the German Bundesliga only on 22 August.

In the Mezzogiorno, the Italian south, currently home to the country's best football, the good folk are warming their feet in the sand and breathing in the healthy sea air, with a few of them even leafing through the football section of their newspapers. It is a scene you will encounter over and over again on the Côte d'Azur, the Balearics, the Costa Brava, and the Greek and Croatian Mediterranean islands.

It feels like the calm before the footballing storm that is set to break over the whole of Europe and beyond in the next few weeks. But this calm is deceptive, because the storm actually broke a while ago. The sunny summer is in fact the crucial period in which clubs regroup, form new teams and rethink their tactics. The same applies to players, especially those who have chosen to move clubs. The stars may not exactly have to reinvent themselves but they do have to realign with their teams and fix new targets for the season, not least their own. Finally, no-one doubts that getting a good pre-season training is often a crucial factor in winning trophies.

At this seemingly calm period in the footballing year, an incubator for the season to come, FIFA Weekly writers bring you their observations from Italy, France and Spain. ☼

Perikles Monioudis



Andrea Pirlo
The Juventus maestro enjoys a holiday on Ibiza.

A coastal idyll
Spanish stars Torres, Xavi, Fabregas and their families head out to their yacht.



Summertime in Spain

Spain in August means sunshine, beaches packed with tourists and catchy hits – some new, some not so new – blaring out of radios, beachside bars and discos. It also means a plethora of pre-season football tournaments, which keep the fans going until La Liga swings back into action.

A common feature of these holiday-season tournaments is that games are played at night, when the heat of the day has thankfully subsided. Some have long traditions behind them, such as the Torneo Teresa Herrera in La Coruna, the Ramon de Carranza in Cadiz, and the Colombino in Huelva, with its spectacular trophy in the form of a silver caravel.

Fans usually take an interest in these warm-up games for two reasons, the first of them being the opportunity to see some of the world game's grandest clubs in action, such as the South American trio Penarol, Corinthians and Boca Juniors, who invariably arrive on tour and with plenty of football already under their belts.

The second is the chance to catch their own teams' new signings in the flesh, a sight that always raises hopes for the season ahead. I can still remember, for example, watching Hristo Stoichkov make his debut for Barcelona at the Torneo Joan Gamper, an evening of much expectation, with

the Bulgarian determined to impress his new admirers from the off.

The sports press details all the latest events

As a result of the recent globalisation of the game, these European summertime tournaments are not the high-profile events they once were. The continent's big clubs opt instead to cash in on the countdown to the new season by visiting new markets, which means tours of Asia and the USA. There are shirts to sell, after all.

Perhaps the summer's defining sight, however, is the pre-season training camp, when team-mates come together to regain peak fitness and, as the case may be, meet their new coach. Spanish sides usually make their getaways to fresher climes, such as the Netherlands, the UK or France, their every move being followed by the media. Back home, meanwhile, football-starved fans while away the hours on the beach and in bars, flicking through the sports dailies in search of the latest on their adoptive sons, holed up in their summer camps.

Every day brings news on how each player has trained, who they are rooming with, what they have eaten for dinner, and whether they prefer the Playstation or a good old-fashioned game of cards.

The economic crisis has also changed the summertime landscape. Riddled with debt, many Spanish first division sides have this year been reduced to swapping players for modest fees. Recruiting an average of six or seven new faces, the country's teams are all hoping to land a gem that they can sell on at a considerable profit in a year's time.

Di Maria the subject of much debate

In the meantime, lucrative TV deals continue to bolster the richest clubs, with the gap between the haves and the have-nots growing every year.

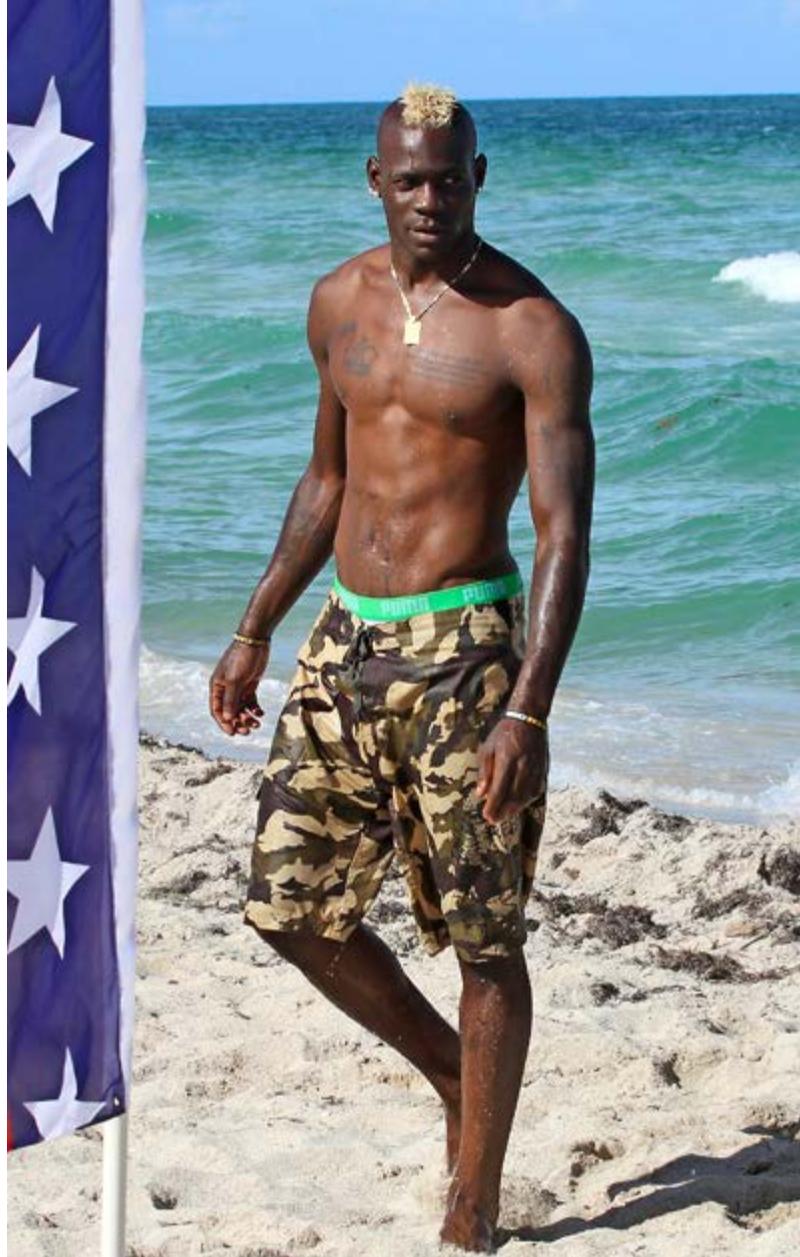
Having sold on key players such as Diego Costa and Filipe Luis following their Liga triumph last season, Atletico Madrid have promptly invested in the services of Mario Mandzukic, Antoine Griezmann and Jan Oblak.

Barcelona have freshened up their squad by bringing in Luis Suarez, Ivan Rakitic, Jeremy Mathieu and calling back Gerard Deulofeu, while also overhauling their goalkeeping roster with Chile's Claudio Bravo and Marc-Andre Ter Stegen.

Far from being outdone, Real Madrid have snapped up German midfielder Toni Kroos and Colombian sensation James Rodriguez, two of the brightest stars of the recent World Cup, and are expected to make yet more signings.

There are also, inevitably, players on the way out. Every close season seems to throw up a drawn-out transfer saga, and this summer's promises to be Angel di Maria's mooted move from Real Madrid to Paris Saint-Germain. Will the Argentinian flyer stay on at the Bernabeu, make the move to Paris or even down tools at the Bernabeu in a bid to force a deal through? The answers to those questions will be revealed in time. ☺

Jordi Puntí



Calm personified AC Milan striker Mario Balotelli.

Southern sides dreaming of glory.

The cruise ship Costa Concordia, which sank close to the island of Giglio on 13 January 2012, has finally been towed to the port of Genoa to be scrapped. For many Italians it stood as a metaphor for the country's national team after their listless elimination from the World Cup in Brazil, with coach Cesare Prandelli, who has since fled to Turkish side Galatasaray, in the role of infamous captain Francesco Schettino.

In the wake of the World Cup fiasco, a veritable witch hunt ensued, and Prandelli was the chief culprit. The former coach had enjoyed widespread popularity after finding success without resorting to Catenaccio and fighting the mafia, but he became a scapegoat for a variety of ills up to and including the hole in the ozone layer. The novelist Ennio Flaiano once wrote that, "Italians are always quick to take the victor's side." They are swift to abandon the defeated too.

Antonio Conte's resignation also sent shockwaves through the country after leading Juventus to the league title for three consecutive years. Over the course of his

tenure he instilled an aggressive style and a fighting spirit that ultimately proved to be the difference between success and failure. Conte demanded everything of his team and of himself and while burn-out was cited as the official reason behind his decision to step down, in reality the club's transfer policy also played a role. In order to be able to compete with the biggest clubs in Europe again, Conte wanted to abolish the three-man back line that rarely works in continental competition in favour of a 4-3-3 formation, and he desired top-class players such as Juan Cuadrado and Alexis Sanchez. That would apparently have put too much strain on the club's finances and consequently Juventus turned to former AC Milan coach Massimiliano Allegri, a man who has divided opinion in Turin.

Public wary of Allegri

Some people view Allegri as a talented coach who won the Scudetto in his first season in Milan, in 2010/11, and who stood up to Silvio Berlusconi when he tried to interfere. Yet for others he is the only coach who failed to win the Italian championship with Zlatan Ibrahimovic at his disposal. The latter subsequently made fun of the titles that had been lost to Juventus. A recent survey of fans revealed an overriding distrust of Allegri and a pessimistic outlook going into the forthcoming season. At one point Juventus also rejected the chance to appoint Carlo Ancelotti, who was mocked with chants of: "A pig cannot be a coach." Ancelotti won the Champions League last season with Real Madrid.

By way of contrast, Filippo Inzaghi was greeted rather more warmly at AC Milan. The venerated former striker is making his debut on the touchline of a professional team after a short stint in charge of the Rossoneri's youth side. Is he up to the task? The eight goals Milan conceded against Panathinaikos and Manchester City at the Guinness Cup in

The Scudetto could easily return to the Mezzogiorno once again.

the USA have already created a sense of unease. His predecessor Clarence Seedorf, selected by club president Berlusconi despite having no prior top-level managerial experience either, was sacked just months after taking charge. In the end the Dutchman, who enjoyed privileges otherwise only granted to royalty – he allegedly had an assistant boil eggs for him in the middle of the night – lost his battle with CEO Adriano Galliani. The club's lawyers have been kept busy ever since.

Napoli and Roma sense opportunity

The upheaval at Milan and Juventus, coupled with Inter Milan's recruitment of Nemanja Vidic and Yann M'Vila, signings that seem to point to the side emerging as the Costa Rica of the Serie A this season - plenty of stamina and physique but ultimately lacking in quality - has given clubs further south cause for optimism. Napoli and Roma each had strong campaigns last term and in respective coaches Rafael Benitez and Rudi Garcia have managers secure in their jobs with clearly-defined game plans and teams that can still improve. That is especially true for the club from the capital, who beat Juventus to the signature of Argentinian Juan Iturbe for €22 million and who already consider themselves a domestic superpower thanks to their plans for constructing their own stadium. The Scudetto, which last headed south in 2001 when Roma themselves were triumphant, could easily return to the Mezzogiorno once again.

And who will be the star of the new campaign? The main contender is the usual suspect, Mario Balotelli, who posed for a photo with a rifle aimed at his critics this summer. Nothing out of the ordinary. Will he finally grow up this season? There are not many people left who believe he will. After all, he is 24 now and another Mario, two years his junior, has already scored the winner in a World Cup final. ⚽

Luigi Garlando



Giglio, Tuscany
Italians playing beach football with the Costa Concordia in the background.



Brazilians for Paris: Thiago Silva and new signing David Luiz.

Paris leading the way

The sun always shines on the Cote d'Azur. Selena Gomez and Leonardo di Caprio have both holidayed in the region this summer, with the latter seemingly relaxed enough to tolerate his numerous paparazzi pursuers on the south coast. Elsewhere in France, the fashion world has converged on Paris, lending the capital an even greater appeal than it usually has at this time of year. The French football team also made a bright start to the summer at the World Cup in Brazil. And while the people of Paris, Monte Carlo, Marseille and Lyon understandably hoped to progress beyond the quarter-finals, few other sides held their own against the eventual world champions as well as *Les Bleus*. Any country that came that close to eliminating the Germans, who completely dismantled hosts Brazil at the semi-final stage, is entitled to see its World Cup campaign as a resounding success.

Many football pundits believe that the national team's success will soon be forgotten when the Ligue 1 season gets underway. French football has largely been dominated by PSG for the last two years, but it is newly-promoted outfit RC Lens, rather than the capital club, that has been hogging the headlines in recent weeks. The French Football Federation had controversially withdrawn the club's licence for financial reasons. But the situation was eventually resolved after much outcry.

Waiting for European success

The current plight of RC Lens might not reflect French football in the best possible light, but other Ligue 1 clubs have done the country proud on the international stage. Since their takeover by wealthy foreign investors, Paris St. Germain and Monaco have both made a return to European football and currently represent France's best hope of finally ending its long wait for success in the continent's premier club competition. In the almost 60-year history of the European Cup and the Champions League, only one French team has ever lifted the famous trophy. That triumph came back

Season start dates

France: 8 August 2014
 England: 16 August 2014
 Portugal: 17 August 2014
 Germany: 22 August 2014
 Spain: 24 August 2014
 Italy: 31 August 2014

Where the music plays

Football in France also tends to focus on Paris





WELCOME TO
THE WORLD'S CUP



©2014 THE COCA-COLA COMPANY. COCA-COLA® AND THE CONTOUR BOTTLE ARE REGISTERED TRADEMARKS OF THE COCA-COLA COMPANY.

OFFICIAL SPONSOR



Star attraction Zlatan Ibrahimovic.

in 1993, when Olympique Marseille were captained to victory by current national team coach Didier Deschamps.

The last few years have seen Sweden star Zlatan Ibrahimovic, Uruguay striker Edinson Cavani and Brazil defenders Thiago Silva and David Luiz join the PSG revolution, while the club has also been consistently linked with a big-money move for Real Madrid wide man Angel di Maria. AS Monaco were PSG's biggest rivals last season, with Colombian duo Radamel Falcao and James Rodriguez helping the principal-ity club qualify for the Champions League again after a spell down in Ligue 2. But with Rodriguez already at Real Madrid after an impressive World Cup campaign and Falcao's future uncertain, Ligue 1 could well be a one-horse race next season.

French stars head abroad

Paris St. Germain have never been particularly popular elsewhere in France, with teams in cities such as Bordeaux, Marseille and Lyon boasting far greater footballing traditions than the capital club. One of Paris's oldest sides is Red Star, but few young football fans are now aware of the club's existence after a series of bribery scandals saw them make a spectacular fall from grace. Elsewhere in the capital, Racing Club Paris signed Germany ace Pierre Littbarski and Uruguayan Enzo Francescoli in an attempt to revive the club's fortunes in the mid-1980s, but it was ultimately a short-lived experiment.

The success enjoyed by Paris St. Germain seems much more sustainable, with the consistently sold-out Parc des Princes attesting to the new project's popularity. The squad, and the league as a whole, does lack home-grown talent, though. The biggest French stars such as Franck Ribery, Karim Benzema, Paul Pogba and Hugo Lloris all play their club football in other countries. One of France's star performers at the World Cup was Antoine Griezmann, who turned out for Spanish side Real Sociedad in San Sebastian prior to the tournament. A series of stellar performances in Brazil saw Griezmann's price tag soar, and the striker recently completed a €30 million switch to Atletico Madrid. The Frenchman opted to stay in Spain rather than return to his homeland and even Mathieu Valbuena, one of the few big names in French domestic football not plying his trade in Paris or Monaco, may soon be leaving Marseille for Dynamo Moscow.

On the whole, France remains reluctant to accept the recent success enjoyed by the country's nouveau-riche clubs. After all, it is foreign - rather than French - investments that are breathing a new lease of life into the domestic game, with Arab and Russian owners in place at PSG and Monaco respectively. This is in stark contrast to the financial situation at RC Lens, who currently depend on financial investments from Azerbaijan just to stay afloat. ❄

Sven Goldmann

The FIFA Transfer Matching System

The FIFA Transfer Matching System GmbH (FIFA TMS) was established on the back of the "For the Good of the Game" Task Force in 2007. At the time, the 57th FIFA Congress voted to create an online system designed to facilitate the international transfers of 11-a-side male professional football players as one of the recommendations of the Task Force. The objectives were to increase integrity and transparency in the market by increasing data available to football authorities on every transaction and to enforce rules on the protection of minors. Thus, the International Transfer Matching System (ITMS) was created and has revolutionized the way international football player transfers are conducted.

ITMS, developed and maintained by FIFA TMS, is a regulated online platform that manages all international transfers of professional male players in accordance with FIFA Regulations and also supports the request for approval to FIFA for the "first registration" of minors (under 18) and the international transfer processes involving minors. Clubs are required to enter standardized data, such as a player's identity and transfer agreement details, agreed transfer fees and intermediary involvement. Where applicable, the system will match this data. Based on the information in ITMS, member associations use the system to request and deliver an international transfer certificate (ITC) electronically. The ITC allows the transfer of a player's registration from one member association to another. (tfw)



Rising star James Rodriguez completes his move to Real Madrid.

ON THE INSIDE

Colombia's Liga Postobon

Never truly gone



Sven Goldmann is a leading football correspondent at *Tagesspiegel* newspaper in Berlin.

The Blue Ballet may not dance quite as beautifully or spectacularly as they did in their heyday over half a century ago, but there can be no question that they are back. From the late 1940s until the mid-50s, Bogota's Millonarios were one of the best teams in the world in club football. Spearheaded by the Argentinians Alfredo di Stefano, Adolfo Pedernera and Nestor Rossi they toured Europe, earning themselves two nicknames in the process that are still used to this day: 'Embajadores' for their role as ambassadors of Colombian football and 'Blue Ballet' due to the eye-catching choreography of their play.

A lot has changed since then. The club rose to become Colombia's record title-holders but then fell into the clutches of drug lords and turned into an enterprise financially dependent on selling off its shares. Yet after a long period of mediocrity Millonarios appear to be on an upward curve once more. In December 2012 they celebrated their first

championship triumph in 24 years, and in the new season are also showing signs of promise. Two wins in as many games have left Millonarios in the mix at the top of the standings in the Torneo Finalizacion, the year's second season in Categoria Primera A, which has been officially known as the Liga Postobon since 2010.

In truth Millonarios never really went away. Alongside city rivals Santa Fe and Medellin's Atletico Nacional, they are the only team to have had an unbroken presence in Colombia's top-flight since the league was founded in 1948. Over the last few years Atletico Nacional have been the team to beat and have won the last two league titles, most recently the Torneo Apertura in May after defeating Barranquilla-based Atletico Junior in the two-legged final. The defending champions have had a sluggish start in the new campaign however, losing the Medellin derby to Independiente and being held to a draw by Deportivo Cali.

Millonarios have begun rather more brightly, recording a 2-1 victory over Envigado Futbol Club in their opening game before playing two fixtures against city neighbours Club Deportivo La Equidad in the tiny Estadio Metropolitano de Techo. The first of those, a cup tie, ended in a 1-0 defeat for

Millonarios but they exacted revenge in the league five days later, winning by the same scoreline after another closely-fought encounter. At the start of the second half Mayer Candelo dinked a free-kick from a central position outside of the area perfectly into the path of Fabian Vargas. The former Colombia international, who returned to his homeland last year following spells in Brazil, Argentina, Spain, Greece and Ecuador, finished in extraordinary style: he made no effort to head the ball but instead leapt into the air and from a horizontal position flicked it into the net with the tip of his boot while the opposition defence could only watch on helplessly.

The spectacular nature of the goal rekindled memories of the national team's impressive displays at the World Cup in Brazil. It also provided a measure of consolation for the fans given that the only two members of the Colombia squad who ply their trade in the Categoria Primera A are the country's two reserve goalkeepers. The modern ambassadors of Colombian football lace their boots in France, Spain, Italy and Portugal. ❄



Blue Ballet Colombian record champions Millonarios' Fabian Vargas (l.) and Andres Cadavid are once again in the mix at the top of the table.



Chinese Super League

Plenty of passion but no master plan



Roland Zorn is a Frankfurt-based football writer.

China may well be a sleeping giant in footballing terms, but many of its people were wide awake during the World Cup. Habitual early risers anyway, Chinese fans had to set their alarms for the dead of night to watch events unfold in Brazil, where the greatest festival of football was once again staged in the absence of the world's most populated country. China have only qualified for the global showdown once, back in 2002. At the tournament in neighbouring Japan and South Korea, the debutants were soon packing their bags for home after three defeats at the group stage in a campaign that yielded no goals and few rays of hope. That abrupt exit from the tournament did more lasting damage to China's footballing reputation than to the nation's passion for the game. A reported 90 million viewers tuned in to the live broadcast of the 2014 Final, at 3am in the morning, and most were apparently supporting eventual world champions Germany.

The notion of China laying hands on the trophy at some point in the future is currently little more than a pipe dream. There may well be gigantic footballing potential among the 1.3 billion Chinese, but no-one has yet succeeded in tapping into it. Prior to becoming head of the nation, state president Xi Jinping, a passionate football fan like so many of his fellow countrymen, enunciated three footballing targets for China: to qualify for a World Cup finals again, to host the World Cup as soon as possible and to actually claim the title at some point in the future. The cunning statesman declined to provide a timeline for his appeal to the nation's players. China may well be a global economic power, but Mr Xi is well aware of the long and rocky footballing road the nation still has to travel.

The game in China still lacks essential structures: there is no youth championship, for example. Many parents do not allow their offspring to play organised football, in a society where the priorities for its boys and girls are education and professional training. There is no great tradition of team sport in



Expertise from overseas Marcello Lippi, coach at leading Chinese club Guangzhou Evergrande.

China especially in comparison to a handful of long-established and highly regarded individual disciplines such as gymnastics and table tennis. On top of that, the professional game in China was considered a cesspool of corruption and manipulation up until a decade ago. The situation only tentatively changed for the better with the introduction of the Chinese Super League in 2004 and siren calls from the authorities for greater transparency and honesty in league operations.

Former Dutch international Arie Haan, who has been working in China for a couple of years now and is currently coach with first division club Tianjin Teda, reckons there are positive signs. The game has become "faster and more athletic," he says. Chinese club Guangzhou Evergrande, domestic champions for the last three years and currently top of the Super League, won last season's Asian Champions League. Owner Xu Jiayin, a fabulously wealthy real estate tycoon, brought in Italian expertise in the shape of Marcello Lippi, who coached his home country to World Cup glory in 2006, and former internationals such as Alberto Gilardino and Alessandro Diamanti. The other 15 clubs are also by and large supported by big companies, and the top professionals in the league now earn genuinely good money.

However, China requires more than this to become a global footballing power: the land famous for its planned economy lacks a

master plan for football. The Academy set up by Guangzhou Evergrande in 2012 with its 50 pitches and a comprehensive education service for its 2,300 full-board students is undoubtedly imposing and impressive, but at this stage it is nothing more than a metaphorical green shoot. Sustainable success will require this nation of passionate football fans to become a country of passionate players. And that could still take a while. ⚽

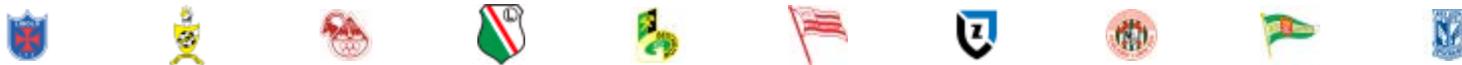
Angola's GiraBola League

Meyong Ze marks the change



Mark Gleeson is a South African journalist and football commentator and lives in Cape Town.

For most of the last three decades, the established order of dominance in Angola's Girabola league was rarely challenged. But since the oil boom and the rapid growth of the country's economy, so the long-standing stranglehold enjoyed by Petro Luanda. Primeiro de Agosto and, in later years, AS Aviação has dissipated and new powerhouses emerged. Among the new forces is Recreativo Libolo, whose week-end win away at Progresso do Sambizanga,



has kept them eight points clear at the top of the standings with two thirds of the season now complete.

The club from Calulo, in Cuanza Sul province, are on course to take a third title in the last four years as they enjoy a handy lead over last year's champions Kabuscorp. Their first title in 2011 saw them become just the third club from outside the capital Luanda to win the league since Angola's independence in 1975.

This year is only the seventh season that Libolo have been in the top flight of Angolan football yet they have been champions twice, runners-up once and were third in their very first campaign in 2007. By Angolan standards it has been a remarkable accession to the top but in a way mirrors how quickly the southern African nation has transformed itself from a country seeking to recover from the ravages of a long-term civil war into an economic tiger.

Like all other African countries, Angola was an exporter of its top playing talent. Now its clubs have the purchasing power to look north to reinforce their squads and reverse the trend. Not only are there players from Cameroon and the Cape Verde Islands in this season's league, but now also from the former colonial power Portugal plus Brazilians who come to Angola via Portuguese clubs. The most vivid example of this change as talent heads from, rather than to Europe is Cameroon international striker Albert Meyong Ze, an Olympic Gold medalist and former CAF African Cup of Nations finals participant.

Halfway through the 2012-2013 season in Portugal, Meyong Ze was the league's top scorer at Vitoria Setubal but before the start of the 2013 Girabola season - Angola's league runs from February to November - he moved to Luanda's Kabuscorp when they made a lucrative offer the Portuguese club could not refuse.

Never before had an African club gone to Europe and signed a player at the peak of his ability. Usually those players who move south to Africa do so at the end of their career or having failed to make the grade in Europe.

Meyong scored 20 goals last year as Kabuscorp won last year's Girabola. He was among the goals again last weekend as he lifted his tally for this year to 12 but will need to deliver more if his club are to catch Libolo in the

Poland's Ekstraklasa

Back on track



Andreas Jaros is a freelance writer based in Vienna.

You do not need to be a fortune teller to predict who will win the 2014/15 Polish championship. Legia Warsaw, one of the founding members of the league, have lifted the title ten times, the domestic cup on a record 16 occasions and also boast the division's standout attacker in Serbia's Miroslav Radovic, whose 14 goals last season ensured he finished as top scorer. Who could possibly deny them a third consecutive title? As it turned out, the overwhelming favourites stumbled to a 1-0 defeat at home to promoted outfit GKS Belchatow on the first day of the new season.

Normal service was resumed in their next outing last weekend however, when the club from the capital, led by battle-hardened Norwegian coach Henning Berg - who won the English title as a defender with Manchester United and Blackburn Rovers - recorded a 3-1 away win at Cracovia Krakow.

Legia are back on track then, which is hardly surprising given the seemingly permanent pool of talented youngsters they have to choose from thanks to a series of partnerships struck up with both Polish and foreign clubs. That safety net may provide them with a solid base domestically but it is nowhere near enough for European competition. Legia's efforts to reach the Champions League group stage have so far been unsuccessful and

their Europa League campaign ended in disastrous fashion in autumn last year when they finished bottom of a group containing Trabzonspor, Lazio and Apollon Limassol. In the coming days Legia face Celtic in the third qualifying round of the Champions League.

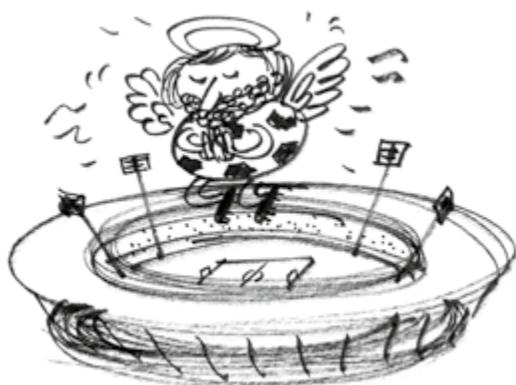
The league itself may be called 'Ekstraklasa' but the teams that play in it do little to justify such a grand name. Surprise package Zawisza Bydgoszcz, who beat Zagłębie Lubin on penalties in the 2014 cup final, discovered their limitations in their maiden continental foray in the second qualifying round of the Europa League at the end of July, and were eliminated by Belgian side Waregem.

That not all Polish exports are as effective as Robert Lewandowski was highlighted recently by German outfit Kaiserslautern. The second division club decided they had no use for nine-time Polish international Ariel Borysiuk in the coming season and sent the midfielder back to his homeland to Lechia Gdansk.

Nevertheless, the 16-team Polish league still arouses intrigue - even if it is for its format rather than its quality. After 30 rounds of matches the top eight sides qualify for a round robin mini-league to fight for the championship, while the bottom eight battle each other to avoid relegation. In this second phase, in which each side plays seven matches, each team starts with half the points total they won in the regular season, a tally that can be rounded up if necessary. In the previous campaign that left Legia with a ten-point advantage over runners-up Lech Poznan, the former club of new Bayern Munich frontman Lewandowski. ❁

Back in the race
Henning Berg,
Legia Warsaw's
battle-hardened coach.





Ode to football

Perikles Monioudis

Born in 522 BC, the Greek poet Pindar made a name for himself at an early age. As a young man he was commissioned by winners of major competitions to write all manner of paeans and victory odes. In his work 'Epinikia', Pindar praised the winners of the four Panhellenic games, including the champions in Olympia.

Two thousand years later, veneration of his kind is no longer commonplace. That is not to say that Olympians are no longer held in high regard - quite the opposite in fact. The global public are constantly kept informed about outstanding sporting achievements and the athletes that perform them, whether it be Usain Bolt or James Rodriguez. Only a select few, however, are ever immortalised in ode.

Albert Ostermaier is not only one of the most renowned poets in the German language, he is also such a passionate football fan that he plays in goal for the German writers' national team and is also the curator of the German Football Association's Culture Foundation. His latest work, 'Flugelwechsel' (Cross-field pass), is made up of football-themed odes dedicated not only to Germany's finest but to players such as Franck Ribery, Jorge Valdano and Socrates, the late Brazilian footballer and paediatrician.

Presumably because he is a goalkeeper, the 46-year-old Munich native concentrates on Oliver Kahn - whom he eulogises in six odes - and freshly-crowned world champion Manuel Neuer. He does so despite the climate of scorn that exists in highlighting individual accomplishments, sporting or otherwise, with a perhaps overwhelming lyrical offering - unless it can be used as a fan chant. However, in

his odes Ostermaier exposes neither the objects of his praise nor himself to ridicule - an achievement in itself. Instead, after reading the poet's six works on Kahn a clearer picture of him emerges, despite or perhaps because of such glorification.

In our minds the 'Titan', as Kahn is still known, leaps further and more forcefully through the air than anyone else and saves even the most difficult shots, almost as if he were still playing today. Indeed, the three-time World Goalkeeper of the Year lives on in our imaginations. The images of him in action are everlasting. And they are also what the odes bear witness to. ⚽

The weekly column by our staff writers

The World Cup's youngest players

11 years old

Nedim Dogan (Turkey)
Position: Striker
World Cup: Switzerland 1954

16 years old

Edu (Brazil)
Position: Striker
World Cup: England 1966

17 years old

Norman Whiteside (Northern Ireland)
Position: Striker
World Cup: Spain 1982

Femi Opubunmi (Nigeria)
Position: Midfield
World Cup: Korea/Japan 2002

Theo Walcott (England)
Position: Striker
World Cup: Germany 2006

Samuel Eto'o (Cameroon)
Position: Striker
World Cup: France 1998

Walter Brom (Poland)
Position: Goalkeeper
World Cup: France 1938

Pele (Brazil)
Position: Striker
World Cup: Sweden 1958

Ronaldo (Brazil)
Position: Striker
World Cup: USA 1994

18 years old

Leite Carvalho (Brazil)
Position: Striker
World Cup: Uruguay 1930

Fabrice Olinga (Cameroon)
Position: Striker
World Cup: Brazil 2014

Source: FIFA

(FIFA World Cup, Milestones & Superlatives, Statistical Kit, 20.06.2014)



Triumph in 2002 Lindsay Tarpley, who scored the Golden Goal in the final, celebrates with the USA's U-19 side.

Back where it all began

The Women's U-20 World Cup in Canada starts on Tuesday, in the place where a new era in women's youth football began back in 2002.

Yvonne Lemmer

The impetus for the first Women's U-19 World Cup came in 1999, when the third edition of the senior Women's World Cup was held in the USA. That tournament was a real milestone in women's football; for the first time matches were played in large stadiums and set new records for the number of spectators and media coverage.

That meant that all eyes in 2002 were on the 12 teams and 26 matches to be played in Edmonton, Vancouver and Victoria. Future international stars took their first steps towards stardom and brought themselves to the world's attention for the first time. For example, 19 year-old Christine Sinclair claimed both the Top Goal Scorer and Best Player awards at the

tournament on home turf. In an interview with the Edmonton Sun in March 2013, the Canadian reflected on her ten goals in the tournament: "Every chance fell to me."

50,000 supporters at the Final

In the end, Sinclair did not manage to lift the ultimate prize. The hosts lost a thrilling final against the USA in front of almost 50,000 fans, in extra time and to a Golden Goal. But unbelievable progress had been made in a real success story for women's youth football.

It was not only Sinclair who used the tournament as a springboard to further success. Marta, announced herself on the international scene too, aged just 16. Her Brazil side only reached fourth place, but she was able to make up for that individually later in her career, winning the FIFA World Player of the Year award five consecutive times between 2006 and 2010.

Dress rehearsal for 2015

Edmonton, Toronto, Montreal and Moncton will be the venues as 16 teams battle it out for the title from 5 August. In another first for the tournament, the U-20 Women's World Cup will be played on artificial turf in three of the four stadiums. For the top sides, the tournament is very much a dress rehearsal for 2015's main event: the Women's World Cup. As Sinclair says, "the plan is to win the title."

To really push women's youth football, FIFA has organised the U-17 Women's World Cup since 2008, which also takes place every two years. Winners so far have included North Korea, the Korean Republic, France and Japan. ⚽

The weekly debate.

Anything you want to get off your chest? Which topics do you want to discuss? Send your suggestions to: feedback-theweekly@fifa.org

FIFA.com users share their views ahead of the U-20 Women's World Cup:

Recently I've been excited about Paraguay's team for the U-20 Women's World Cup in Canada! The effectiveness and confidence of their players combined with the far-sighted planning of their well-prepared coach will take the team a long way. I've got my fingers crossed that this will be South America's year in women's football too and that Paraguay can dominate!

tomtom73, The Netherlands

Women's football is an important issue. I play in a small women's team myself and am looking forward to the start of the U-20 Women's World Cup in Canada. It must be an incredible feeling to give everything out on the pitch in front of so many people. Naturally my favourite team is Brazil; it remains to be seen if they can progress from a difficult group and show the men back at home how it's done.

Claudia222, Switzerland

I'll mainly be following Germany's matches. I'm particularly looking forward to their opening game against defending champions the USA as I'm expecting an exciting spectacle of the highest quality: firstly because it'll be a replay of the 2012 final; and secondly because Germany have some high-profile (and, above all, extremely talented) reinforcements in Melanie Leupolz and Sara Dabritz. They'll do all they can to prove they have the skills to lead the way and overcome the favourites from the USA!

antoinette_gehrund90, Germany

I'm looking forward to [the Women's World Cup in] 2015 most of all. Hopefully Canada will win on home soil!

landslide55, Canada

"I'm expecting an exciting spectacle of the highest quality."

Anyone who still thinks women's football is overshadowed by the men's game hasn't been paying attention! Many men's sides would make a swift exit from this summer's U-20 World Cup and wouldn't have a realistic chance of even making it to the quarter-finals! Despite the naysayers, this development makes me extremely happy!

BigFish76, Sweden

Marta is the best - I'm a big fan of hers.

ydyo19861120, China

"Women's football is an important issue."



The future of football

One World Cup is over, and the next is on the horizon. Twenty-three days after the Final in Rio de Janeiro, the Opening Match of the U-20 Women's World Cup will kick off between Canada and Ghana in Toronto. This opening fixture neatly reflects the global reach of the women's game. Almost 40 million women and girls play football nowadays, in all 209 FIFA member nations. The women's game is booming, especially at junior level: 14 percent of all youth players are female. The potential for growth is bigger than in any other area of our sport.

Women's football is also a pioneering force in the crucial area of promoting gender equality regardless of cultural background. This is especially true in Africa and Asia, so it is good to see teams from these regions among the participating nations in Canada. FIFA sent out an important signal last December by awarding the 2016 U-17 Women's World Cup to Jordan. Sport can assume the leading role in social questions like these, especially in the Arab world.

It will also be interesting to observe how the competitive situation has developed. For example, France won the U-17 Women's World Cup two years ago, but how strong will they be in Canada? And what of the teams that finished the 2012 tournament in second to fourth places, the North Koreans, Ghanaians and Germans?

For Canada, where women's football is very well regarded throughout society, the U-20 tournament is eminently important not least in organisational and logistical terms. This is because ten months from now this magnificent sporting nation welcomes the world to the senior global showdown for women, featuring a 24-strong starting field for the first time. The TV audience of 407.8 million for the 2011 Women's World Cup in Germany underlines the powerful appeal of the forthcoming event.

For now though, we can look forward to the contest between the 16 best U-20 national teams. At the matches in Edmonton, Moncton, Montreal and Toronto we will witness the future of football.

Best wishes, Sepp Blatter



First Love

Place: Accra, Ghana

Date: 27 June 2011

Time: 11.09 a.m.





Oscar
11 Oscar



The Glorious Journey for All

Hyundai brings the world together to celebrate the FIFA World Cup™



Share your moments to celebrate 2014 FIFA World Cup Brazil™.
worldcup.hyundai.com

 **NEW THINKING.
NEW POSSIBILITIES.**

“We want to qualify for the 2018 World Cup”



Feted heroes The Costa Rica national team after the World Cup.

Costa Rica's journey to the quarter-finals was the big surprise of this summer's World Cup in Brazil. Henry Duarte, Technical Development Director of the Costa Rican Football Federation, explained how this small nation managed such an impressive achievement.

Pure ecstasy
Fans at home in
Costa Rica.



With just 4.3 million inhabitants, Costa Rica are by no means a football powerhouse. How surprised were you by the team's passage to the World Cup quarter-finals?

Henry Duarte: For me personally, it was no big surprise – in my mind I was expecting a result like that. Costa Rica is a true footballing nation with more than one million male and female footballers. We have an immense pool of talent at our disposal and a core of players who ply their trade in foreign leagues. We were in the top 30 of the FIFA rankings before the World Cup even started; now we're in 16th place.

Your team has the lowest market value of all 32 sides involved in this summer's tournament. Are Costa Rican footballers underrated?

Many people overseas were probably not aware of our progress before now. Whenever Costa Rica is mentioned, the conversation usually relates to tourism. The Federation has been carrying out targeted development work and has provided a solid foundation for the national team. As a country with even fewer inhabitants (3.4 million – *editor's note*), Uruguay has been a key source of inspiration for us.

Talking of Uruguay, you topped three former world champions in Brazil – Italy, England and La Celeste themselves. Anyone predicting that before the tournament began would have been considered insane...

It was our dream to reach the knockout stages, and we did it. Our exceptional preparations were key to our success. While our Colombian coach Jorge Luis Pinto studied the national teams of Uruguay, Italy and England in meticulous detail, our opponents seemed to underestimate us. We caught Uruguay on the wrong foot with our strong defence, excellent organisation and ability to switch quickly from defence to attack. By the time we played Italy and England it was already too late for them, as it is almost impossible to change your approach during a tournament. Our performances in Brazil were a tactical masterstroke and could serve as a lesson for any coaching seminar.

“Our clubs are already benefiting from football's improved profile in this country”

There must have been immense elation in Costa Rica...

You can say that again – the people are still in a state of World Cup ecstasy. Our team made them happy, and it looks like they'll be happy for quite some time yet. Costa Ricans want to continue celebrating, and they can't get enough of the sport. An impressive number of women and girls have been caught up in football fever too.

Costa Rica qualified for the World Cup finals for the first time at Italy 1990 – there were only 24 teams in the competition back then – and reached the Round of 16 that time around. How would you rate that success compared to this year's achievement?

Twenty-four years ago we had a generation of experienced older players at our disposal, all at the pinnacle of their careers. That team delivered their best possible performances at exactly the right moment. Their appearance at the finals in Italy also marked the end of an era, with many players retiring from the national side after the tournament. That's why it's no accident that it took 12 years for us to qualify for the World Cup finals in Japan and South Korea in 2002.

To what extent can your successful 1990 qualifying campaign be attributed to legendary coach Bora Milutinovic?

Bora was the right coach at the right time. He understood better than practically anyone else how to motivate the players and fire them



On the brink
Costa Rica's team during their penalty shootout against the Netherlands.

FIFA in Costa Rica

The Costa Rican Football Federation has qualified for the World Cup finals on four separate occasions – in 1990, 2002, 2006 and 2014 – and currently occupies 16th place in the FIFA/Coca-Cola World Ranking. The Central American nation is home to around 4.5 million people.

In 2001, 2007 and 2009, FIFA provided around \$1,675,000 to help the Federation to establish and develop a headquarters in San Rafael de Alajuela, a technical centre and a sports centre as well as constructing football pitches. In 2010 and 2011, FIFA supported the construction of accommodation totalling \$900,000.



End of the road
Coach Jorge Luis Pinto has decided to step down from his post.

up for a World Cup campaign within a short space of time. Now we want to work on a longer-term basis and build on what we have already achieved at the top level.

What is the Costa Rican Football Federation doing to ensure the “sustainability” of this summer’s success in Brazil?

The key is to consistently make use of the opportunities now open to us, which will make it easier for us to attract strong teams as friendly match opponents. Up to now we've been quite isolated and have only occasionally been able to test ourselves against major countries. Our clubs are already benefiting from football's improved profile in this country, and eight of the 12 teams in our top flight have been invited to training camps in the

USA, Canada or Mexico. That would have been inconceivable before the World Cup in Brazil. When it comes to infrastructure, we've got a much stronger base than we had 15 years ago. Back then we didn't even have a training ground of our own; the national team lived a virtually nomadic existence and sometimes had to train on baseball fields. Now we've got three grass pitches and an artificial pitch, as well as a modern national stadium in San Jose that seats 35,000 people.

Fourteen of the World Cup squad play their football overseas. What role does Costa Rica's domestic league play in the national team's rise?

It's extremely important. Even though the clubs lose their best players overseas every

year, this forces them to focus more consistently on their young players and continue to develop promising new talent. Only three overseas players are allowed per club in our championship, so responsibility for their performance automatically passes to our domestic footballers. In contrast to many other leagues, our home-grown players take up the most important positions, which helps to increase their dynamism, intensity and tactical awareness. The third-highest league, LINAFA, also plays a key role as it's where our best amateur teams compete. It has practically formed the basis for our current upturn in fortunes.

What is the situation with home-grown coaches?

Training coaches is another central part of our development programme. In order to move Costa Rican football forward, we need our own experienced and competent coaches to guide our most talented players to the top.

Representatives from the CONCACAF Zone generally performed extremely well in Brazil, with three of the four teams – Costa Rica, USA and Mexico – qualifying for the knockout stages. Is the region reaching its peak?

Hardly – countries such as Panama, El Salvador and Canada have huge potential too. Costa Rica's success helps the whole region and reinforces our claim for a fourth fixed spot at the World Cup finals.

What are Costa Rica's next targets?

We want to qualify for the 2018 World Cup in Russia – that's the most important thing. Our youth work is also one of our top priorities. Our training programme includes teams at U-15, U-17, U-19 and U-20 levels, and although we don't currently have an U-23 team, we want to resolve that in time for the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro so that we can take the next generation to the top of the sport. Costa Rica's 2014 fairytale could be continued in two years' time. ⚽

Henry Duarte was speaking to Thomas Renggli

SONY
make.believe

OFFICIAL PARTNER



EVERY GASP
EVERY SCREAM
EVERY ROAR
EVERY DIVE
EVERY BALL
EVERY PASS
EVERY CHANCE
EVERY STRIKE
EVERY BEAUTIFUL DETAIL
SHALL BE SEEN
SHALL BE HEARD
SHALL BE FELT

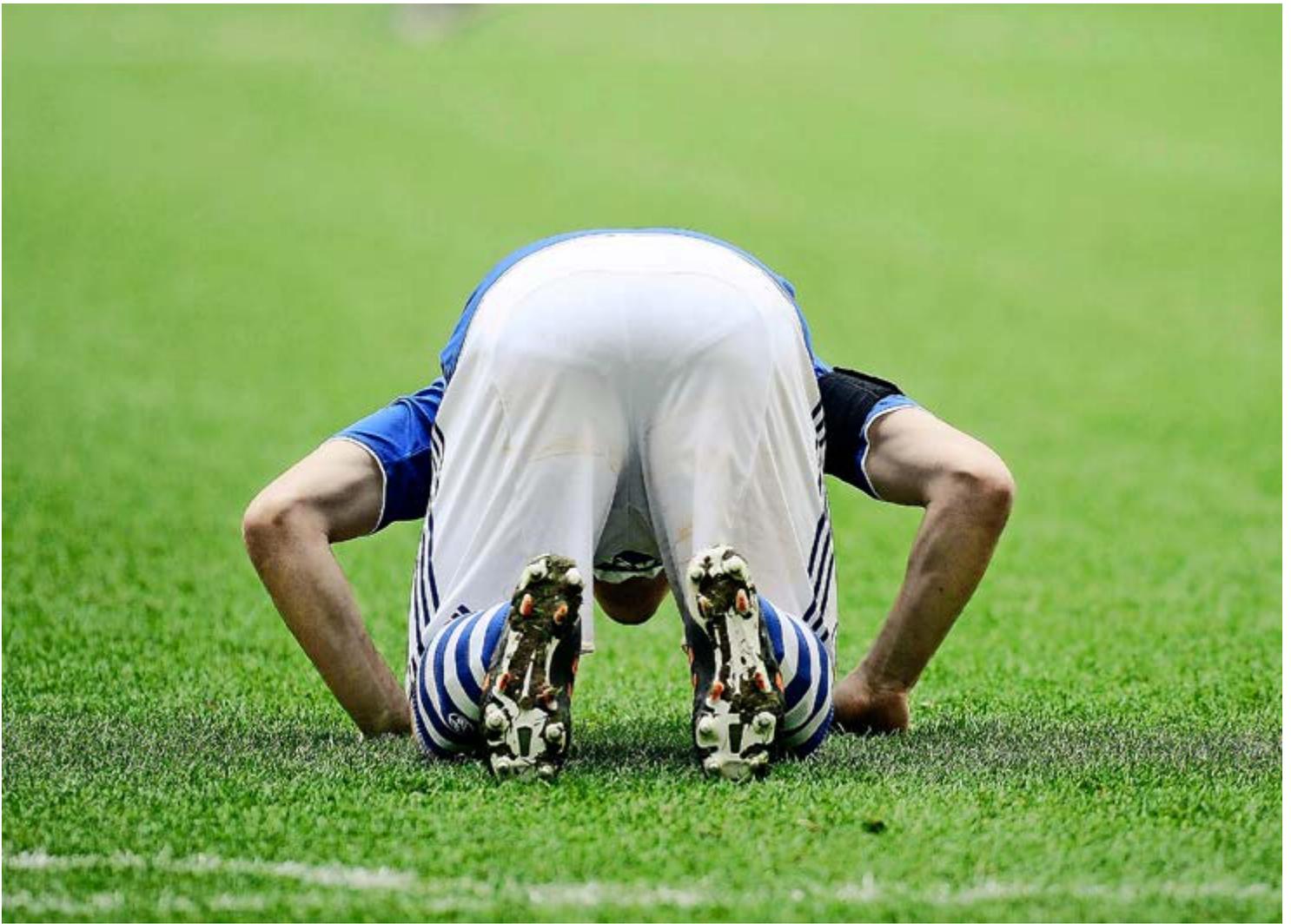
Feel the Beauty
BE MOVED



BRAVIA | THE NEW 4K LED TV



"SONY" and "make.believe" are trademarks of Sony Corporation.



He ate his last meal before sunrise. It is Ramadan, Islam's holy month of fasting, and being both a Muslim and a professional footballer means no snacks after training and probably not even a gulp of water. He has endured hunger all day and still has to play a match this evening. As he arrives for the game, the sun hangs low over the stadium as if to remind him that it is not yet time to eat. Now the match is in full swing, and you would never know by watching the player that he has not eaten all day. His running, tenacity and hard work make him one of the best players on the pitch. Twice he finds himself in front of the opponents' goal; twice he scores. In his elation, he falls to his knees in prayer and thanks God. His two goals are vital in securing a win for his team. Darkness has finally descended by the time the final whistle blows. He thoroughly deserves his evening meal for such a masterly performance. ❄️

Dominik Petermann

There it stood, the pinball machine, at gate number 62 in the airport. It flashed, rattled and gave off all manner of noises, an old model without a doubt. On the illuminated area above the nervously blinking digital display stood a laughing Zinedine Zidane, still with a full head of hair, in the middle of performing one of his world-famous tricks. Children of all ages crowded around the machine and a baby in a buggy stared reverently at Zidane. It will still be a couple of years before that infant will be able to see the metal ball behind the glass case. Football-themed fun to help stave off the boredom: it was clear the old machine would still have to give a couple more of years of service in the stuffy waiting area. In the background an announcement was made over two small loudspeakers that muffled each other's sound on every vowel: "Last call for flight 4422 to Marseille." A group of the people around the machine peeled away. The bulky man in his late forties, wearing bermuda shorts and a football shirt, pinged the ball around the machine one last time before turning around and wandering off. ❄️

Alan Schweingruber

The emergence of smartphone technology and the craving for recognition among many of its users has recently led to a trend for capturing yourself in photos referred to as "selfies". Germany's Chancellor Angela Merkel and Arsenal striker Lukas Podolski posed together for such an image in the immediate aftermath of their country's World Cup triumph in Rio, but an increasing number of professional footballers are finding themselves unwillingly dragged into these self-portraits. Take Milan star Mario Balotelli for example. During a match against Manchester City at Pittsburgh's Heinz Field a few days ago, two AC fans trespassed onto the field of play to immortalise themselves alongside their idol, then uploaded the resulting image on Twitter. As a result, this particular selfie gave the pitch invaders a brief moment of fame on the smartphone screens of strangers everywhere, many of whom would probably prefer to watch football matches without such interruptions. ❄️

Perikles Monioudis

THE
OBERMANN
FILES
PART 1 OF 4



Hope through football Holger Obermann surrounded by young Pakistani players

Mini goals in Pakistan

Ten years ago, overseas development coach Holger Obermann joined the aid effort in crisis and catastrophe-struck areas of Pakistan, using the power of the game to alleviate at least a little of the terrible suffering.

We were confronted with the spectre of child labour in Pakistan. This was not merely a fringe topic raised by FIFA's "Football for Hope" initiative. It was our principal focus for weeks on end. Several hundred children in a small town in Pakistan were being forced to work in factories, mainly manufacturing balls for export around the world. But FIFA, various European charities and the sports equipment industry helped us find a solution. In a major campaign, the kids were freed from the ghettos and included in a hugely successful football-based initiative by the name of "Kicken statt Nähen" (Don't Sew, Play).

Sport can help, especially when people have lost hope. There is great suffering here, especially in Kashmir in the north west of the country. It remains a fiercely disputed border region in which much blood has flowed in the past between the Pakistanis and the Indians, and where

many thousands have died. Then there are the areas prone to natural catastrophe. One badly hit area is the region around provincial capital Muzaffarabad.

A major earthquake occurred on 8 October 2005 at 8.50 am, wreaking havoc over an area some 100 km wide. Houses collapsed and lives were extinguished. The death toll rose by the hour until at least 100,000 people were reported killed. Emergency and rescue services including helpers from Germany struggled to make their way across the devastated areas. Countless kids and youths lost their families, and were subsequently forced to eke out an existence on the streets.

Football had to rise to the challenge. FIFA and numerous national associations reacted by sending sports equipment and, even more importantly, coaching staff. People can help people. The focus was not on scoring or saving goals, not on technique and tactics, victories or

defeats. Many kids were and remain traumatised. Sport can offer a little comfort, and restore the joy of living to young people - one small step at a time.

Safer's suffering

The reason I kept coming back was the kids. They are defenceless, and often lost. One of them was Safer Gilani from the village of Neleem, 20 km from Muzaffarabad. At the time the earthquake struck he was staying with his grandparents in the capital city, Islamabad. He heard about the disaster that had destroyed his village on the radio and immediately set off for home, but it was a tortuous undertaking. The roads had been completely destroyed in a radius of 50 km around the epicentre of the quake. With great difficulty and after taking countless diversions the lad finally made it to Muzaffarabad only to discover the dreadful truth: his parents and five siblings were all dead. There wasn't a lot I could do, but I at least managed to have Safer assigned a place in the emergency tented accommodation provided by the Red Cross. We sensed his deep sorrow and utter bewilderment. It was a fate shared by too many at the time.

I returned to Muzaffarabad a year later in 2006. What had I brought to alleviate a little of the kids' trauma? Donations from Germany, shoes and warm clothing. It was the early days of winter. Balls and football boots were less in demand on this occasion but still the kids joined in, playing to forget on rock-hard ground. Feeling the freedom, they ran, fought, won, lost and won again. When a goal was scored their sorrows disappeared for a very short moment. Safer was among those still traumatised, but there had been a small change: a tiny spark of joy because he was playing football again. This was the game at its most beautiful.

The lads played on until they sank to the floor exhausted, drained and utterly spent. Which brought us to the next problem: hunger and thirst. But sport can also help in this respect. My Pakistani assistant Mohsen made sure of that. He had been out and about in the early morning purchasing sandwiches, milk and fruit and for these lads he had prepared a feast. Even more than that, his efforts represented hope. Perhaps there would be a better tomorrow after all.

"Let's keep going, coach!"

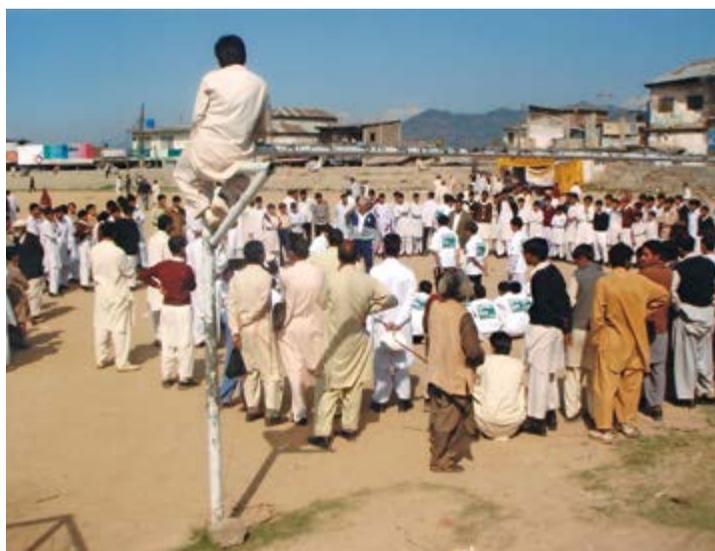
We continued our tour of inspection in Rawalakot and Abbottabad, making slow progress on the narrow road. We allowed a full five hours for a 100 km journey, often driving perilously close to 100-metre deep abysses. Suddenly we saw headlights in our rear view mirror. Could it be an ambush? There it was again, an anxious feeling in my guts. But I wouldn't have been there if I had been unable to control my fears, not in countries afflicted by crisis or war. The vehicle pulled out, overtook us and pulled back in again, a hair's breadth from our front bumper. Our driver jumped on the brakes, and we breathed a sigh of relief, because we had seen the four Pakistanis inside were uniformed. They were secret police, simply ensuring no-one came too close to the nuclear power station, and escorted us all the way to Rawalakot. We joined community leaders for our inspection and assured them a FIFA donation would arrive in the next few months. We unloaded mini goals. Playing on a small-size pitch improves ball control. There were no keepers so we saw plenty of goals, and the kids especially enjoyed that.

Danger is a frequent companion in this job, but not on that day. We could relax. Abbottabad was further up the mountain. The cadets in the military academy play football in their leisure time. When 50 balls and shirts arrived in a huge parcel from Germany, they were almost speechless with joy. We'd played for 120 minutes and still no-one wanted to stop. "Let's keep going, coach!" they shouted. So, just this once, I let them have another 15 minutes. ☺

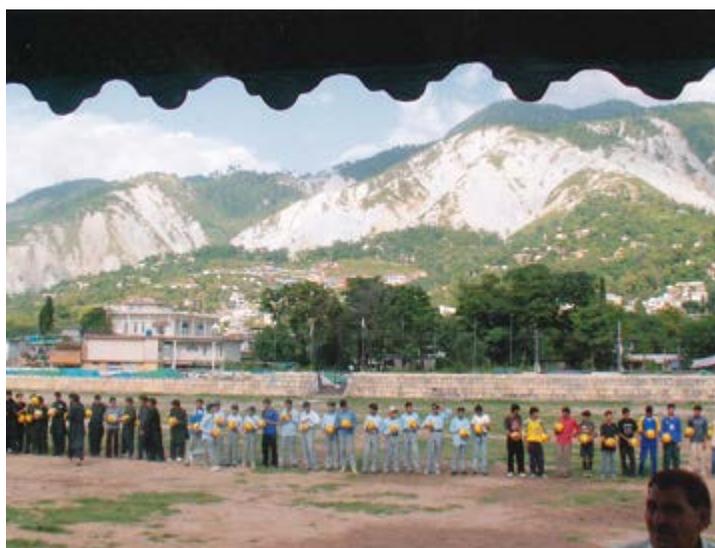
FIFA'S AID TO PAKISTAN

FIFA began distributing Football Resource Kits in Pakistan in 2005 as part of the International Labour Organization (ILO) International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC).

The first FIFA Goal project for Pakistan was approved back in March 2002 with the construction of a headquarters for the Pakistan Football Association (PFF) and an associated technical centre (total investment of US\$512,608, both projects in Lahore). Four years later, FIFA allocated US\$400,000 for a PFF training centre in Karachi.



Training Obermann coaches local kids.



Balls for all Start of a tournament in the foothills.

Holger Obermann (born 1936 in Kassel, Germany) has worked in football for many years and on four continents. In a four-part FIFA Weekly series we exclusively present excerpts from the German overseas coach's manuscript "Mein Fussball hatte Flügel" (My football had wings).

PART TWO COVERING CAMEROON WILL BE PUBLISHED IN OUR EDITION DATED 15 AUGUST.



Name

Alexei Sorokin

Date and place of birth

5 April 1972, Moscow

Positions held

CEO of the Russia 2018 Local Organising Committee and formerly the Secretary General of the Football Union of Russia and the head of Russia's bid to host the World Cup.

“Football is a part of Russia’s soul too”

With four years to go before Russia hosts the World Cup, Alexei Sorokin, the CEO of the Russia 2018 LOC, spoke about the next phase in the tournament’s preparations and the state of Russian football.

Mr Sorokin, football is part of Brazil’s soul. Is it part of Russia’s too?

Alexei Sorokin: Yes, football is part of Russia’s soul. It is the number one sport in Russia. You only have to look at the statistics to see that. I know we’re not the world champions but we have been Olympic and European champions in the past. We have five million registered players playing for Russian clubs, and it’s anyone’s guess how many millions more play the game for fun.

What do your compatriots think about the 2018 World Cup?

There’s a huge amount of enthusiasm and the surveys are very encouraging, with 76% of people in favour of Russia hosting the World Cup in 2018. That’s a good start. We haven’t launched the promotional campaigns yet and the sponsors have yet to launch theirs. Even so, it’s good to have that kind of support for the World Cup at this early stage.

Part of the work has already been done. Spartak’s stadium is ready, as is Sochi’s of course, and Kazan’s. What are you focusing on right now?

There’s still a lot of work to be done. We’ll really get down to business now the World Cup has finished in Brazil. We are ready for FIFA to come and do all their checks and we’ll continue building and inspecting the remaining stadiums. We’ll keep on getting things organised and by the summer we’ll have set up departments similar to all the FIFA departments involved in the project, in terms of both operations and planning and strategy.

There will be a considerable amount of investment in infrastructures.

Yes, it’ll be the same with communications, and transport, training grounds, accommodation and power lines, with \$19bn being invested. Ours is a very ambitious programme.

Russia is, to all intents and purposes, a continent in itself, and there were several problems with transport during the Sochi Winter Olympics.

In a geographical sense, Sochi is a difficult place. Nevertheless, the area in which the 2018 World Cup is being held is smaller than that of Brazil, and teams won’t have to make such long journeys. None of the venues are more than a two-hour flight away from Moscow.

What does your investment in transport infrastructure mean exactly?

It covers access to the stadiums, streets, the refurbishing of airport terminals and much more besides. We want to offer free on ground transportation to all fans with tickets, and this is something we are in the process of discussing with the Russian rail operator and other transport companies.

As the former Secretary General of the Football Union of Russia, how do you see the future of football in your country?

We returned to the World Cup after a 12-year absence, which explains why expectations were not that high, even if we were very impressive in qualifying. We finished third in our group with two points from two draws. In the World Cup you need a little bit of luck to go your way too.

All the players in the Russia team are home-based. Could that be an advantage in terms of team spirit and togetherness?

I don’t see it as an advantage or disadvantage. Only the best players should be in the national team and the man who picks them is the coach. Four years ago we had five or six players with foreign teams and we failed to reach the World Cup. As I said to you, though, I don’t think it is relevant.

Russian clubs are more powerful now.

I think that’s the real reason why our national team is made up entirely of players

from the national league. Teams are able to hold on to their international players and they make use of that. The aim is for the Russian championship to take its place among the top four leagues in Europe before 2018, the year we host the World Cup. Right now I can’t say if that objective’s going to be reached.

It would be good for the Football Union of Russia too.

Well, it goes without saying that the clubs and the Football Union of Russia have conflicting interests. Clubs are obviously interested in selling their players to foreign clubs, while the Football Union of Russia would prefer the best players to stay here and make the national league stronger. But it’s the same everywhere.

Changing the subject, you’re a linguist and you have some very specific language skills. How do you think they can help you go about your job as the CEO of the 2018 World Cup?

In communication, obviously (*laughs*). I don’t think it’s absolutely essential in life to cling on to your educational background or to what you’ve trained in. Naturally, being a linguist helps me to some extent, but that’s not where my main professional skills lie. This is a job in which I make use of my intellect more than any specific training. ☺

Alexei Sorokin was talking to Perikles Monioudis

T H E N

Bokelberg Stadium, Monchengladbach, Germany



1971

A Gunter Netzer and Borussia Monchengladbach fan holds aloft a cardboard cut-out during a European Cup tie.

N

O

W

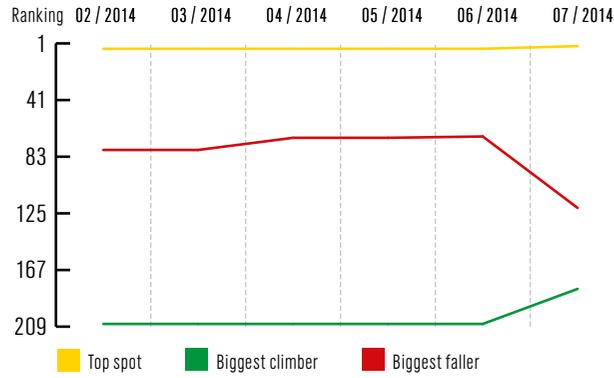
Arena Castelao, Fortaleza, Brazil



2014

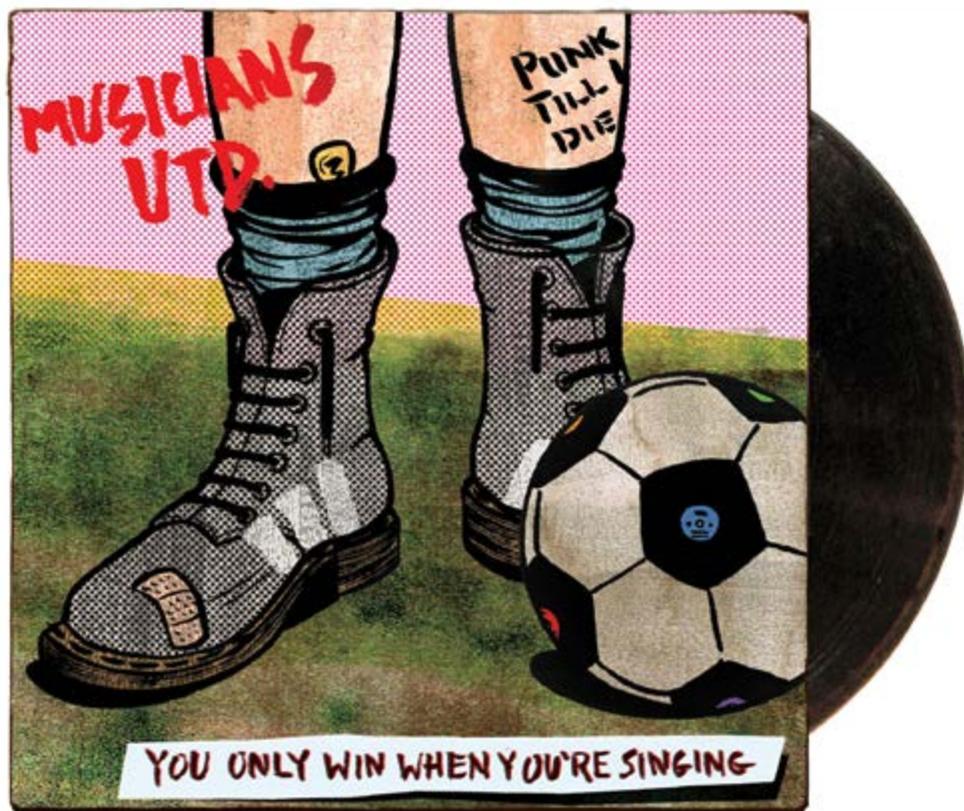
Brazil fans congregate behind a cardboard replica of keeper Julio Cesar. A *Seleção* beat Colombia 2-1 in the World Cup quarter-final.

Rank	Team	Change in ranking	Points
1	Germany	1	1724
2	Argentina	3	1606
3	Netherlands	12	1496
4	Colombia	4	1492
5	Belgium	6	1401
6	Uruguay	1	1330
7	Brazil	-4	1241
8	Spain	-7	1229
9	Switzerland	-3	1216
10	France	7	1202
11	Portugal	-7	1148
12	Chile	2	1098
13	Greece	-1	1091
14	Italy	-5	1056
15	USA	-2	989
16	Costa Rica	12	986
17	Croatia	1	955
18	Mexico	2	930
19	Bosnia and Herzegovina	2	917
20	England	-10	911
21	Ecuador	5	901
22	Ukraine	-6	898
23	Russia	-4	897
24	Algeria	-2	872
25	Côte d'Ivoire	-2	850
26	Denmark	-3	807
27	Scotland	0	734
28	Romania	1	733
29	Sweden	3	724
30	Venezuela	10	720
31	Serbia	-1	717
32	Turkey	3	714
33	Panama	-2	684
34	Nigeria	10	664
35	Czech Republic	-1	646
36	Egypt	0	645
37	Slovenia	-12	644
38	Hungary	9	642
38	Ghana	-1	642
40	Honduras	-7	637
41	Armenia	-3	635
42	Tunisia	6	621
43	Austria	-1	614
44	Wales	-3	606
45	Japan	1	604
46	Slovakia	3	588
47	Iceland	5	570
48	Paraguay	2	566
49	Iran	-6	563
50	Montenegro	1	559
51	Guinea	1	555
52	Uzbekistan	7	523
53	Norway	2	520
53	Cameroon	3	520
55	Finland	6	508
56	Korea Republic	1	501
57	Jordan	6	500
58	Burkina Faso	2	495
59	Peru	-14	487
60	Mali	-3	483
61	Poland	8	478
62	Senegal	12	476
63	Libya	1	471
64	Sierra Leone	-10	469
65	United Arab Emirates	7	466
66	South Africa	-1	450
67	Albania	-1	444
67	Israel	8	444
69	Oman	10	443
70	Republic of Ireland	0	440
71	Bolivia	-4	429
72	Bulgaria	6	425
73	Azerbaijan	10	410
74	FYR Macedonia	6	406
75	Cape Verde Islands	-36	401
76	Australia	-14	397
77	Zambia	-1	396



78	Saudi Arabia	12	384
79	Morocco	-2	377
79	Angola	14	377
81	Belarus	1	376
82	Congo	3	375
83	Jamaica	-2	373
84	Trinidad and Tobago	-13	369
85	Palestine	9	362
86	Qatar	14	361
87	Uganda	-1	358
88	Togo	0	357
89	Northern Ireland	1	356
89	Iraq	15	356
91	Benin	-4	354
92	Estonia	6	345
93	Gabon	-4	344
94	China PR	9	342
95	Kenya	13	339
96	Congo DR	-12	338
96	Georgia	0	338
98	Zimbabwe	1	334
99	Botswana	-7	332
99	Niger	13	332
101	New Zealand	-4	330
102	Moldova	-1	325
103	Latvia	6	314
104	Lithuania	2	312
105	Bahrain	5	288
106	Tanzania	7	287
107	Kuwait	8	281
108	Luxembourg	11	278
109	Rwanda	7	276
110	Ethiopia	-3	273
111	Equatorial Guinea	-9	270
112	Namibia	2	264
113	Haiti	-40	262
114	Mozambique	4	257
115	Sudan	5	256
115	Liberia	1	256
117	Central African Republic	-12	253
118	Canada	-8	250
119	Lebanon	6	249
120	Cuba	-25	245
121	Malawi	1	234
121	El Salvador	-53	234
123	Aruba	-3	233
124	Tajikistan	2	232
125	Dominican Republic	6	230
126	Burundi	2	222
127	Kazakhstan	-3	220
128	Philippines	1	218
129	Afghanistan	1	218
129	Vietnam	-6	217
131	Lesotho	8	213
131	Suriname	5	213
133	Mauritania	4	208
134	Guatemala	-7	204
135	St Vincent and the Grenadines	-2	203
136	New Caledonia	4	199
136	Guinea-Bissau	-2	199
138	St Lucia	-1	195
139	Cyprus	3	193
140	Turkmenistan	3	183
140	Chad	-6	183
142	Grenada	2	182
143	Madagascar	1	179
144	Kyrgyzstan	5	176

145	Maldives	2	171
146	Syria	-6	169
147	Korea DPR	-1	163
148	Gambia	0	161
149	Antigua and Barbuda	2	152
150	Malta	-18	146
151	Malaysia	2	144
151	India	3	144
153	Indonesia	4	141
154	Singapore	1	140
155	Guyana	1	136
156	Puerto Rico	2	134
157	Thailand	-8	128
158	St Kitts and Nevis	2	124
159	Swaziland	14	123
160	Myanmar	-1	122
161	Belize	-9	117
162	Hong Kong	1	114
163	Bangladesh	4	103
164	Nepal	0	102
165	Pakistan	-1	100
166	Montserrat	0	99
167	Liechtenstein	-5	93
167	Dominica	2	93
169	Barbados	1	92
170	Laos	-2	87
171	Tahiti	-10	85
172	Comoros	2	84
173	Bermuda	2	83
174	Guam	4	79
175	Nicaragua	1	78
175	Solomon Islands	5	78
177	São Tomé e Príncipe	-5	72
178	Sri Lanka	1	71
178	Chinese Taipei	-2	71
180	Yemen	3	70
181	Turks and Caicos Islands	26	66
182	Seychelles	-1	64
183	Curaçao	-1	63
184	Faroe Islands	-13	61
185	Mauritius	-1	56
186	South Sudan	-1	43
187	Vanuatu	3	38
188	Fiji	0	31
189	Mongolia	-2	29
190	US Virgin Islands	5	28
190	Samoa	-1	28
192	Bahamas	-6	26
192	Brunei Darussalam	0	26
192	Timor-Leste	0	26
192	Tonga	0	26
196	Cayman Islands	0	21
197	American Samoa	1	18
198	Andorra	2	16
199	Papua New Guinea	-3	14
200	Cambodia	-10	13
200	British Virgin Islands	-2	13
202	Eritrea	-1	11
203	Somalia	-1	8
204	Macau	-2	7
205	Djibouti	-1	6
206	Cook Islands	-1	5
207	Anguilla	-1	1
208	Bhutan	-1	0
208	San Marino	-1	0



Football-mad musos

Hanspeter Kuenzler

There are players who sing, but also musicians who play. Some of them are not entirely devoid of talent either.

Menace were true pioneers of punk and still tour the world to this day. We track down guitarist Finn Panton minding a record stall in London's Camden Lock market. He walks with a limp, but that has nothing to do with his career at the rough end of the music biz - except in the sense that the chronic arthritis affecting his foot was ultimately inflicted by Madness bassist Bedders. During a match in Regent's Park back in the 1980s, the bassman clattered the guitar player so hard that his foot never fully recovered.

Panton can no longer play, but he still heads up the amateur league he himself launched in 1983: the Musical Associations League. Football was regarded as ridiculously uncool in the music scene at the time, but a few musicians still went to the park, provided of course no trendspotters were about, and indulged their passion for the game. Panton rounded up a handful of them for an inaugural match in Regent's Park.

The fame of Camden's football-playing punks spread like wildfire. The league attract-

ed teams fielded by record companies, live music pubs, bands, DJs and other music industry players and had swollen to three divisions at its peak. Some players were stars, but no-one cared: "We once read in the papers that one of the lads had joined Rainbow," Finn chuckles, "we didn't even know he could sing."

Finn's Hall of Fame includes the likes of Sex Pistols drummer Paul Cook, Damon Albarn of Blur and Iron Maiden's Steve Harris. The league has shrunk a little these days and currently comprises 16 teams in two divisions. "Hiring pitches in the public parks is too expensive now," Panton explains. There is still passion and determination in abundance, compensating admirably for certain limitations on technique and skill.

But in an ironic twist, the musicians' league was responsible for an English presence on the Maracanã turf for the World Cup Final. The players from MAL second division outfit AFC Groucho Harpos looked on in astonishment when they spotted their defender Alex Degtiarev on the touchline. His little lad won an Escort Kids competition - and duly trotted out onto the pitch hand-in-hand with Mats Hummels. ⚽



Perikles Monioudis

There is only one reason football memorabilia exists: to remind fans of their beloved side, to reassure them during their everyday lives as well as in the stadium. It is, however, no surprise that over the last few decades the items have evolved to fulfil different purposes, such as the highly practical object above: a simple pocket knife with two blades of different lengths.

The metal insert in the light-coloured shaft is of a powerfully-built football player, moving forward over an imaginary pitch with the ball at his feet. The owner of the knife perhaps sees this as he spreads butter on a piece of bread with the blunt blade before maybe tightening a screw on his bicycle bell with the equally blunt other blade.

Of course, knives are not allowed in World Cup stadiums anymore - the metal detectors at the entrance would see to that. In lower leagues, however, where half-time often coincides with an afternoon snack, pocket knives still have their uses, even if the pictured specimen from Sunderland no longer does.

This particular knife had its heyday around the turn of the 20th century anyway, when Sunderland FC won the First Division title in 1892, 1893, 1895, 1902 and 1913 before lifting it for the last time in 1936.

The intervening barren spell has not harmed the club's long-term popularity. Sunderland are among the world's 31 wealthiest teams, with an estimated market value of approximately \$93 million USD. Yes, you could certainly buy a lot of pocket knives with that. But could you get one as nice? ⚽



instinct takes over

#predatorinstinct

adidas.com/predator

Name**Huib Stevens**Date and place of birth**29 November 1953,
Sittard, Netherlands**Clubs coached**Kerkrade, Schalke 04,
Hertha Berlin, Cologne,
Eindhoven, Salzburg,
PAOK Saloniki, Stuttgart**Major coaching honours**UEFA Cup winner 1997,
German Cup winner 2001 and 2002
(all with Schalke),
Austrian Championship winner 2010.**


“The atmosphere was eerie”

On 11 September 2001, coach Huib Stevens managed Schalke 04 in their first Champions League match, but the day is ingrained in his memory for very different reasons.

September 2001 was a very special day for us at Schalke 04. The previous season we had qualified for the Champions League for the first time in the club's history and were due to make our debut in the competition against Panathinaikos on that day. The match was sold out and due to be staged in front of more than 50,000 spectators at our new stadium, so naturally we were all very excited about it.

We checked into a hotel as we always did before important matches. I went downstairs a couple of hours before kick-off and the players were already down there watching television. I'll never forget the images that greeted me: aeroplanes, skyscrapers, rubble and death. Immediately I called out: “Turn that off!” but it was already too late. How can you deny people information in a situation like that? Instead I tried to distract the players by reviewing our tactics for the evening ahead. I just wanted to get rid of those images somehow.

I could never have imagined such a situation. For me, football has always been of the utmost importance, but all of a sudden something more important was going on, so I hoped the match would provide us with some

form of escape. Of course the players put up a fight. They went to our manager, Rudi Assauer, asking him to call off the game but there was nothing he could do. I suspect UEFA discussed the matter internally but they announced that the matches would go ahead as planned that evening, citing the neutrality of sport as the reason for the decision.

We travelled to the stadium in our team bus two hours before kick-off. The atmosphere was eerie, not only among the fans but among the players too. Nobody was thinking about football. I had to substitute our midfielder Andreas Moller after half an hour. I tried to distract myself and wanted to say to myself: “Life goes on!” But of course that didn't work.

We didn't have a single shot on goal in the entire 90 minutes and lost the match 2-0. After the game, the Greek side danced and celebrated on the pitch and I didn't blame them – they had simply coped better under the circumstances. But how could I blame my players? All I could say to them in the dressing room afterwards was “Why are you still here?”

After the game I returned to the hotel alone, as my wife and children were back at

home in Eindhoven. Ordinarily that wouldn't have bothered me as I liked having the chance to review the entire match in front of the video player on my own. But that night was different; I needed somebody to talk to. I couldn't just sit all alone at home in front of the television – not that night. So I called my wife and spoke to her for half an hour. After that, I put the television on once more and watched the pictures coming from America – the aeroplanes, skyscrapers, rubble and death. It was incomprehensible.

UEFA responded that same evening, cancelling all the matches scheduled for Wednesday evening. It was a reasonable and very humane decision, but it came a day too late for us. ☹

**As told to Sven Goldmann
on September 11, 2002**

In Turning Point, personalities reflect on a decisive moment in their lives.

The FIFA World Cup™
is where all of us want to be.



VISA



FIFA WORLD CUP
Brasil

worldwide partner

everywhere you want to be

A transfer in the billions, six identical names and four different spellings - test your knowledge!

① As their new season slowly approaches, which of these leagues is still on summer break?



② Nowadays, transfers totalling many millions are completely normal, but who first moved to another club for more than 40,000,000,000 (forty billion)?



A Christian 1999

E Luis 2000

I Cristiano 2009

O Luis 2014

③ In the top division of one particular European league, five clubs all have which of these words in their names?

L Borussia **N** Real
R Olympique **Y** United

④ He was a European champion and won the Ballon d'Or. His surname is spelled differently depending on whether you speak English or Spanish, French, German or Italian. Who is he?



E

N

S

U

The answer to last week's Quiz Cup was **MATS**

Detailed answers on www.fifa.com/theweekly

Inspiration and implementation: cus

Send your answer by **6 August 2014** to feedback-theweekly@fifa.org.

Correct solutions to all quizzes published from 13 June 2014 onwards will go into a draw in January 2015 for a trip for **two to the FIFA Ballon d'Or on 12 January 2015**.

Before sending in answers, all participants must read and accept the competition terms and conditions and the rules, which can be found at:

http://www.fifa.com/mm/document/af-magazine/fifaweekly/02/20/51/99/en_rules_20140613_english_neutral.pdf



A goalkeeper is given a second yellow card or straight red card during a penalty shootout. What should or can the affected team do about it?

Dario Colombo, Naples

The Laws of the Game state that “if the goalkeeper is sent off during the taking of kicks from the penalty mark, he must be replaced by a player who finished the match,” but the rules differ in the event of injury: “A goalkeeper who is injured while kicks are being taken from the penalty mark and is unable to continue as goalkeeper may be replaced by a named substitute provided his team has not used the maximum number of substitutes permitted under the competition rules.” (*thr*)



Which team will win the U-20 Women's World Cup?

From 5 to 24 August, 16 teams will go head-to-head for the most coveted trophy in U-20 women's football. Germany, USA, Korea DPR and France are all among the favourites, but who will win? Cast your vote at www.ffa.com/newscentre

LAST WEEK'S POLL RESULTS

Can James Rodriguez succeed at Real Madrid?



WEEK IN NUMBERS



CSKA Moscow have now won six Russian Super Cup titles. The capital city side defeated nine-man FK Rostov 3-1 in the final in Krasnodar on Saturday evening. CSKA's win further reinforces their dominance of the tournament and Russia's cup competitions in general.



15-year-old Martin Odegaard was the week's youngest goalscorer. The Stromsgodset prodigy netted his first goal in a 3-1 win over reigning Norwegian champions Sandnes Ulf. Odegaard first made a name for himself earlier this year by becoming the youngest player ever to feature in the Tippeligaen.



Robert Lewandowski led Bayern Munich to Telekom Cup victory in Hamburg by scoring three goals in two days. The former Borussia Dortmund striker looked formidable ahead of the new season, scoring an incredible lobbed goal against Borussia Monchengladbach. With five goals to his name, the 25-year-old has scored more than any other player in Telekom Cup history.