



TECHNICAL REPORT



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INTRODUCTION

This technical report sets out to provide a permanent record, from a coaching standpoint, of the 31 matches played during a UEFA EURO 2012 won by a Spanish squad which set benchmarks with its clearly defined playing philosophy and made history by becoming the first to successfully defend the UEFA European Football Championship title and achieve a unique hat-trick of European and world trophies.

In addition to recording factual and statistical information about the tournament, this report seeks to offer analysis, reflections and debating points which, it is hoped, will give technicians food for thought. By highlighting tendencies in European national team football and relating them to the trends which have become visible in the UEFA Champions League, the objective is also to provide coaches active in the development levels of the game with information to help them develop the qualities that will be needed by the elite performers of the future.



Spain's David Silva tries to play his way out of an Italian maze formed by Daniele De Rossi – with his boot on the ball – Giorgio Chiellini, Leonardo Bonucci and Emanuele Giaccherini

GROUP A

STING IN THE TAIL



Poland's substitute goalkeeper Przemysław Tytoń steps in to save the penalty from Giorgos Karagounis

Resilience and stout defending emerged as key elements in a group from which the Polish co-hosts were disappointed to make an early exit along with Russia, semi-finalists in 2008 and group leaders until the final matchday. Dick Advocaat's side had convincingly beaten the Czechs on the opening day, but Michał Bilek's team ultimately took top place, while the Russians were eliminated by a Greek side that had had its back to the wall throughout the group stage.

The Greeks had seemed to be slithering onto a downward slope when, just before half-time in the opening game, defender Sokratis Papastathopoulos was red-carded with his side 1-0 down to the rampant hosts. But Fernando Santos regrouped his team into a compact 4-4-1 formation and, against ten, the Poles lost their impetus to the extent that the first action by second-choice goalkeeper Przemysław Tytoń, replacing red-carded Wojciech Szczęsny, was to save a penalty from Giorgos Karagounis.

The Greeks' 4-3-3 formation evolved into a 4-2-3-1 (Giorgos Samaras moving from the left into a central target role) after going 2-0 down inside six minutes against the Czechs. Again, they reacted with extraordinary resilience and reduced arrears. But a 2-1 defeat seemed to spell elimination.

For the Czechs, the three points were manna after an initial mauling by Russia in a game that produced 33 goal attempts. At 2-0 down, Bilek modified his 4-2-3-1 into a 4-1-4-1 formation which laid the foundations for a comeback to 2-1, only for powerful Russian counters to provide two more goals. Dick Advocaat's side continued to impress during the second match against Poland, with Andrey Arshavin playing a free-spirit role and opening spaces for team-mates, notably the exuberant left-back Yuri Zhirkov. Franciszek Smuda switched to a more classical 4-3-3 shape with Dariusz Dudka coming in as single screening midfielder and a spectacular equaliser by Jakub Błaszczykowski was a reward for better possession play, character and fighting spirit.

This left everything to be decided on the final matchday. After two 1-1 draws, Poland needed to beat the Czechs in Wrocław to survive. They started strongly, with midfielders Eugen Polanski and Rafał Murawski pushing forward to support a three-pronged attack, while the Czechs defended in depth and waited for opportunities to counter. After the break, Smuda took off the two advanced midfielders and switched to a 4-4-2, which, as urgencies increased, evolved into a 4-2-4. The Czechs, however, gradually took control and, using numerical advantage in midfield as a launching

platform, took the lead with 18 minutes remaining. Although they had an effort spectacularly cleared off the line in the last minute, the Poles were defeated and eliminated.

Simultaneously, a storm was brewing in Warsaw, where the Russians needed only a point to qualify. The wind seemed to be blowing in favour of the favourites as they dominated ball possession and carved clear chances during the opening exchanges. But one critical moment in added time before the break turned the group upside down. Sergei Ignashevich got his head to a seemingly innocuous throw-in on the Greek right and lofted the ball over Zhirkov into the path of Giorgos Karagounis, who drove the ball into the Russian net. That 'accident' proved to be decisive. During the second half, Advocaat dropped Roman Shirokov into a screening role alongside Igor Denisov, withdrew a midfielder and, for a final onslaught, added Pavel Pogrebnyak and Marat Izmailov to the front men in a 4-4-2 formation. However, the Russians failed to pierce the massed Greek defence – and one of the pre-tournament favourites was out.



Milan Baroš (right) and Petr Jiráček celebrate the latter's goal against Poland that earned the Czech Republic a quarter-final place

GROUP B

GERMANY DOMINATE

A group containing three previous winners was predictably difficult. But few would have predicted that Bert van Marwijk's Dutch team would travel home without winning a point. The scene was set by an opening match in Kharkiv, where the Dutch dominated Morten Olsen's Danish team 53-47% in ball possession, 28-8 on goal attempts and 11-4 on corners – but were defeated 1-0. For the last 20 minutes, Van Marwijk replaced one of his screening midfielders (Mark van Bommel) with the creative Rafael van der Vaart, moved Wesley Sneijder to the left flank to replace Ibrahim Afellay, and sent on Klaas-Jan Huntelaar as main striker, with Robin van Persie operating in his slipstream. It was a formula that he was to repeat in the final must-win game against Portugal.



Michael Krohn-Dehli scores the goal which signifies a shock defeat for the Netherlands on their opening day

Joachim Löw's team traded punches with Portugal during an opening match that was an exhibition of technical and athletic qualities – Germany playing their usual 4-2-3-1 system and Portugal opting for a 4-3-3 with Miguel Veloso as the screening midfielder. The contest was decided by a Mario Gomez header from a Sami Khedira cross 18 minutes from time. The results sent the Dutch and Portuguese into their second games needing to win – and the latter achieved that objective. An unchanged team went 2-0 ahead, only for two headers by Nicklas Bendtner to bring Denmark back to level terms with ten minutes to play. As it had done in Group A, an 'accident' then proved decisive, substitute Silvestre Varela failing to make contact with his attempted shot at goal, only to react swiftly enough to hammer the ball inside the near post.

Against Germany, the Dutch fielded the same starters. But when 2-0 down at the break (both goals stemming from the German right, where Thomas Müller's in-depth running and passing were thorns in the Dutch side), Van Marwijk repeated his tactical adjustments at half-time. The German full-backs, however, effectively pre-empted penetrations on the flanks and when the Dutch found a reply, it came from an infield run by Arjen Robben and a central finish by Van Persie. The results meant that no one was mathematically qualified or eliminated, with the Germans needing a point and the others a win.

Injury to Dennis Rommedahl forced Morten Olsen to bring Jakob Poulsen into an otherwise unchanged lineup for the final game against Germany, with Christian Eriksen moving to the right from his more central role. Müller, also on the right, was again the provider for Germany's opener, with the Danish equaliser stemming from an aerial combination between Bendtner and top scorer Michael Krohn-Dehli. However, Lars Bender, stepping in at right-back for the suspended Jérôme Boateng, ran onto an inspired assist from Mesut Özil to clinch a 2-1 scoreline that sent the Danes home.

Against Portugal, the Dutch started with their more offensive lineup and gained an early reward when Van der Vaart pushed forward to receive from Robben on the right and score with a left-footed shot from the edge of the box. Paulo Bento's team (unchanged over the three matches) remained unfazed, with Nani and Cristiano Ronaldo using their pace and skills in dangerous counterattacks. Outdoing the Dutch 22 to 13 in scoring attempts, they were rewarded with two goals. Although Van Marwijk switched to three at the back for the final 25 minutes (sending on Afellay to add attacking personnel on the right), the Portuguese, injecting Rolando as a fifth defender for the closing minutes, played out the 90 minutes without conceding again, clinching second place behind Germany and sending the Dutch to the airport along with the Danes.



Portuguese captain Cristiano Ronaldo tries to escape from the clutches of German defender Jérôme Boateng during his team's only defeat of the group stage



An exhibition of tattoos and despair as Dutch defender Gregory van der Wiel tries to cope with early elimination

GROUP C

SPAIN AND ITALY IMPRESS

The 2008 champions, Spain, opened their title defence with 60% of the ball against Italy (the only team they failed to beat in 2008) and a 1-1 draw, both goals coming from top-class combinations in the space of three minutes in the second half. Tactically, it was a riveting contest of the highest technical order, with Vicente del Bosque fielding a 4-3-3 formation that featured no strikers (Iniesta, Fàbregas and Silva forming the attacking trident), and with Cesare Prandelli opting to play three at the back, including Daniele De Rossi, more widely known as a midfielder.

The draw in Gdansk allowed Croatia to occupy the driving seat with a 3-1 win over the Republic of Ireland. Slaven Bilić lined up his team in 4-1-3-2 formation, while Giovanni Trapattoni opted for a classic 4-4-2, with Aiden McGeady and Damien Duff operating as genuine wingers. Despite earning an equaliser with their set-play weaponry, the Irish conceded three goals at critical times: the start and end of the first half and the opening minutes of the second. In the following game against Spain, the Irish had 34% of the ball and, despite the massed green defences, Spain had 26 goal attempts, 20 of them on target. Fernando Torres, drafted in as striker to replace midfielder Cesc Fàbregas, scored twice during the 4-0 win. On the same day, Italy, fielding an unchanged team, took the lead from an Andrea Pirlo free-kick. But, after the break, the Croatians upped the tempo, gained greater control and equalised when a cross from the left was headed in by unmarked Mario Mandžukić. At this point, Croatia and Spain topped the group with four points, Italy were on two and the Irish had become the first to be mathematically eliminated – although their supporters' ebullience was to continue unabated.



Spain started their match against the Irish with a striker – here Fernando Torres holds off Richard Dunne to score his second goal and put his team 3-0 ahead



Despite the close presence of Irish defender John O'Shea, Italian striker Mario Balotelli sets himself up for the spectacular volley from a corner that sealed the Azzurri's 2-0 win

Prandelli, aware that the game against the Irish was a must-win fixture, made three changes of personnel and switched to a 4-4-2 structure, with Pirlo at the base of the midfield diamond and De Rossi reverting to his more accustomed role in the middle of the park. Trapattoni remained faithful to the core of his team but permuted his strikers against his compatriots. The Irish fought stoutly, shut down spaces and, despite having only 40% of the ball, stayed in the game until substitute Mario Balotelli settled the issue in spectacular fashion in the last minute. Italian eyes turned to the scoreboard hoping not to see a 2-2 draw between Spain and Croatia, which would have meant elimination for them.

Their wish was granted – but not without a degree of suspense. In Gdansk, Bilić had devised a shrewd game plan aimed at running Spain's ball circulation into cul-de-sacs. He gave Domagoj Vida (at right-back) and Danijel Pranjić (left-side midfield) their first starts in a 4-4-2 structure, with usual right-back Darijo Srna operating in midfield and playmaker Luka Modrić playing off the lone striker, Mandžukić. As the need to score became more urgent after the break, Bilić withdrew Srna to his usual position, moved Modrić to the base of a midfield triangle and finished with a trio of front-runners, Nikica Jelavić and Eduardo being drafted in as subs. The defending champions, however, had the last word. With two minutes remaining – and after Vicente del Bosque had reverted to his strikerless 4-3-3 – Fàbregas played a delightful through pass to Andrés Iniesta, who squared the ball for substitute winger Jesús Navas to ram it into an unguarded net from point-blank range. The Croatians had given a very good account of themselves but accompanied the Irish on the road home.



Determined ball-winning by Sergio Busquets dispossesses Croatian playmaker Luka Modrić during Spain's 1-0 win in Gdansk

GROUP D

ENGLAND PERSIST AND PROSPER

This group offered evidence to support theories that expectations can colour performances and playing styles. France, champions in 2000, were expected to progress. There were suspicions that Sweden, on the basis of regular appearances at final tournaments and strong Under-21 performances in recent years, could 'do something'. Ukraine had to cope with the expectations endemic to host nations. And England, with Roy Hodgson taking the helm only weeks before the tournament and losing players through injury, went into action with expectations unusually low.

The modest expectations were underlined by an opening game in which England had 40% of the ball and 3 goal attempts compared with 19 for France. Hodgson had opted for a 4-4-2 formation that proved to be very well organised and hardworking. France, operating a 4-3-3 with Alou Diarra (often assisted by Yohan Cabaye) in the midfield holding role and Samir Nasri teaming up with Franck Ribéry to provide ammunition for lone striker Karim Benzema, forced England into deep-defending mode – and they did so resolutely enough to earn a 1-1 draw, which, in the public view, was considered a positive result. On the same day, the Ukrainians refuelled expectations by coming from a goal down to beat Sweden 2-1, with two headed goals by Andriy Shevchenko. Oleh Blokhin opted for a 4-2-3-1 structure,

while Erik Hamrén favoured a 4-4-1-1 formation, varying the attacking partner for Zlatan Ibrahimović from game to game.

Sweden also struggled to hold on to an advantage in the second game against England, when they came from a goal down to lead 2-1 thanks to well-worked set plays. Roy Hodgson had given the attack a different complexion by fielding Andy Carroll and Danny Welbeck. But it was substitute Theo Walcott who struck an equaliser and crossed for Welbeck to back-heel the winner. The French went to bed as group leaders that night, after beating the hosts 2-0 in a match suspended after 4 minutes due to a storm and restarted 58 minutes later. The French underlined their tactical maturity and their athletic qualities with a convincing performance.

They were unexpectedly less convincing in their final match against the eliminated Swedes. Laurent Blanc's side, with Yann M'Vila coming in for Cabaye, struggled to find routes through a well-organised Swedish defence, while Hamrén's decision to send on Christian Wilhelmsson at the interval made an impact. Sweden scored from two crosses from the right by Sebastian Larsson and Wilhelmsson, with Ibrahimović producing a spectacular volley to put his side ahead. The Swedish team went home but had provided an illustration of their potential.



England substitute Theo Walcott is happy to have brought his team back to 2-2 against Sweden, prior to providing the assist for the winning goal



Despite the high-speed interception attempt by Oleh Gusev, Yohan Cabaye hits the goal that gave France a 2-0 victory over Ukraine – their only win of the tournament



Andriy Shevchenko leaps above Olof Mellberg to head in Ukraine's opening goal in their 2-1 victory against Sweden

However, the outcome of the group depended on the winner-takes-it-all England v Ukraine fixture in Donetsk. Roy Hodgson played Wayne Rooney (back after a two-match suspension) as shadow-striker behind Welbeck, while Oleh Blokhin made changes in each department – notably in attack, where Artem Milevskiy and Marko Dević formed the partnership due to the fitness doubts surrounding Shevchenko. The Ukrainians, urged forward by a partisan crowd, had 58% of the ball and won 16-9 on goal attempts but (often narrowly) failed to beat Joe Hart between the English posts. The only goal of the game came when a cross from the right was deflected by defender and goalkeeper to the far post, where Rooney nodded into the net. Contrary to all the pre-tournament expectations, England had claimed top spot in the group and the Ukrainians, like fellow co-hosts Poland, had made an early exit despite some creditable performances.

QUARTER-FINALS

CZECH REPUBLIC V PORTUGAL



Cristiano Ronaldo gets across Czech right-back Theodor Gebre Selassie to head powerfully past Petr Čech and secure the 1-0 win for Portugal

The Czech head coach, Michal Bílek, took his team to rain-drenched Warsaw admitting he was “happy to get so far after making a mess of our first match”. Although they had also lost their opening game, the Portuguese took to the field as favourites – a situation which coloured the tactical approaches to the game played under a closed roof at the National Stadium. Whereas Paulo Bento fielded an unchanged team, Bílek (with playmaker Tomáš Rosický still sidelined by injury) reinforced his midfield by introducing the previously unused Vladimír Darida for his third international appearance, with the avowed intention of enhancing defensive qualities in his side’s engine room.

The script for the game offered few surprises and progressed relentlessly to its predicted outcome. The Czechs, finding it difficult to retain possession, relied on a stout contain-and-counter approach, with captain Petr Čech leading the way by delivering long, direct passes towards lone striker Milan Baroš, who fought a succession of lonely battles against Pepe and Bruno Alves or, when he drifted to his preferred left side, João Pereira. With Tomáš Hübschman in a holding role,

Jaroslav Plašil took responsibility for distribution to the wide areas, where Petr Jiráček on the right and Václav Pilař on the left tried to make penetrating runs. The most notable counterattack was based on a break down the right by Darida and a looping cross that Baroš narrowly failed to meet. Otherwise, it was a story of relentless pressure by a Portuguese side which, as Paulo Bento admitted, struggled to make efficient use of their 56% ball possession. Although often involved in play, Čech was not obliged to make any significant saves during the first half.

An injury to striker Hélder Postiga had obliged Paulo Bento to make a change of personnel before the break, but team structures were unchanged when the teams emerged for the second half. The Portuguese coach had encouraged his team to exploit the wings to a greater extent, make more frequent positional interchanges and maintain a higher tempo of ball circulation. Portugal consequently took firm control of a game which, with the Czechs struggling to mount effective counters, became a monologue. Bílek made one change, withdrawing Darida, moving Jiráček into a support-striker role and introducing Jan Rezek on the right.

Paulo Bento, meanwhile, made no further changes until a game which yielded 20 goal attempts by Portugal and 2 by the Czechs had been decided by Cristiano Ronaldo’s solitary 79th-minute goal.

The breakthrough finally came when Nani supplied João Moutinho on the right, with Ronaldo getting across his defender to head the well-delivered cross down onto the ground and into the roof of the net. “We dominated throughout,” Paulo Bento commented afterwards. “But when you dominate, you need to be clinical at the back and at the front. It was no surprise that the Czechs defended deep and we knew that we were capable of creating chances.”

His Czech counterpart had no qualms about confessing: “We showed character and strength, and we managed to hold out in the first half. But we steadily lost energy in the second half. They were better than us and it showed. We have created a team with great qualities and spirit, but we knew we weren’t really on the same level as them.”



Petr Čech stretches to the limit as the Portuguese test him once again

QUARTER-FINALS

GERMANY V GREECE

After one victory in their group games and without two suspended players – one of them their captain – the Greeks played an underdog role against Germany in Gdansk and did so with their usual endeavour, perseverance and commitment to the cause. Fernando Santos gave Grigoris Makos his first start of the tournament, as central screening midfielder alongside Kostas Katsouranis, and fielded Dimitris Salpingidis as the advanced central striker, flanked by Sotiris Ninis on the right and Giorgos Samaras on the left. Joachim Löw also rang some changes in the attacking positions, giving first starts to Marco Reus, André Schürrle and Miroslav Klose.

The Germans went into attacking mode immediately, with Philipp Lahm surging forward on the left and the midfield trident of Bastian Schweinsteiger, Sami Khedira and Mesut Özil interchanging positions, testing the opposition with pace, creativity and a tactical

maturity that belied their dates of birth. The Greeks set about coping with the German onslaught by defending deep in a 4-5-1 formation and occasionally launching counters via Samaras or Salpingidis, with goalkeeper Michalis Sifakis giving priority to long passes towards Samaras on the left. Although chances were not converted, the German team constantly looked for the penetrating pass in the attacking third, while the mobile frontrunners worked hard to create spaces for team-mates surging forward from deeper positions. This was how Joachim Löw's side finally took the lead six minutes before the interval, when Özil squared the ball into the path of Lahm, who had made an infield run from the left. The German captain struck a fierce shot into the far corner.

The goal prompted Fernando Santos to make a double substitution at half-time, moving Giannis Maniatis to right-back (with Vassilis



Greek striker Giorgos Samaras gets to the ball before Jérôme Boateng and German goalkeeper Manuel Neuer to make it momentarily 1-1 from close range

Torossidis moving to the left to replace Giorgos Tzavellas) and drafting Giorgos Fotakis into central midfield. In attack, he withdrew Ninis and sent on Fanis Gekas as central striker, with Salpingidis moving to the right. His move, clearly aimed at opening the game up in search of an equaliser, paid off within ten minutes when Salpingidis crossed low from the right for Samaras to nudge the ball past Manuel Neuer. Parity, however, lasted barely six minutes, as Jérôme Boateng, back from suspension, crossed from the right for Khedira to strike a stunning volley into the roof of the Greek net.

Reassured by regaining the advantage, the Germans set about controlling the game with secure short passes in the areas of potential vulnerability and continued to create cracks in the Greek defensive block with fluent movement in the final third. Klose added a third, heading in a free-kick delivered with precision by Özil from wide on the right towards the near post, and seven minutes later Marco Reus, meeting a rebound off the Greek goalkeeper, hit an unstoppable shot into the top far corner from relatively long range.

During the closing period, Joachim Löw substituted his front three and the Greeks were given the consolation of the last word when a shot by Torossidis bounced off a German arm and Salpingidis sent Neuer the wrong way from the penalty spot to put 4-2 on the scoreboard. No one could argue, however, that the Germans, with 66% possession and 24 goal attempts to the Greeks' 9, were worthy winners.



Miroslav Klose outjumps Greek defender Kyriakos Papadopoulos to head home a free-kick and put Germany 3-1 ahead

QUARTER-FINALS

SPAIN V FRANCE



Right-back Álvaro Arbeloa cuts off the outside route while Santi Cazorla moves in to provide double cover as Franck Ribéry tries to weave his way through the Spanish defence

France have been uncomfortable opponents for Spain from youth development levels to FIFA World Cups. The match in Donetsk was therefore considered a stern test for the defending champions, and the French coach, Laurent Blanc, was determined that this should be the case. His strategic premise was that the Spaniards would have the lion's share of the ball and his aim was to ensure that their possession should be as sterile as possible. Predicting that the opposition's most incisive moves would stem from the left, he fielded a double right-back, introducing the previously unused Anthony Réveillère and pushing Mathieu Debuchy into midfield. The suspension of Philippe Mexès obliged him to draft Laurent Koscielny into central defence while, in midfield, Florent Malouda teamed up with Franck Ribéry on the left, looking to supply sole striker Karim Benzema. Vicente del Bosque opted for his strikerless formation, with Xabi Alonso and Sergio Busquets underpinning an attacking quartet of midfielders.

The result was a cautious start, like two boxers circling the ring with guards held high. The first goal attempt (significantly by Xabi Alonso) was in the eighth minute. The turning point came 11 minutes later. And, to Blanc's chagrin,

the breakthrough stemmed from the Spanish left. A run by Andrés Iniesta opened space for a fast upfield surge by full-back Jordi Alba, who hit a perfectly flighted cross. It fell to head height beyond the far post where the onrushing Xabi Alonso, unmolested, was able to direct a powerful header into the far corner of the French net.

Much as it may seem a simplistic statement, the goal changed the complexion of the game. Spain had passed the buck to their opponents. The French were now obliged to find a response and to make possession fertile rather than sterile. The Spaniards, who had started with a huge share of the ball and finished the first half with 60%, had less need to invest calories in high pressing and by the end of the match the French had had 45% of the ball – more than Blanc had predicted.

Indeed, France were achieving many of their strategic objectives. Xavi Hernández, for instance, had been restricted to fewer than 100 passes for the first time in the tournament. But up stepped Xabi Alonso to become the side's distributor-in-chief, with his individual passing tally exceeding the joint total of French counterparts Debuchy, Cabaye and Malouda.

Four of the six changes were concentrated into four minutes midway through the second half. Blanc gave a more attacking complexion to his side by sending on Jérémy Ménéz for Debuchy on the right, replacing Malouda with Samir Nasri as creative prompter and then introducing Olivier Giroud as an additional striker for the closing minutes. Vicente del Bosque switched to striker mode by sending on Fernando Torres and shared workloads out in the wide positions by relieving Iniesta and David Silva.

The French, as Blanc admitted, had tried to supply their front men more rapidly than usual and struggled to find fluency in their combination play. Spain continued to control the tempo and sealed the 2-0 win when Pedro was brought down by Réveillère and Xabi Alonso was able to celebrate his 100th appearance by scoring his second from the penalty spot. The bottom line, in a game which yielded only 13 goal attempts, was that the French managed only one on target. As Del Bosque put it, with his elder-statesman-like diplomacy, "I don't think it was an unfair outcome".

QUARTER-FINALS

ENGLAND V ITALY

For the first time in the tournament, a penalty shoot-out determined the winner of a contest which was played with total commitment yet produced only two cautions in two hours of football. Statistics offer an indication of the balance of power in Kyiv: Italy had 64% of the ball, made 1,003 passes to England's 522, and had 35 goal attempts (20 on target) compared with England's 9 (4 on target). Joe Hart made a series of notable saves in the England goal, while Gianluigi Buffon was required to make only one. But England resisted Italian domination with a high level of team organisation and a strong survival instinct exemplified by the tackling and blocking by central defenders John Terry and Joleon Lescott.



England's right-back Glen Johnson appears in the Italian penalty area to shoot between Andrea Barzagli and Ignazio Abate – but fails to beat Gianluigi Buffon

Roy Hodgson maintained his 4-4-2 structure with Wayne Rooney playing off the lead striker, initially Danny Welbeck. He altered the attacking texture of his team with two changes on the hour mark, with Andy Carroll replacing Welbeck as target striker and the pacy, more offensive Theo Walcott coming on for James Milner on the right flank. The central midfielders, Steven Gerrard and Scott Parker, once again provided the fulcrum on which the team balanced, with Gerrard the main launcher of counterattacks thanks to his ball-winning abilities in the key area in front of the back four. During the first half especially, the full-backs, Glen Johnson and Ashley Cole, made adventurous upfield runs on the flanks, though as time went on England's attacking lost its verve and fatigue started to become a factor.

Cesare Prandelli fielded four at the back for the second successive match, with Andrea Pirlo directing operations from a starting position immediately in front of them. He and Daniele De Rossi were especially adept at spotting direct routes or supplying through passes to Antonio Cassano and Mario Balotelli, very mobile across the attacking front. Prandelli's changes (Alessandro Diamanti and Antonio Nocerino for Cassano and De Rossi) meant that Italy played out the 90 minutes in a 4-1-4-1 formation with Balotelli as spearhead. During added time, the Italy coach introduced Christian Maggio for right-back Ignazio Abate, while England's third change came in the fourth minute of extra time, when a fatigued Parker (troubled by a minor injury) was replaced.

During the extra 30 minutes, England's resilience was sternly tested by an Italian side which had 75% of possession and pushed relentlessly towards Hart, whose goalkeeping competence was one of the main reasons for the 'clean sheet'. England's fatigue was reflected by the fact that only 55% of their passes reached their destination during extra time – including only 50% of short passes. Italy obtained a substantial advantage on points but failed to find a knockout punch, even though Balotelli – making himself available for through passes from Pirlo, De Rossi and Marchisio and combining well with Cassano and then Diamanti – had 11 attempts at goal.

The penalty shoot-out, where previous failures by both teams were a conditioning psychological factor, tilted initially in England's favour when Riccardo Montolivo hit Italy's second spot kick wide. But, with his side 2-1 down, Pirlo showed his confidence by chipping Panenka-style into the English net. Young then shot against the crossbar, Gianluigi Buffon, who had made only one save during the two hours of open play, denied Cole, and Diamanti converted the winner. England were widely praised for their courageous display but few argued that Cesare Prandelli's Italy deserved their semi-final place.



Defender Glen Johnson looks anxious as Mario Balotelli takes to the air to hit an acrobatic volley at the England goal



Having held off Claudio Marchisio, England attacker Wayne Rooney finds another Italian midfielder, Riccardo Montolivo, lying in wait

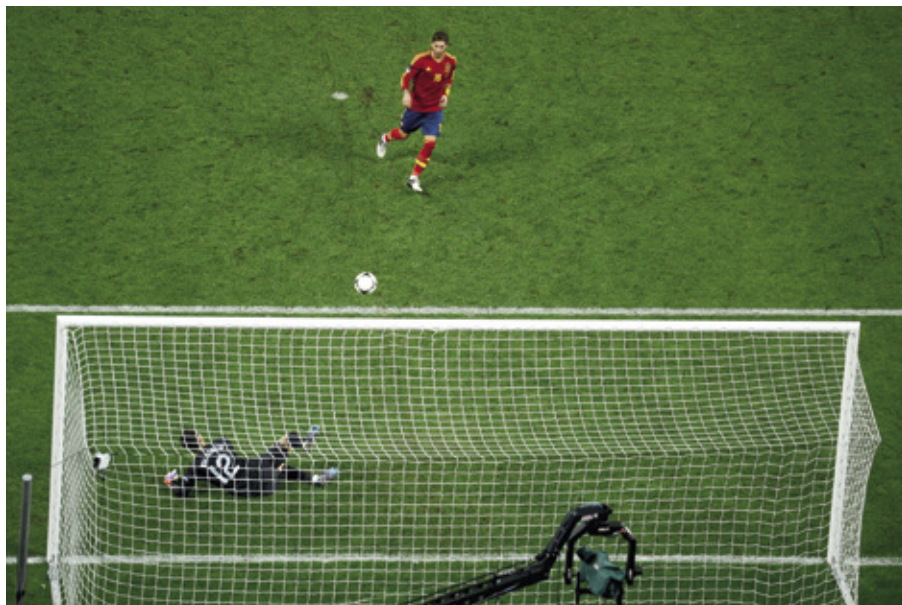


Joe Hart's dejection contrasts with Alessandro Diamanti's joy as the decisive penalty hits the net

SEMI-FINALS

PORTUGAL V

SPAIN



Defender Sergio Ramos leaves Portuguese keeper Rui Patrício stranded as he scores à la Panenka to put Spain 3-2 up in the shoot-out

Familiarity breeds respect. Iberian derbies always have a special edge and in Donetsk the degree of familiarity was elevated even further by the presence of four Real Madrid CF players among the Spanish starters and three among the Portuguese. The result was a tactically fascinating encounter during which safety in defence was the common denominator. Paulo Bento's side set out to defuse Spanish attacks with periods of high pressing, while Spain's right-back Alvaro Arbeloa tried to take the sting out of his club-mate Cristiano Ronaldo, the armour-piercing weapon in the Portuguese offensive armoury.

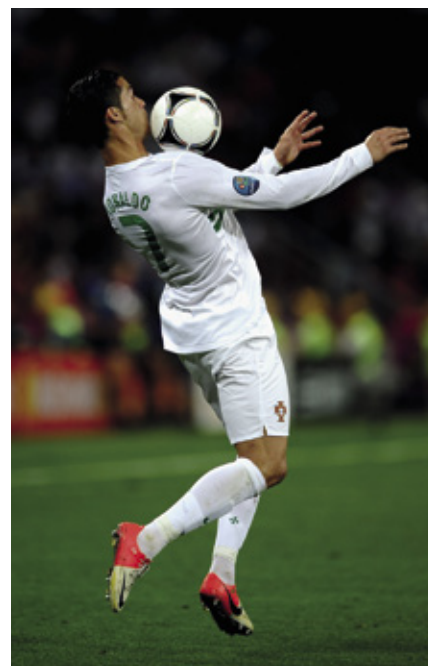
Paulo Bento replaced the injured Hélder Postiga with Hugo Almeida at the apex of the attack and, with Miguel Veloso performing a sober containing role in front of the back four, encouraged the hardworking Raul Meireles and João Moutinho to move into the slipstream of Almeida while Nani and Ronaldo tried to exploit their individual magic on the flanks, supported by overlapping runs by the two full-backs, João Pereira and Fábio Coentrão. Vicente del Bosque opted to field the previously unused Alvaro Negredo as striker in a 4-2-3-1 structure but early in the second half reverted to his strikerless

formation by replacing him with midfielder Cesc Fàbregas. By that time, the Spanish team had established domination in possession and passing, but Portugal's approach work seemed to have more venom. Del Bosque set out to rectify this by replacing David Silva with the pacy winger Jesús Navas and then sending on another winger, Pedro Rodríguez, to replace Xavi Hernández. Spain's short-passing combinations gradually wore down the Portuguese, whose approach play became progressively more direct as the game wore on – to the extent that for every Portuguese pass during extra time, Spain made two.

Defences, however, prevailed. Bruno Alves and Pepe blocked and intercepted with proficiency in the centre of the Portuguese back four, while Spanish stability, with Gerard Piqué and Sergio Ramos outstanding in central defence, was enhanced by the well-balanced combination of Sergio Busquets and Xabi Alonso in the midfield screening positions, the latter efficient in using long diagonal passes to switch the attacking focus. Both teams played with great middle-to-front mobility, with Andrés Iniesta constantly probing on the Spanish left, aided and abetted by powerful upfield runs by left-back Jordi Alba.

In spite of the technical quality of both teams' approach work, statistics reveal that, although he was required to deal with a variety of crosses, Iker Casillas did not have to make a save. His Portuguese counterpart, Rui Patrício, made only three – two of which, against Iniesta and Navas, kept Portugal afloat during the 30 minutes of extra time, when Spain exercised clear domination (57% of ball possession) against tiring opponents. Paulo Bento made his last two changes during extra time, notably sending on striker Silvestre Varela to replace midfielder Meireles for the closing minutes.

Although Ronaldo had shot wide when set free by Meireles after a fast break in the last minute of normal time, chances were limited to 21 in two hours of football, only 7 of them on target. The penalty shoot-out initially tilted in Portugal's favour when Rui Patrício saved from Xabi Alonso, only for Casillas to save from João Moutinho. After five successful spot kicks, Bruno Alves hammered the ball against the crossbar, allowing Fàbregas, striking the ball into the net via Rui Patrício's right post, to send Spain into their second successive European Championship final.



Cristiano Ronaldo controls with chin and chest during the tense semi-final in Donetsk

SEMI-FINALS

GERMANY V ITALY

Germany's record of never having defeated Italy in a competitive match at a major tournament was unexpectedly extended in Warsaw, where they lost to well-structured, efficient and ambitious opponents. Joachim Löw, anxious to disturb the Italian midfield – Andrea Pirlo especially – adjusted the complexion of his team but without changing their 4-2-3-1 structure. His starting lineup featured Toni Kroos, Mesut Özil and Lukas Podolski, forming the line of three which supported lone striker Mario Gomez. Kroos, after initial moments on the right, moved infield, with Özil switching to the wide area. The German team were as purposeful and hard-running as ever but struggled to find their usual attacking fluency.

Cesare Prandelli maintained his 4-4-2 structure, with Pirlo producing another (literally) pivotal performance at the base of a midfield diamond which prevented Germany's line of three from supplying ammunition to Gomez. At the same time, Riccardo Montolivo was catalysing Italy's mobile, flexible middle-to-front play which unstitched theories that they might adopt a 'catenaccio'-style approach to the fixture against the favourites. As they

had done during the opening group match against Spain, the Italians demonstrated that they were comfortable without the ball but dangerous and purposeful with it. During the first half, Gianluigi Buffon made only two long clearances, preferring to initiate passing moves with short balls.

Löw admitted after the match: "We lost our organisation after the first, avoidable, goal." It came in the 20th minute, when Antonio Cassano, wide on the left, was able to turn past two opponents and deliver a well-flighted cross. Holger Badstuber, caught in mid-turn, was unable to jump and, behind him, Mario Balotelli appeared to head the ball past Manuel Neuer. With the Germans pushing for an equaliser, Montolivo found space on the left of midfield to hit a beautifully weighted through ball, inviting Balotelli to burst between the two central defenders, control the ball and strike an unstoppable shot into the top corner.

The 2-0 deficit prompted Löw to make a double change at half-time, giving the team greater width by drafting in Marco Reus on the right and, in moving Kroos leftwards, restoring Özil to his more customary central position behind fresh striker Miroslav Klose. With Sami



Mario Balotelli celebrates in subdued fashion after heading Italy 1-0 ahead

Khedira as the dynamo and Özil the organiser, Germany's attacking play was revitalised. But, with Buffon making good saves at critical moments, they were unable to obtain the goal which would have reopened the game psychologically.

Italy's tactical awareness and fighting spirit were epitomised by the midfield contributions from Claudio Marchisio and Daniele De Rossi, while the back four defended stoutly. As UEFA technical observer Holger Osieck put it, Pirlo acted as "the head and soul of his team". Prandelli added physical presence to his midfield by sending on Thiago Motta for Montolivo and replaced his attacking duo as the Germans pushed for a goal with greater width, tempo and dynamism. Italy defended resolutely and could have settled the issue by taking the opportunities carved out by fast counterattacks. Their failure to do so set up a taut finish, with Özil converting a penalty after Federico Balzaretti had been penalised for handball. But the clock was already on 90+2 and, even with Neuer charging upfield for Germany's final onslaughts, Italy survived the closing minutes. A tactically accomplished performance had earned them a rematch with Spain in Kyiv.



German goalkeeper Manuel Neuer is wrong-footed as Mario Balotelli heads Antonio Cassano's cross into the net

CAMPEONES, CAMPEONES, CAMPEONES



FINAL

SPAIN V ITALY

The UEFA EURO 2012 final between defending champions Spain and former winners Italy was billed as a fitting climax to a three-week football extravaganza in Poland and Ukraine which had surpassed all expectations. Both finalists had promoted a positive, attack-oriented approach throughout the tournament, and the Italians had been particularly impressive in their 2-1 victory over the much-fancied Germans in the semi-final in Warsaw. Meanwhile, Spanish coach Vicente del Bosque was banishing any thoughts of complacency from his side with this declaration: "Success in the past does not guarantee success in the future."

With 63,000 in the Olympic Stadium in Kyiv, a record-breaking worldwide TV audience and two teams in top form, the scene was set for a classic occasion. Portuguese referee Pedro Proença signalled the start of the proceedings and Spain kicked off – Andrés Iniesta, who had scored the winning goal in the 2010 FIFA World Cup final, was first to touch the ball, his side having no recognised striker to carry out the formality.

Spain had never beaten Italy in a European Championship or World Cup final tournament (except on penalties), although they did beat their Latin counterparts in the Olympics, back in 1920. It was new history that Del Bosque's men were after though; there was no time for nostalgia. In the early exchanges, Italy's Andrea Pirlo shot wide, while Sergio Ramos of Spain sent a long-range free-kick over the crossbar. With the kind of haste witnessed when children rush from school at the end of the day, the Spanish were quickly into top gear, speed of thought, foot and ball immediately evident in their progressive possession game.



Spain's starting formation



Two of the tournament's great architects: Andrea Pirlo arrives just too late to prevent Xavi Hernández from lining up his pass like an archer launching his arrow

Del Bosque's men attacked with and without the ball and the mercurial Pirlo found his space and supply lines severely restricted.

Spain fielded a 4-2-3-1 formation, but with midfielder Cesc Fàbregas as the dedicated front man, they rarely functioned in that shape. Previously, Del Bosque had explained his thinking: "Playing with a true forward gives you more depth, but we wanted to have continuity, to dominate and to have possession of the ball in order to create chances." The consequence of this philosophy was the arrival of various players into advanced positions. David Silva, Xavi Hernández, Iniesta and



Italy's starting formation

Fàbregas, in particular, took turns at leading the charge. Although less in control of the ball, the Italians still pursued their attacking aims using a 4-4-2 formation. Cesare Prandelli had chosen a midfield diamond, which was driven, at its base, by the gifted Pirlo, and an unpredictable but dangerous twin striking partnership of Mario Balotelli and Antonio Cassano. With ten minutes gone, Xavi Hernández, under pressure, shot over the crossbar following a great one-two combination with Fàbregas. The heat was building, and within four minutes the smoke had turned to fire. Xavi Hernández fed Iniesta. The latter then delivered a defence-splitting pass, one that lesser mortals playing on public pitches throughout the world can only dream of. Fàbregas, the man labelled as the "false nine" because of his freedom of movement middle-to-front, took one touch and brilliantly cut the ball back from the byline into the path of the arriving Silva. The Manchester City FC star, hardly a classic target man, headed the ball into the net passed a startled Gianluigi Buffon.

FINAL

Often you are at your most vulnerable when you have just scored, and so it proved for Spain. A Pirlo free-kick struck the Spanish wall and deflected for a corner on the left. This was followed by the Italian No21 delivering three impressive corner kicks in a row. Spain's goalkeeper and captain Iker Casillas commanded his area during this onslaught, displaying the confidence of someone who had only conceded one goal in the final tournament up to that point. Significantly, it was Italy who had breached his team's defence in the opening game. As the Italians tried to fight back, their cause was not aided by the substitution of Giorgio Chiellini due to a hamstring injury. Federico Balzaretti replaced him at left-back, but it would prove to be a costly replacement. Gerard Piqué collected a yellow card before team-mates Xavi Hernández, Xabi Alonso and David Silva conjured up a penetrating move on a par with a sharp knife going through a ball of Mozzarella. Despite the tidal wave against them, World Cup winning veterans Andrea Pirlo and Daniele De Rossi worked tirelessly to bring balance to the game in terms of possession and territory. But, with 41 minutes on the clock, Spain inflicted further damage on Italian aspirations.

Spanish left full-back Jordi Alba could not have chosen a more appropriate moment to score his first international goal. Following an

eight-pass move, which included a contribution from goalkeeper Iker Casillas, the ball arrived at the Spanish No18 – a left-sided player who was developed at FC Barcelona's La Masia, then matured with Valencia CF and finally returned to Barça for a reported fee of €14m. Pass number nine in the sequence was delivered across the halfway line to Xavi Hernández, Spain's orchestrator supreme, and the young Jordi Alba, making his 11th international appearance, set off at lightning speed in the direction of the Italian goal. With surgical precision, Xavi Hernández delivered a perfectly weighted, subtly angled through pass. Without breaking stride, Jordi Alba took one touch and swiftly swept the ball, with his left foot, past the stranded Buffon. The Italian captain and goalkeeper had conceded two goals in a match for the first time in the final tournament, and the half-time whistle was at least four minutes away. When the break did arrive, Spain led 2-0 and the Italians were in need of a hero to rescue them.

Cesare Prandelli, with the adventurous spirit he had displayed throughout the EURO 2012 campaign, replaced one Antonio with another: Di Natale for Cassano up front. Within 60 seconds, the new man had made his mark with a menacing header following a good delivery by full-back Ignazio Abate from the right flank. Although the Spanish had gone 29 fixtures without losing a European Championship



Andrea Pirlo clips a trademark pass with consummate ease during the Kyiv final

match, the Azzuri had not given up hope of a revival and Thiago Motta replaced Riccardo Montolivo in a brave attempt to find much-needed inspiration while there was time to retrieve the situation. The move backfired dramatically with Motta, on the pitch for only three minutes, damaging a hamstring and Italy, having used all three substitutes, finding themselves with ten men, two goals behind, and 30 minutes to play. As Vicente del Bosque said afterwards: "Italy had no luck. Everything went our way, Italy had one player fewer for the final half hour and one less day of rest to prepare." The Italians were forced to adapt and 4-3-2 became their default formation, making them more vulnerable to Spain's numerical superiority in midfield. The task for Cesare Prandelli and his side began to appear insurmountable.

With 15 minutes remaining, Spain introduced a traditional striker – Fernando Torres taking the place of Fàbregas. As those in blue started to wilt, those in red blossomed. It was therefore of little surprise when the recently introduced Torres scored Spain's third goal. Leg-weary Andrea Pirlo and Daniele De Rossi tried to combine inside their own half, but they were disposed of by the ever-alert Xavi Hernández. Before anyone could draw breath, the pass was delivered and the Spanish front man, who had scored the winner at UEFA EURO 2008, took a touch and steered the ball into the Italian net. The scoreline matched Germany's record 3-0 against the USSR in the European



Xavi Hernández displays his quintessential skills as he twists and turns away from three Italian opponents with the ball as if tied to his bootlaces



Championship final of 1972, but Spain still had time to add to their tally. Juan Mata replaced Iniesta (named man of the match and subsequently player of the tournament) and within one minute the substitute proceeded to finish off a move involving Sergio Busquets and Fernando Torres which created a new scoring record for a EURO final. And then, mercifully for ten-man Italy, it was over.

La Roja were elevated to football royalty – the first team to retain the Henri Delaunay Cup, the first team to win three consecutive international titles, and Vicente del Bosque the first coach to win the UEFA Champions League, the FIFA World Cup and the UEFA European Championship. It was therefore highly appropriate that, prior to the medal ceremony with the UEFA President, Michel Platini, the Spanish players, including Iker Casillas, Xavi Hernández, Sergio Ramos and Iniesta, who had played in all three national team finals (2008, 2010, 2012), danced in a huddle and sang with collective gusto: “Campeones, campeones, campeones!”

Andy Roxburgh

UEFA Technical Director



1. The Spanish squad celebrates a second successive title, won by the biggest winning margin in any final of the competition
2. Captain Iker Casillas and midfield orchestrator Xavi Hernández celebrate just as they had done in Vienna four years earlier
3. Nine minutes after coming on, striker Fernando Torres sidefoots the ball past Gianluigi Buffon to put Spain 3-0 ahead

ACTING AND REACTING

There is a temptation to treat the final tournament of the UEFA European Football Championship as an isolated 31-match event at which the search for 'trends' can be a risky business. The sheer grandeur of the tournament and its enormous social impact make it easy to overlook the fact that, in footballing terms, it is often the culmination of a longer-term process. It is therefore quite appropriate to refer back to a comment made by Germany's Joachim Löw, the second-longest-serving of the coaches who led teams at UEFA EURO 2012 (behind Morten Olsen). "After the World Cup in 2006," he said, "we decided to concentrate more on ball possession and on initiating play. We set out to change our footballing culture and to move away from reactive play." Although the ability to counterattack remained an important weapon in the teams' armouries in Poland and Ukraine, the most successful teams were the ones who were willing and able to take the initiative.

This was one of the topics discussed by UEFA's technical team, who – in addition to monitoring the day-by-day progress of the tournament – looked for longer-term issues which can affect the evolution of the game and provide working tools for colleagues who are coaching on the front line, responsible for player development or educating the next generation of technicians. These are some of those issues.

1. HEADLINES

The number of headed goals at UEFA EURO 2012 was high enough to become a media issue, especially in the early stages of the tournament when they accounted for 40% of the total. By the end of the tournament this had fallen to 29%, but David Silva's opening goal for Spain in the final brought the total to an all-time competition record of 22, beating the previous high of 17 at UEFA EURO 2004. The table shows how the trend has evolved since the 31-match format was introduced in 1996.

Year	Headed goals	Total goals	Percentage
1996	11	64	17.2%
2000	15	85	17.6%
2004	17	77	22.1%
2008	15	77	19.5%
2012	22	76	28.9%



Hélder Postiga, the spearhead in Portugal's 4-3-3 formation, shoots powerfully at goal during the group game against the Dutch

A record may have been set but the 2012 tournament did not produce a dramatic change of pattern. Nine of the 22 headers stemmed from set plays, compared with 7 of 15 in 2008. In this department, the main features were brilliant delivery and great movements by the receivers. The importance of top-quality delivery was illustrated by Russia's Andrey Arshavin, who set up a glancing header in a crowded box. And the intelligence of movement was exemplified by Ukrainian captain Andriy Shevchenko, who made a semi-circular run from behind Swedish skipper Zlatan Ibrahimović to head in at the near post a corner from the left. Denmark, England, Germany, Italy, Portugal, the Republic of Ireland, Russia, Sweden and Ukraine headed in one goal apiece from set plays.

A notable feature of the 13 goals scored from headers in open play was that 10 had their origin in crosses from the right and only 3 from the left. The latter included a classic cross and finish during Spain's quarter-final against France, with Jordi Alba delivering beyond the back post into the path of Xabi Alonso, who made a powerful run into space from deep to score unopposed. Poland's goal

against Greece was another copybook move, with Robert Lewandowski heading at the back post a good delivery from the right. In England's game against Sweden, Steven Gerrard provided an example of pinpoint diagonal crossing from a deeper position by crossing for Andy Carroll to head home.



Greek captain Giorgos Karagounis was an influential component in his side's 4-3-3 formation

The increase in the number of headed goals, however, is an indicator that, as Gérard Houllier put it, "the response to the compact defensive blocks set up in central areas is to try to go round the sides". In operational terms, this frequently involved mechanisms aimed at creating space for full-backs to deliver the crosses, with 'wrong-footed' wingers often cutting inside to draw opponents away from the area to be exploited by overlapping full-backs, such as Darijo Srna (Croatia), Theodor Gebre Selassie (Czech Republic), Ashley Cole (England), Gaël Clichy (France), Philipp Lahm and Jérôme Boateng (Germany), Łukasz Piszczek (Poland), Fábio Coentrão (Portugal), Yuri Zhirkov (Russia), Jordi Alba (Spain)...

The record number of headed goals at EURO 2012 came only 12 months after UEFA's technical report on the finals of the UEFA European Under-17 Championship had highlighted that no open-play goals had been headers and, as a debating point, had asked: "Is it legitimate to allege that heading technique is no longer a major priority on the training agenda for young attackers?" If answers were affirmative, EURO 2012 suggested that a policy review might not be out of place.



Croatian captain Darijo Srna emerged as one of the most adventurous and influential full-backs of the group stage

2. CHANGING SHAPES

UEFA EURO 2012 also suggested that structural flexibility is one of the ingredients for success, with many coaches opting to vary team shapes from game to game or during a match. Observations on team shapes are therefore based on default settings or favoured options rather than structures which were set in stone.

Twelve of the teams in Poland and Ukraine preferred to operate a 4-3-3 system or its younger brother, the 4-2-3-1. The latter was predominant, with Czechs, Danes, Dutch, Germans, Poles, Spaniards and Ukrainians lining up in 4-2-3-1 formation, and the champions often opting for a 4-6-0 with no recognised striker. When they fielded Fernando Torres or (v Portugal) Alvaro Negredo, they became one of the 13 sides to operate with a single striker.

Croatia, France, Greece, Portugal and Russia formed the quintet whose preference was for 4-3-3. The main difference between the two structures was, evidently, the use of one or two screening midfielders in front of the back four. Six teams operated with a single screen and the other ten with a twin screen. In the latter formation, the key was to strike the right defence/attack balance. In terms of benchmarks, the Bastian Schweinsteiger/Sami Khedira or Sergio Busquets/Xabi Alonso partnerships in the German and Spanish engine rooms are worth highlighting.

Only four teams lined up in a 4-4-2 structure: England, the Republic of Ireland, Sweden and Italy – the latter playing the first two matches in 3-5-2 formation, with midfielder Daniele De Rossi switched to the back three. There also were positional nuances among those who opted for twin strikers, with Ibrahimović, for example, playing the role of second striker in a Swedish formation which could easily be labelled 4-4-1-1.

The trend towards this type of 'shadow striker' or 'free spirit' operating off the front was extended at EURO 2012, where nine teams opted for this sort of attacking relationship – something which would have been extremely rare a couple of decades ago.

Shades of meaning can also be applied to the Croatian 4-3-3 in that the formation tilted to the left (one wide left, one front, one off the front) with a view to offering maximum space for the exuberant attacking by full-back Darijo Srna on the right flank.



This is Xavi Hernández: the ball under control and eyes like a hawk looking for a target

3. THE PASSING PARADOX

The tournament underlined a trend towards a possession-oriented passing game while, at the same time, reflecting the paradoxical situation which has marked the last four seasons of UEFA Champions League football. In 2008/09, FC Barcelona based their title win on 63% ball possession and something between 600 and 700 passes per game. In 2009/10, FC Internazionale Milano won the competition with 45% of the ball (only 32% in the final) and just over 400 passes per game. In 2010/11, Barça reconquered the summit with 68% possession and 791 passes per game, only for Chelsea FC to take the 2012 title with an average of 47% of the ball.

In other words the pendulum has swung since UEFA EURO 2008. UEFA's technical report on the tournament in Austria and Switzerland remarked: "When it came to passing quantity and quality, Spain led the way – Luis Aragonés's side averaged more than 450 passes per game (they recorded the tournament's highest figure with 510 v Sweden) and achieved the highest average of successful passes." These words could be equally applicable to Spain's UEFA EURO 2012 campaign – but not the numbers. Only four years on, the idea of hailing 450 passes per game as exceptional or applauding a tournament high of 510 would be almost laughable. Everybody except the Irish topped

TECHNICAL TOPICS

the average of 450 passes, 11 of the finalists made more than 500 passes per match, and the tournament high (excluding matches which went to extra time) was Spain's 929 passes against the Irish. The art of retaining the ball has taken on paramount importance and, as Dutch coach Bert van Marwijk commented, "Top football is all about space. You have to learn to work in small spaces near the opponents' area – and to control big spaces behind your own back line." Spain once again provided clear examples of the value of individual technique, the ability to twist and turn away from pressure, and the capacity to make rapid changes of speed in restricted areas.

Although the trend towards possession-based football is undeniable, EURO 2012 demonstrated that the paradox remains. The Russians and the Dutch, despite averaging 56% of the ball, went home after the group stage; England, despite 36% (25% during extra time) against Italy, could have won the quarter-final shoot-out; likewise Portugal, who had 43% of possession and 547 passes to 885 in their semi-final against Spain. As in the UEFA Champions League, the challenge was to translate possession and inter-passing into a positive attacking game.

4. BEATING THE BLOCK

As mentioned elsewhere, most teams' response to compact defensive blocks was to try to go round them. It could be argued that the increasing preference for peripheral routes towards goal is in response to the declining effectiveness of the counterattack, aimed at beating the block before it is in place. At UEFA EURO 2008, 46% of the open-play goals stemmed from fast breaks but in the interim percentages have been steadily declining in the UEFA Champions League (to 27% in the 2011/12 season). This downward trend was underlined at UEFA EURO 2012, where 25% of the open-play goals were derived from counters. This highlighted the efficiency of defensive blocks and the efficacy of counter-the-counter plays, such as immediate pressure on the ball carrier, the use of 'tactical fouls' to break up counters, or the constant presence of four, five or six players behind the ball as a precautionary measure when a team is attacking. Even so, Czechs and Spaniards capitalised on three counters apiece, a trademark Russian break put Roman Pavlyuchenko clear against the Czechs, and against France, Sweden produced a textbook collective counterattack, winning the ball in midfield, transferring it to the right and crossing for Ibrahimović to score. Expertise in counterattacking is still a valuable asset.



With the Czechs pushing forward in an attempt to reduce a deficit, the Russians were able to go into their trademark counterattacking mode, with substitute striker Roman Pavlyuchenko celebrating after culminating a classic break to make it 4-1



Ukrainian captain Anatoliy Tymoshchuk played a classic midfield holding role for the co-hosts

5. SCREENING AND SCHEMING

The generalised presence of two screening midfielders in front of the back four adds density to defensive blocks and provides numerical deterrents to teams – Spain among them – who set out to play their way through the middle. However, UEFA EURO 2012 illustrated how the screening midfielders are evolving away from the label of 'extra defenders' and are now expected to build from the back, make greater creative contributions and support attacks.

The six teams who fielded a single screening midfielder provided contrasts. Ukraine's Anatoliy Tymoshchuk and Portugal's Miguel Veloso were examples of those who played a holding role (the latter behind the adventurous Raul Meireles and João Moutinho), while Cesare Prandelli opted to field Andrea Pirlo, the conductor of his orchestra, in the pivotal area in front of the back four. It was from this position at the base of his side's midfield diamond that he emerged as one of the tournament's most influential players. "Having the creator in this position gave Italy a big variety of attacking options based on movement in the midfield areas ahead of Pirlo and Antonio Cassano up front," said Lars Lagerbäck. "The role of the screening midfielder is evolving," added Gérard Houllier. "If you have two adventurous full-backs, he has to form a defensive triangle. But, because teams get back into their defensive block so quickly, the guy in front of the back four becomes a playmaker. Every team needs somebody who can play football in that position."

6. THE PRESSING GAME

Although the Spanish side often echoed the high-pressing practices of FC Barcelona, few teams at UEFA EURO 2012 opted for sustained high-intensity pressure – and even Vicente del Bosque's team was not alien to taking a foot off the accelerator when ahead on the scoreboard. Portugal – especially in their semi-final against the Spanish – along with Germany and Italy, were prepared to hold a high line at certain moments. The ability to press was linked to attacking philosophies in that the teams prepared to push players forward to support attacks were the ones who had players in place to immediately exert high pressure with the aim of immediate ball-winning. By contrast, the more direct back-to-front play of some teams did not lend itself to a high-pressing game.

Collective high pressing was based on pressurising the ball carrier, cutting off the short-passing options and squeezing the game into small areas, with the players on the far side pushing across towards the ball to complete a back-to-front and side-to-side squeezing operation. However, the priority for most of the teams at EURO 2012 was to press the ball carrier and to focus on quick transitions into the defensive block, waiting for opponents to move forward.



'Wrong-footed winger' Arjen Robben tries to dribble past his FC Bayern München team-mate Philipp Lahm during the Netherlands' 2-1 defeat by Germany



Germany's Mesut Özil, one of the wing players prepared to make infield runs, skips past Portuguese midfielder Raúl Meireles during the Group B game

7. THE WANDERING WINGERS

The tendency to field 'wrong-footed' wingers, which has taken a firm foothold in the UEFA Champions League since Pep Guardiola's decision to field Lionel Messi on Barça's right flank, was one of the visible features of UEFA EURO 2012. The likes of Arjen Robben, David Silva, Andrés Iniesta, Thomas Müller or even Mesut Özil provided clear examples of the type of player prepared to receive in wide positions and then make infield runs aimed at exploiting spaces created by the lone striker, supplying a reverse pass to an overlapping full-back or finding channels for fast combination movements. The wingers' role was often to take opponents out of position (with the ball or without it) to create spaces for full-backs to make the sort of runs towards the corner flag which, years ago, were associated with the wingers.

8. THE COACHING INFLUENCE

"We're an old country with old methods and structures which we are trying to change," said Italy coach Cesare Prandelli after the final against Spain. He had served notice of his intentions during Italy's opening match of UEFA EURO 2012 which was, as fate would have it, against Spain. He opted for an unusual playing system with three at the back and encouraged his players to carry the game to the defending European and world champions. Minutes after replacing Mario Balotelli with Antonio Di Natale, the latter shot his side into the lead. With the media applauding his positive approach and his readiness to run risks, Italy embarked on an adventure which took them all the way to Kyiv. Roy Hodgson, who travelled to the event after next-to-no team-building time, led England into the quarter-finals after making two inspired substitutions in the match against Sweden. And Vicente del Bosque exposed himself to intense media pressure by retaining faith in his striker-less formation. All three were role models in terms of staying calm and collected when under great pressure and always looking for the best solutions for the team.



Pepe's near-post header gave Portugal their first advantage in the group match against Denmark

9. THE REBOUND MENTALITY

There is a theory that teams can be measured by their reactions to adversity. As UEFA's technical director, Andy Roxburgh, maintains, "talent always rebounds". UEFA EURO 2012 provided examples of that. Portugal and the Czech Republic gave the lie to adages about the importance of not losing the opening game by bouncing back to reach the knockout rounds of the tournament. Portugal then recovered from the psychological blow of losing a two-goal advantage against Denmark and managed to find a late winner. Spain immediately bounced back after going 1-0 down to Italy. England came back from 2-1 down to beat Sweden and then carried their never-say-die mentality into their quarter-final against Italy. Portugal showed tremendous concentration and mental strength during their semi-final against Spain. And Greece exhibited exceptional resilience in coming back to draw with Poland after being one goal and one man down before half-time. During their next match they fell 2-0 down to the Czechs after six minutes but came close to salvaging a draw. "At half-time, I told them to clear their minds," Greece's coach Fernando Santos explained afterwards. "Everything that had happened in the first half was a burden. So we set out to have a rational plan to turn the game round in the second half, because we believed we could. In such cases you have to display heart, a clear mind and

cold-bloodedness to dominate your opponents and show your qualities. We used our hearts more than our minds in the last 15 minutes and that's why, ultimately, it didn't work out."

Asked to name the factors that can make a difference in a contest between evenly matched teams, Gérard Houllier responded: "Heart, commitment and mental resilience." Croatia's coach, Slaven Bilić, echoed this opinion. "We are not as strong mentally as teams like Germany or Italy. We need to improve this and we are working hard to do that." Germany's Joachim Löw, having

no qualms about bringing players straight from the Under-21s into his squads for major events, added: "They are young, they are talented and, above all, they are mentally strong."

10. THE WEIGHT OF EXPECTATIONS

After the co-hosts' 1-1 draw with Greece on the opening day, Polish coach Franciszek Smuda admitted, "I felt I had the weight of 40 million people on my shoulders. We were under great pressure, great stress, and I think it was a great burden on this young team. We could see that some of the players were paralysed by the pressure."

After Sweden's defeat against Ukraine, Erik Hamrén admitted, "It was the opening game and we talked to the players about courage. We only had five players who showed that from the start." Laurent Blanc made a similar comment after the opening draw with England: "I thought we were timid at the start and I don't know why." Giovanni Trapattoni, after the Group C defeat by Spain, said: "The mistakes we made came as a blow. We don't see those types of errors in training. We don't see the tension." Vicente del Bosque admitted that Spain's run of success had generated levels of expectation which were difficult to bear.

UEFA EURO 2012 offered a wide range of evidence to support theories that performance can be affected by expectations. "The European Championship," said Joachim Löw, "is like a Formula 1 race without the warm-up. You have to get off the grid as fast as you can."



Poland opened their campaign against Greece "with the weight of 40 million people on their shoulders"

GOALSCORING ANALYSIS

NEW HEIGHTS FOR HEADING

Although the goalscoring tally was one goal short of the two previous editions (77 in 2008 and 2004), there was plenty to cheer about at UEFA EURO 2012, with some spectacular finishing and a group stage without a goalless match. In addition, headed goals took on increased prominence. The grand total of 22 was a new high, following the 15 in 2008 and 17 in 2004, and offered proof that good delivery from both set plays and crosses can pay handsome dividends. Corners and indirect free-kicks were the source of 9 headed goals, while 13 came from crossing and finishing in open play. At UEFA EURO 2008, approximately 50% of open goals emanated from the flanks. The return was slightly less in 2012 but attracted greater attention because of the eye-catching quality of so many spectacular headed goals. Andy Carroll's opener for England v Sweden, following a brilliant deep cross from Steven Gerrard, was magnificent. As were the efforts of Cristiano Ronaldo for Portugal against the Czech Republic and Xabi Alonso for Spain versus France. Further analysis of headed goals can be found in the Technical Topics section of this report.

Overall, the goalscoring statistics were similar to four years ago, with a few minor exceptions. There were fewer goals from crosses and diagonals in 2012 but a slight increase in the number from long-range shooting and incisive passing. The details are provided in the following chart, which is the product of personal interpretation. The information is related to the technical/tactical actions which led to the 76 goals scored during the 31-match final tournament in Poland and Ukraine.



Andy Carroll finds space to head England into a 1-0 lead in the 23rd minute of the Group D game against Sweden

Category	Action	Guidelines	Goals
SET PLAYS	Corners	Direct from/following a corner	6
	Free-kicks (direct)	Direct from a free-kick	1
	Free-kicks (indirect)	Following a free-kick	5
	Penalties	Spot kick (or follow-up from a penalty)	3
	Throw-ins	Following a throw-in	1
OPEN PLAY	Combinations	Wall pass/three-man combination play	4
	Crosses	Cross from the wing	21
	Cutbacks	Pass back from the byline	3
	Diagonals	Diagonal pass into the penalty box	1
	Running with the ball	Dribble and close-range shot/dribble and pass	4
	Long-range shots	Direct shot/shot and rebound	7
	Forward passes	Through pass or pass over the defence	15
	Defensive errors	Bad pass back/mistake by the goalkeeper	4
	Own goals	Goal by the opponent	1
Total			76

GOALSCORING ANALYSIS

SET PLAYS

For the second EURO in a row, 16 goals came from set-play moves. The ratio (21%) is comparable with the UEFA Champions League of 2011/12, which yielded approximately 22% of its total goals (345 in 125 matches) from dead-ball situations. The figures reflect a downward trend in this aspect of goalscoring since the high of 35% in the 2001/02 UEFA Champions League. With approximately four out of five goals now coming from open play, clearly the impact of set-play goals has diminished to a certain extent. However, in some UEFA EURO 2012 matches goals from this particular source were significant and occasionally decisive. For example, Andriy Shevchenko scored the winner for Ukraine against Sweden with a front-post header following a corner from the left. Italy's two goals in the defeat of the Republic of Ireland were from corners – both delivered by Andrea Pirlo's right foot. The Juventus playmaker also scored the only direct free-kick in the tournament (in the 1-1 encounter with Croatia). And indirect free-kicks gave Russia and England a share of the points versus Poland and France respectively.

Interestingly, EURO 2012 produced 343 corners, of which 6 were converted. That is the equivalent of 57 corners per goal: better than UEFA EURO 2008 with its 1 in 64 ratio but not as good as last season's UEFA Champions League, which registered a rate of 1 goal for every 46 corners. There is no doubt that sophisticated analysis (i.e. spying) has minimised the possibility of a surprising, clever set-play manoeuvre, but the threat still remains with the brilliant delivery of someone like Andrea Pirlo or the inventiveness of a team such as Spain, as was witnessed when Cesc Fàbregas put the finishing touch to a clever short corner against the Republic of Ireland.

Four penalties were awarded during EURO 2012 and three were converted. Those by Germany (Mesut Özil) and Greece (Dimitris Salpingidis) were consolations in matches that were already lost, while Xabi Alonso's composed finish confirmed Spain's victory

over France. Greece had to settle for a draw after Giorgos Karagounis had his spot-kick effort saved in the match against Poland, following the red card shown to goalkeeper Wojciech Szczęsny. At EURO 2008, five penalties were awarded and four were converted. The aforementioned figures support the view that, at a EURO, the area in and around the penalty box is generally a risk-free

zone in terms of foul play, with brain rather than brawn the dominant force. The pre-tournament instructions about simulation, additional assistant referees and foul play, presented to the squads by members of UEFA's Referees Committee, definitely had an effect – 20% fewer fouls than in EURO 2008 offered tangible proof of a change in some players' behaviour.



Having got in behind Alou Diarra, Joleon Lescott connects with a header that is on its way into the French net to put England 1-0 up



Andriy Shevchenko celebrates after his clever run round Zlatan Ibrahimović had allowed him to score with a near-post header from a corner to put Ukraine 2-1 ahead

OPEN PLAY

Of the 60 goals scored in this category, 25 were created on the flanks (i.e. crosses, cutbacks and diagonals). As previously indicated, this translated into approximately 42% of the open-play tally. Three sides (England, Sweden and Portugal) scored a hat-trick of goals from crosses. Impressive examples were Danny Welbeck's imaginative flick to redirect Theo Walcott's cross into the Swedish net and the Scandinavians' opening goal against France, which was dispatched by Zlatan Ibrahimović with a sensational volley, an effort later voted the best open-play goal of EURO 2012 by UEFA's technical team. With the classic winger less plentiful than in the past, much of the onus for creating goalscoring chances from the wings was transferred to attacking full-backs, overlapping midfielders or mobile strikers. Jordi Alba's left-wing delivery for Spain's opening goal against France was a sensational example of a full-back transforming into a winger and providing the perfect cross.

Combination play and passes through or over the defence accounted for approximately 32% of the goals in free play. There were fewer combinations than last time, but this was offset by an increase in incisive passes. Xavi's through ball to set up Jordi Alba for Spain's

second goal in the final was a masterpiece of penetration – the weight and the angle of Xavi's pass was the work of a footballing artist.

There was a reasonable increase at EURO 2012 in goals from long-range shooting and solo dribbling and finishing, up from 4 to 11. This converts into 20% of all goals, which is similar to the proportion recorded in last season's UEFA Champions League. The stunning drives by Philipp Lahm for Germany versus Greece, Jakub Błaszczykowski for Poland against Russia, and the Netherlands' Robin van Persie and Rafael van der Vaart in the matches with Germany and Portugal respectively were magnificent in their execution and dazzling examples of powerful shooting which punishes deep-lying or open defences.

No matter the method, the importance of scoring first was once again highlighted at EURO 2012. Only twice (compared with four times in 2008) did a team concede the opening goal and recover to win. Two goals from Cristiano Ronaldo gave Portugal victory against the Netherlands, and a double, both with the head, from Andriy Shevchenko resulted in Ukraine beating Sweden in the co-hosts' opening match in Kyiv. Other examples of recovery were provided by England producing a 3-2 win after having



Philipp Lahm strikes the ball towards the far corner of the Greek net to score the first goal of the quarter-final



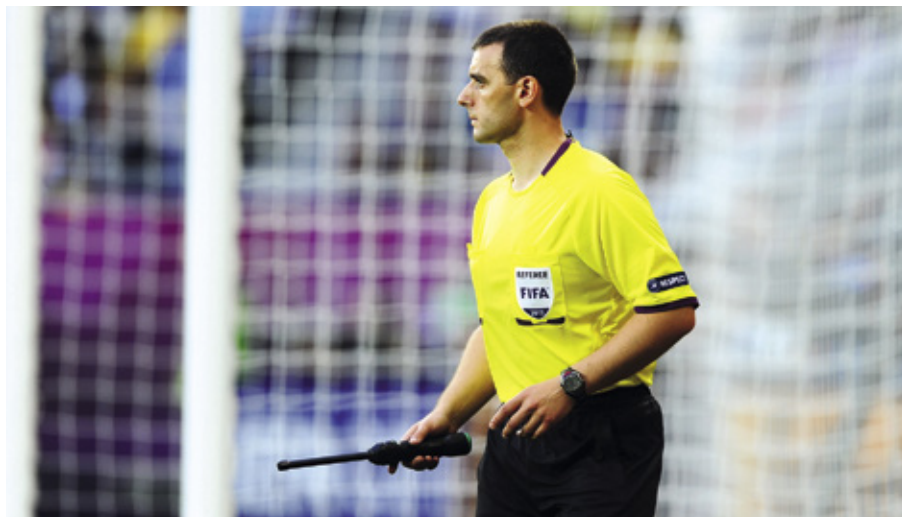
Dutch No23 Rafael van der Vaart beats the Portuguese wall and goalkeeper to put his team 1-0 ahead in the decisive Group B game

trailed 2-1 to Sweden, and by Portugal bouncing back to score the winner against Denmark after having given up a two-goal lead.

All 16 finalists at EURO 2012 scored at least once, while Spain, the champions, led the way with a tally of 12. Vicente del Bosque's side also had the meanest defence, with only one goal conceded in six final-tournament matches, a statistic which confirms that great defending and spectacular attacking can live comfortably in juxtaposition.

Andy Roxburgh
UEFA Technical Director

ALERTS, ARMBANDS AND ASSISTANTS



Scotland's Euan Norris in action as an additional assistant referee during the Group B match between Denmark and Portugal

ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE?

This talking point is not focused on the specific did-the-ball-cross-the-line incident during the England v Ukraine match, nor on subsequent discussion by the International Football Association Board related to the introduction of goal-line technology. The longer-term debating point is the impact made by additional assistant referees, who were making their European Championship debut after three seasons of experimentation in UEFA Champions League and, more recently, UEFA Europa League football.

The men who are now established in footballing vocabulary as AARs provoke a division of opinions within the coaching profession. But those who claim that their impact level is minimal perhaps do not fully appreciate the niceties of the job or are too preoccupied with directing their team from the technical area to pay overmuch attention to the work being done on the goal lines. The role of the AAR is to advise the match referee from different angles in situations where decisions might be difficult to take. The refereeing community stresses that if the AAR is not gesticulating it does not mean he is not contributing. The thinking behind the decision to experiment was to maintain the human element and to minimise – it would be unrealistic to say eradicate – mistakes.

If you believe that the most enjoyable discussions are those which cannot be settled by statistical evidence, the subject of the AARs is one to relish. One of the salient features of UEFA EURO 2012 was that the tournament was played with intensity and commitment but

in an atmosphere where the spirit and the attitudes of the players were generally positive. The same applied to the technical area, where the sort of conflicts between coaches and fourth officials which had made news in 2008 were conspicuous by their absence. One of the other unquantifiable elements was the impact of the pre-tournament briefing each team received from members of UEFA's Referees Committee, during which advice and instructions were delivered. Forewarned is forearmed?

The main talking point is therefore to assess to what extent the presence of the AARs acts as a deterrent. It can be argued that if there is more police presence, crime rates are likely to go down. Are the AARs making an impact in terms of the reduction of pushing, holding and shirt-tugging in the penalty area?

A side issue

The other debating point is a much more specific question related to their positioning. Is it the optimum strategy to have the assistant referee and the AAR on the same side of the pitch?

Technicians generally feel that the AAR would be better deployed on the other side – and not just to avoid having two pairs of eyes along the same line of vision in did-the-ball-cross-the-line situations. Instead of duplication from the right side of the attack, would the extra pair of eyes be more efficiently utilised on the other side of the goal, enhancing the coverage of incidents by adding an additional angle? The referees opine to differ. Their standpoint is related to the logistics of refereeing

generally unknown to the general public and specifically the commonly accepted practice of covering the pitch by running diagonals.

Debate can be further fuelled by specific examples. Under the current system of having assistant referee and AAR on the same side, would, for instance, the much-publicised handball by Thierry Henry during the 2010 FIFA World Cup play-off against the Republic of Ireland have remained undetected despite the extra pair of eyes? Would an AAR on the opposite side have been better positioned to spot an infringement which would have taken place practically under his nose?

RED ALERT?

The opening game at UEFA EURO 2012 highlighted a topic which has been a constant source of concern to UEFA Champions League and national team coaches who have attended UEFA events in recent years. Although also related to referees, it is not a refereeing issue. The duty of match officials is to implement the Laws of the Game – so the talking point is whether, in this particular instance, the laws lead to justice or injustice.

The incident which refuelled ongoing debate occurred in the 69th minute of the match between Poland and Greece. With 1-1 on the scoreboard, Greek attacker Dimitris Salpingidis made a darting run into the hosts' box and, with the ball under control, was tripped as he cut across the advancing Wojciech Szczesny as the Polish goalkeeper was trying to change direction.



Spanish referee Carlos Velasco Carballo shows the red card to Polish goalkeeper Wojciech Szczesny in the 69th minute of the co-hosts' opening game against Greece

The action took place in a split second. But the consequences were far-reaching. The referee applied the law by showing a red card to the goalkeeper. While Szczesny was removing his gloves and heading for the dressing room, Polish coach Franciszek Smuda signalled the removal of Maciej Rybus, one of the line of three supporting striker Robert Lewandowski, so that Przemyslaw Tytoń could hastily pull on his gloves and, with no warm-up, station himself between the posts.

His first duty was to deal with the penalty – and, as it happens, he stretched acrobatically to his left to save the spot kick struck by the Greek captain Giorgos Karagounis. Szczesny, automatically given a one-match suspension, watched his team's second match against Russia from the stand and, with his coach retaining faith in Tytoń, played no further part in the tournament.

The talking point is whether Szczesny's crime was deserving of the multiple punishment inflicted on the offender and his team. The player was dismissed, the coach was obliged to make an undesired substitution, a penalty was awarded against the offender's team, Poland had to play 20 minutes with ten, and Szczesny was ruled out of the following match.

Had it been an obvious red-card offence (a handball on the line, taking the attackers' legs out from behind or any other action that could have denied a goal rather than a "goalscoring opportunity") there would be no room for discussion.

This, however, was one of the occasions which provoke unease among the coaching profession. The action by the Polish goalkeeper was, as a member of UEFA's technical team put it, "a fairly innocuous trip". Had the incident occurred outside the penalty area, the feeling was that a free-kick would have been awarded but, unquestionably, it would not have been a red-card offence. The debating point

is why one law applies outside the box and another, much more severe, inside it.

The counter-argument is evidently that, inside the box, the "innocuous trip" snuffed out a clear goalscoring opportunity. However, the goalscoring opportunity was restored by the penalty which was awarded – and it could be argued that the spot kick presented a better opportunity in comparison with Salpingidis' original situation.

In light of this, how justifiable is it to add the further punishments of dismissal, substitution, playing time with one player down and a subsequent suspension? If the trip five metres away would have been a commonplace no-card infringement, how justifiable is it to convert it into a red-card offence? Would it be more appropriate to rate it as a yellow-card offence which would not entail such drastic consequences for the individual and the team? Is it time to review the situation?

OVERCROWDING IN THE BACK ROOM?

The expansion of the team-behind-the-team is one of the most notable trends in recent years, both at club and national team levels. Ross Mathie, a UEFA technical observer at the 2011/12 European Under-17 Championship final tournament, was not over-exaggerating when, looking back over three decades of coaching Scotland's youth development teams, he said: "When I started in 1981, I had one assistant and a sponge man." At UEFA EURO 2012, an ample majority of the head coaches were backed by a cohort of specialists.

Is the adage "football is an art" still valid? The contributions by sports scientists are undoubtedly making an increasing impact on the way coaches approach certain areas of their job. Specialised staff are required to compile the DVD material which has now become a core element of team get-togethers,

in terms of both self-assessment and analysis of opponents. In some cases, training sessions are filmed as an add-on to in-depth examination of the physical state of every squad member. Team selection can be affected by statistical and physical performance data. Nutritionists and chefs now appear regularly on rooming lists. The question is whether top-level football is now more of a science than an art.

There are repercussions for the head coach. It has now become commonplace for the team-behind-the-team to include goalkeeping and fitness specialists. At EURO 2012, the coaching staff of at least three finalists (Denmark, Netherlands and Poland) also featured specialised coaches for attackers.

The debating point is to what extent the trend towards 'individualisation' should be allowed to develop. As far back as UEFA EURO 2004, the proliferation of individual fitness coaches, physios and even agents in training camps began to emerge as a concern for the head coach, whose priorities at this sort of event are collective rather than individual. Are we heading to the point where an individual is backed by a team that runs into double figures?

Going back to the 'attack coach', what is the most adequate approach to the presence on the training ground of the specialists in attacking play? Does it mean that attackers are separated from the group for specific coaching? Or does the attacking specialist simply offer guidance from the sideline (and in the dressing room)? Are the relationships between the head coach and his back-up team of specialists now becoming a crucial area?

Extending the issue to its extreme, is the presence of specialists having an impact on the job description of the head coach? Is the role evolving into one where the head coach is something akin to a chief executive, whose main role is to coordinate, delegate, set targets and assess the performance of an extensive staff?

To what extent is the expansion of the backroom staff a positive trend? Is the management of playing staff and backroom becoming too much of a burden for the head coach? Is it appropriate that the team-behind-the-team can be more numerous than the squad of footballers? Are we reaching a point where it is legitimate to discuss a limit on the numbers of backroom staff? Should UEFA, as an international authority, take the lead by imposing a cap at the events it organises?



France's head coach Laurent Blanc flanked by members of his team-behind-the-team



Spanish captain Iker Casillas races from the goal line to congratulate Cesc Fàbregas after the midfielder had converted the winning penalty in the semi-final against Portugal

WHO WEARS THE ARMBAND?

Prior to kick-off at the UEFA EURO 2012 final in Kyiv, the two captains removed their gloves to shake hands. Iker Casillas and Gianluigi Buffon, along with France's Hugo Lloris and the Czech Republic's Petr Čech, formed a quartet of goalkeepers who wore the captain's armband during the final tournament. The talking point is simple: how appropriate is it?

Discussion, however, can become more complex. Instinctive reactions among the current and former national team coaches who formed UEFA's technical team added up to a preference for players nearer the heart of the action than the goalkeeper, who plays a more insular role. England's Steven Gerrard was signalled as an example of the classic captain: a key performer within the collective effort, one who leads by example, and a player ready to take responsibility at the heart of the team.

But there were second thoughts – and a great deal of reflection on the role of the captain.

In Europe, cultures vary at club and national team levels. In some cases, the armband represents a simple recognition of seniority. In others, captaincy roles are shared by a group of players, one of whom acts as the

captain on the field of play; the others in the dressing room. EURO 2012 provided examples of star performers, such as Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo, Ukraine's Andriy Shevchenko or Sweden's Zlatan Ibrahimović, who sported the armband almost as a badge of distinction – a recognition of their importance to the team and their influence on collective performance.

At the final in Kyiv, the two captains' involvement could be measured by the number of passes they made. Casillas made fewer than any other player, while Buffon successfully delivered more passes than Claudio Marchisio or Mario Balotelli. But there's more to it than that. Both goalkeepers were extremely experienced campaigners and both were strong characters. Within the Spanish and Italian teams, it could be argued that Xavi Hernández, Xabi Alonso or Andrea Pirlo were the 'lead players' who had great specific gravity within the team's performance, but who were maybe not as communicative. They influenced and stimulated their team-mates by the way they played, yet were not the ones to verbally goad, encourage or stimulate.

Germany's head coach, Joachim Löw, had no qualms about naming Philipp Lahm as captain, a player who is intelligent, communicative and

very much involved in the team's mechanisms. But he also said, "Bastian Schweinsteiger has matured incredibly over the last three years and has become something of an emotional leader. It's important for the team when he is there."

For the coach, what importance does the captaincy have? What qualities should the captain possess? What are the criteria for choosing him?

FOOTBALL OR DRAMA?

The fact that the UEFA Champions League final and one of the semi-finals were decided from the penalty spot prompted discussion on the shoot-out in UEFA's technical report on the 2011/12 season. At UEFA EURO 2012, the England v Italy quarter-final and the Portugal v Spain semi-final were decided in the same way. Both shoot-outs broke records in terms of TV audiences, confirming that the public identifies with the sheer drama they offer. Football people have long since been searching for more football-related solutions to stalemated matches. But, bearing in mind the public's response, is it time to stop looking for alternatives?

WINNING COACH

VICENTE'S VICTORIES

"You are only footballers," Vicente del Bosque told his players on the eve of the Kyiv final, "but you have a duty to project an image of Spain." Victory over Italy filled him with quiet pride – so quiet that he left the dressing room to the players. "I don't feel that comfortable with scenes of euphoria," explained the man who seems almost embarrassed to have become the first coach to be champion of Europe and the world at both club and national team level. His tactical acumen and team-building abilities are reflected by the fact that his UEFA Champions League titles with Real Madrid CF in 2000 and 2002 were won with two different playing structures – and so were his national team successes in South Africa and Poland/Ukraine in 2010 and 2012.

Since leading Spain to their first-ever FIFA World Cup victory, Vicente has been feted in every corner of the country, showered with awards, named a marquis and put on the agenda for an enormous range of social and commercial events. He remains, however, untainted by acclaim. As Gerard Piqué said after the final in Kyiv, "We have blind faith in Vicente del Bosque. He is an example for all of us because of his tranquillity and his coherence. Whenever he speaks, it is with openness and sincerity – and that lays the foundations for success."

As a standard-bearer for respect and humility, Vicente would undoubtedly applaud a mention of Cesare Prandelli, his rival in the final. In the Spaniard's own words, "We produced an extraordinary performance but the job he has done with the Italian team should not be underestimated." Nor should the work done by Vicente during a period when, as he says, "We moved from rags to riches very quickly and created so much expectation that anything less than a superlative level seemed to be tasteless to Spanish palates."

The sweet taste of success served to remove a degree of pre-tournament bitterness. After victory in South Africa, Vicente had highlighted the importance of man-managing a group during an extended period. The run-up to UEFA EURO 2012, however, was marked by tensions derived from Real Madrid v Barcelona confrontations which had threatened to erect a wall in the national team dressing room.

Oil needed to be poured on troubled waters. Injuries then deprived him of the leadership qualities of Carles Puyol and the national team's highest-ever scorer, David Villa. Vicente's response was to devise the strikerless team structure that exposed him to criticism early in the tournament from media who wondered how strikers such as Fernando Torres, Fernando Llorente or Alvaro Negredo could be left on the bench. He maintained his faith in the system though, despite "the stick that you have to expect to receive when, as a national team manager, you are exposed so much to public opinion."

Vicente's historic planting of Spanish flags on the summits of football has not diluted his passion for the grassroots game. "I couldn't imagine that this would happen," he said after the final in Kyiv, "because I always felt – and still do – that my vocation was to work with youngsters in youth development teams." His unprecedented success at senior level can be recorded in statistical form: after 6 defeats (2 competitive games and 4 friendlies), the final in Kyiv brought Vicente's record to 51 victories in 61 games. But there is more to Vicente del Bosque than results...



1.



2.



3.

1. Vicente del Bosque – unassuming but with a shrewd eye for the game
2. The ribbons on the Henri Delaunay Cup match Vicente del Bosque's wristband as he displays the trophy during the Spanish delegation's flight from Kyiv to Madrid
3. Vicente del Bosque is a father figure to his players

RESULTS

GROUP A

POLAND 1-1 GREECE

Friday 8 June, 18.00,
National Stadium Warsaw



GOALS: 1-0 Lewandowski 17, 1-1 Salpingidis 51
POLAND: Szczesny; Piszczek, Wasilewski, Perquis, Boenisch; Murawski, Polanski; Blaszczykowski (C), Obraniak, Rybus (Tytoń 70); Lewandowski
GREECE: Chalkias; Torosidis, Papastathopoulos, A. Papadopoulos (K. Papadopoulos 37), Holebas; Maniatis, Katsouranis, Karagounis (C); Ninis (Salpingidis 46), Gekas (Fortounis 68), Samaras
YELLOW CARDS: Papastathopoulos 35, 44, Holebas 45+2, Karagounis 54 (Greece)
YELLOW-RED CARD: Papastathopoulos 44 (Greece)
RED CARD: Szczesny 69 (Poland)
MAN OF THE MATCH: Lewandowski
REFEREE: Carlos Velasco Carballo (Spain)
ASSISTANTS: Alonso, Yuste / **FOURTH OFFICIAL:** Rocchi
ADDITIONAL ASSISTANTS: Fernández Borbalán, Clos Gómez
ATTENDANCE: 56,070

GREECE 1-2 CZECH REPUBLIC

Tuesday 12 June, 18.00,
Municipal Stadium Wroclaw



GOALS: 0-1 Jiráček 3, 0-2 Pilař 6, 1-2 Gekas 53
GREECE: Chalkias (Sifakis 23); Torosidis, Katsouranis, K. Papadopoulos, Holebas; Maniatis; Fotakis (Gekas 46), Karagounis (C), Fortounis (Mitroglou 71); Salpingidis, Samaras
CZECH REPUBLIC: Čech; Gebre Selassie, Sivok, Kadlec, Limberský; Hübschman, Plašil; Jiráček, Rosický (C) (Kolář 46 / Rajtoral 90), Pilař; Baroš (Pekhart 64)
YELLOW CARDS: Torosidis 34, K. Papadopoulos 56, Salpingidis 57 (Greece); Rosický 27, Jiráček 36, Kolář 65 (Czech Republic)
MAN OF THE MATCH: Pilař
REFEREE: Stéphane Lannoy (France)
ASSISTANTS: Cano, Annonier / **FOURTH OFFICIAL:** Jug
ADDITIONAL ASSISTANTS: Fautrel, Buquet
ATTENDANCE: 41,105

CZECH REPUBLIC 1-0 POLAND

Saturday 16 June, 20.45,
Municipal Stadium Wroclaw



GOAL: 1-0 Jiráček 72
CZECH REPUBLIC: Čech (C); Gebre Selassie, Sivok, Kadlec, Limberský; Hübschman, Plašil; Jiráček (Rajtoral 84), Kolář, Pilař (Rezek 88); Baroš (Pekhart 90+1)
POLAND: Tytoń; Piszczek, Wasilewski, Perquis, Boenisch; Polanski (Grosicki 56), Dudka, Murawski (Mierzejewski 73), Blaszczykowski (C), Obraniak (Brožek 73); Lewandowski
YELLOW CARDS: Limberský 12, Plašil 87, Pekhart 90+4 (Czech Republic); Murawski 22, Polanski 48, Wasilewski 61, Blaszczykowski 87, Perquis 90 (Poland)
MAN OF THE MATCH: Jiráček
REFEREE: Craig Thomson (Scotland)
ASSISTANTS: Ross, Rose / **FOURTH OFFICIAL:** Fautrel
ADDITIONAL ASSISTANTS: Collum, Norris
ATTENDANCE: 41,000

RUSSIA 4-1 CZECH REPUBLIC

Friday 8 June, 20.45,
Municipal Stadium Wroclaw



GOALS: 1-0 Dzagoev 15, 2-0 Shirokov 24, 2-1 Pilař 52, 3-1 Dzagoev 79, 4-1 Pavlyuchenko 82
RUSSIA: Malafeev; Anyukov, Berezutski, Ignashevich, Zhirkov; Zyryanov, Denisov, Shirokov; Dzagoev (Kokorin 84), Arshavin (C); Kerzhakov (Pavlyuchenko 73)
CZECH REPUBLIC: Čech; Gebre Selassie, Hubník, Sivok, Kadlec; Plašil; Rezek (Hübschman 46), Rosický (C), Jiráček (Petržela 76); Pilař; Baroš (Lafata 85)
CARDS: none
MAN OF THE MATCH: Dzagoev
REFEREE: Howard Webb (England)
ASSISTANTS: Mullarkey, Kirkup / **FOURTH OFFICIAL:** De Sousa
ADDITIONAL ASSISTANTS: Atkinson, Clattenburg
ATTENDANCE: 41,000

POLAND 1-1 RUSSIA

Tuesday 12 June, 20.45,
National Stadium Warsaw



GOALS: 0-1 Dzagoev 37, 1-1 Blaszczykowski 57
POLAND: Tytoń; Piszczek, Wasilewski, Perquis, Boenisch; Polanski (Matuszczyk 85), Dudka (Mierzejewski 73), Murawski; Blaszczykowski (C), Obraniak (Brožek 90+3); Lewandowski
RUSSIA: Malafeev; Anyukov, Berezutski, Ignashevich, Zhirkov; Denisov, Zyryanov; Dzagoev (Izmailov 79), Shirokov, Arshavin (C); Kerzhakov (Pavlyuchenko 70)
YELLOW CARDS: Lewandowski 60, Polanski 79 (Poland); Denisov 60, Dzagoev 75 (Russia)
MAN OF THE MATCH: Blaszczykowski
REFEREE: Wolfgang Stark (Germany)
ASSISTANTS: Salver, Pickel / **FOURTH OFFICIAL:** Vad
ADDITIONAL ASSISTANTS: Meyer, Aytekin
ATTENDANCE: 55,920

GREECE 1-0 RUSSIA

Saturday 16 June, 20.45,
National Stadium Warsaw



GOAL: 1-0 Karagounis 45+2
GREECE: Sifakis; Torosidis, K. Papadopoulos, Papastathopoulos, Tzavellas; Katsouranis, Maniatis; Salpingidis (Ninis 83), Karagounis (C) (Makos 67), Samaras; Gekas (Holebas 64)
RUSSIA: Malafeev; Anyukov (Izmailov 81), Berezutski, Ignashevich, Zhirkov; Denisov; Dzagoev, Glushakov (Pogrebnyak 72), Shirokov, Arshavin (C); Kerzhakov (Pavlyuchenko 46)
YELLOW CARDS: Karagounis 61, Holebas 90+4 (Greece); Anyukov 61, Zhirkov 69, Dzagoev 70, Pogrebnyak 90+3 (Russia)
MAN OF THE MATCH: Karagounis
REFEREE: Jonas Eriksson (Sweden)
ASSISTANTS: Wittberg, Klasenius / **FOURTH OFFICIAL:** Göçek
ADDITIONAL ASSISTANTS: Strömbergsson, Johannesson
ATTENDANCE: 55,614

Group A	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Czech Republic	3	2	0	1	4	5	6
Greece	3	1	1	1	3	3	4
Russia	3	1	1	1	5	3	4
Poland	3	0	2	1	2	3	2

(All times are local)

RESULTS

GROUP B

NETHERLANDS 0-1 DENMARK

Saturday 9 June, 19.00,
Metalist Stadium, Kharkiv



GOAL: 0-1 Krohn-Dehli 24

NETHERLANDS: Stekelenburg; Van der Wiel (Kuyt 85), Heitinga, Vlaar, Willems; Van Bommel (C), De Jong (Van der Vaart 71); Robben, Sneijder, Afellay (Huntelaar 71); Van Persie

DENMARK: Andersen; Jacobsen, Kjær, Agger (C), S. Poulsen; Kvist, Zimling; Rommedahl (Mikkelsen 84), Eriksen (Schöne 74), Krohn-Dehli; Bendtner

YELLOW CARDS: Van Bommel 67 (Netherlands); S. Poulsen 78, Kvist 81 (Denmark)

MAN OF THE MATCH: Krohn-Dehli

REFEREE: Damir Skomina (Slovenia)

ASSISTANTS: Arhar, Žunič / **FOURTH OFFICIAL:** Kralovec

ADDITIONAL ASSISTANTS: Jug, Vinčič

ATTENDANCE: 35,923

DENMARK 2-3 PORTUGAL

Wednesday 13 June, 19.00,
Arena Lviv



GOALS: 0-1 Pepe 24, 0-2 Hélder Postiga 36, 1-2 Bendtner 41, 2-2 Bendtner 80, 2-3 Varela 87

DENMARK: Andersen; Jacobsen, Kjær, Agger (C), S. Poulsen; Kvist, Zimling (J. Poulsen 16); Rommedahl (Mikkelsen 60), Eriksen, Krohn-Dehli (Schöne 90+2); Bendtner

PORTUGAL: Rui Patrício; João Pereira, Pepe, Bruno Alves, Coentrão; Miguel Veloso; Nani (Rolando 89), Meireles (Varela 84), Moutinho; Cristiano Ronaldo (C), Hélder Postiga (Nélson Oliveira 64)

YELLOW CARDS: J. Poulsen 56, Jacobsen 81 (Denmark); Meireles 29, Cristiano Ronaldo 90+2 (Portugal)

MAN OF THE MATCH: Pepe

REFEREE: Craig Thomson (Scotland)

ASSISTANTS: Ross, Rose / **FOURTH OFFICIAL:** Shvetsov

ADDITIONAL ASSISTANTS: Collum, Norris

ATTENDANCE: 31,840

PORTUGAL 2-1 NETHERLANDS

Sunday 17 June, 21.45,
Metalist Stadium, Kharkiv



GOALS: 0-1 Van der Vaart 11, 1-1 Cristiano Ronaldo 28, 2-1 Cristiano Ronaldo 74

PORTUGAL: Rui Patrício; João Pereira, Pepe, Bruno Alves, Coentrão; Miguel Veloso; Nani (Rolando 87), Meireles (Custódio 72), Moutinho; Cristiano Ronaldo (C), Hélder Postiga (Nélson Oliveira 64)

NETHERLANDS: Stekelenburg; Van der Wiel, Vlaar, Mathijsen, Willems (Afellay 67); De Jong, Van der Vaart (C); Robben, Van Persie, Sneijder; Huntelaar

YELLOW CARDS: João Pereira 90+2 (Portugal); Willems 51, Van Persie 69 (Netherlands)

MAN OF THE MATCH: Cristiano Ronaldo

REFEREE: Nicola Rizzoli (Italy)

ASSISTANTS: Faverani, Stefani / **FOURTH OFFICIAL:** Atkinson

ADDITIONAL ASSISTANTS: Rocchi, Tagliavento

ATTENDANCE: 37,445

GERMANY 1-0 PORTUGAL

Saturday 9 June, 21.45,
Arena Lviv



GOAL: 1-0 Gomez 72

GERMANY: Neuer; Boateng, Hummels, Badstuber, Lahm (C); Schweinsteiger, Khedira; Müller (Bender 90+4), Özil (Kroos 87), Podolski; Gomez (Klose 80)

PORTUGAL: Rui Patrício; João Pereira, Pepe, Bruno Alves, Coentrão; Miguel Veloso; Meireles (Varela 80), Moutinho; Nani, Hélder Postiga (Nélson Oliveira 70), Cristiano Ronaldo (C)

YELLOW CARDS: Badstuber 43, Boateng 69 (Germany); Hélder Postiga 13, Coentrão 60 (Portugal)

MAN OF THE MATCH: Özil

REFEREE: Stéphane Lannoy (France)

ASSISTANTS: Cano, Annonier / **FOURTH OFFICIAL:** Borski

ADDITIONAL ASSISTANTS: Fautrel, Buquet

ATTENDANCE: 32,990

NETHERLANDS 1-2 GERMANY

Wednesday 13 June, 21.45,
Metalist Stadium, Kharkiv



GOALS: 0-1 Gomez 24, 0-2 Gomez 38, 1-2 Van Persie 73

NETHERLANDS: Stekelenburg; Van der Wiel, Heitinga, Mathijsen, Willems; Van Bommel (C) (Van der Vaart 46), De Jong;

Robben (Kuyt 83), Sneijder, Afellay (Huntelaar 46); Van Persie

GERMANY: Neuer; Boateng, Hummels, Badstuber, Lahm (C); Khedira, Schweinsteiger; Müller (Bender 90+2), Özil (Kroos 81), Podolski; Gomez (Klose 72)

YELLOW CARDS: De Jong 80, Willems 90 (Netherlands); Boateng 87 (Germany)

MAN OF THE MATCH: Gomez

REFEREE: Jonas Eriksson (Sweden)

ASSISTANTS: Wittberg, Klasenius / **FOURTH OFFICIAL:** Hagen

ADDITIONAL ASSISTANTS: Strömbergsson, Johannesson

ATTENDANCE: 37,750

DENMARK 1-2 GERMANY

Sunday 17 June, 21.45,
Arena Lviv



GOALS: 0-1 Podolski 19, 1-1 Krohn-Dehli 24, 1-2 Bender 80

DENMARK: Andersen; Jacobsen, Kjær, Agger (C), S. Poulsen; Kvist, Zimling (C. Poulsen 78); Eriksen, J. Poulsen (Mikkelsen 82), Krohn-Dehli; Bendtner

GERMANY: Neuer; Bender, Hummels, Badstuber, Lahm (C); Khedira, Schweinsteiger; Müller (Kroos 84), Özil,

Podolski (Schürrle 64); Gomez (Klose 74)

CARDS: none

MAN OF THE MATCH: Podolski

REFEREE: Carlos Velasco Carballo (Spain)

ASSISTANTS: Alonso, Yuste / **FOURTH OFFICIAL:** Clattenburg

ADDITIONAL ASSISTANTS: Fernández Borbalán, Clos Gómez

ATTENDANCE: 32,990

Group B	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Germany	3	3	0	0	5	2	9
Portugal	3	2	0	1	5	4	6
Denmark	3	1	0	2	4	5	3
Netherlands	3	0	0	3	2	5	0

RESULTS

GROUP C

SPAIN 1-1 ITALY

Sunday 10 June, 18.00,
Arena Gdansk



GOALS: 0-1 Di Natale 61, 1-1 Fàbregas 64

SPAIN: Casillas (C); Arbeloa, Piqué, Sergio Ramos, Jordi Alba; Busquets, Xabi Alonso; Xavi Hernández; Silva (Navas 64), Fàbregas (Torres 74), Iniesta
ITALY: Buffon (C); Bonucci, De Rossi, Chiellini; Maggio, Marchisio, Pirlo, Motta (Nocerino 90), Giaccherini; Balotelli (Di Natale 56), Cassano (Giovenco 65)

YELLOW CARDS: Jordi Alba 66, Arbeloa 84, Torres 84 (Spain); Balotelli 37, Bonucci 66, Chiellini 79, Maggio 89 (Italy)

MAN OF THE MATCH: Iniesta

REFEREE: Viktor Kassai (Hungary)

ASSISTANTS: Erös, Ring / **FOURTH OFFICIAL:** Collum

ADDITIONAL ASSISTANTS: Vad, Bogнар

ATTENDANCE: 38,869

ITALY 1-1 CROATIA

Thursday 14 June, 18.00,
Municipal Stadium Poznan



GOALS: 1-0 Pirlo 39, 1-1 Mandžukić 72

ITALY: Buffon (C); Bonucci, De Rossi, Chiellini; Maggio, Marchisio, Pirlo, Motta (Montolivo 62), Giaccherini; Cassano (Giovenco 83), Balotelli (Di Natale 69)

CROATIA: Pletikosa; Srna (C), Čorluka, Schindenfeld, Strinić; Vukojević; Rakitić, Modrić, Perišić (Pranjić 68); Mandžukić (Kranjčar 90+4), Jelavić (Eduardo 83)

YELLOW CARDS: Motta 56, Montolivo 80 (Italy); Schindenfeld 86 (Croatia)

MAN OF THE MATCH: Pirlo

REFEREE: Howard Webb (England)

ASSISTANTS: Mullarkey, Kirkup / **FOURTH OFFICIAL:** Kralovec

ADDITIONAL ASSISTANTS: Atkinson, Clattenburg

ATTENDANCE: 37,096

CROATIA 0-1 SPAIN

Monday 18 June, 20.45,
Arena Gdansk



GOAL: 0-1 Jesús Navas 88

CROATIA: Pletikosa; Vida (Jelavić 66), Čorluka, Schindenfeld, Strinić; Vukojević (Eduardo 81); Srna (C) Rakitić, Modrić, Pranjić (Perišić 66); Mandžukić

SPAIN: Casillas (C); Arbeloa, Piqué, Sergio Ramos, Jordi Alba; Busquets, Xabi Alonso; Silva (Fàbregas 73), Xavi Hernández (Negredo 89), Iniesta; Torres (Jesús Navas 61)

YELLOW CARDS: Čorluka 27, Srna 44, Strinić 53, Mandžukić 90, Jelavić 90+1, Rakitić 90+3 (Croatia)

MAN OF THE MATCH: Iniesta

REFEREE: Wolfgang Stark (Germany)

ASSISTANTS: Salver, Pickel / **FOURTH OFFICIAL:** Liesveld

ADDITIONAL ASSISTANTS: Meyer, Aytekin

ATTENDANCE: 39,076

REP. OF IRELAND 1-3 CROATIA

Sunday 10 June, 20.45,
Municipal Stadium Poznan



GOALS: 0-1 Mandžukić 3, 1-1 St Ledger 19, 1-2 Jelavić 43, 1-3 Mandžukić 49

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND: Given; O'Shea, Dunne, St Ledger, Ward; Duff, Whelan, Andrews, McGeady (Cox 54); Doyle (Walters 53), Keane (C) (Long 75)

CROATIA: Pletikosa; Srna (C), Čorluka, Schindenfeld, Strinić; Vukojević; Rakitić (Dujmović 90+2), Modrić, Perišić (Eduardo 89), Mandžukić, Jelavić (Kranjčar 72)

YELLOW CARDS: Andrews 45+1 (Republic of Ireland); Modrić 53, Kranjčar 84 (Croatia)

MAN OF THE MATCH: Mandžukić

REFEREE: Björn Kuipers (Netherlands)

ASSISTANTS: Van Roekel, Zeinstra / **FOURTH OFFICIAL:** Shvetsov

ADDITIONAL ASSISTANTS: Van Boekel, Liesveld

ATTENDANCE: 39,550

SPAIN 4-0 REP. OF IRELAND

Thursday 14 June, 20.45,
Arena Gdansk



GOALS: 1-0 Torres 4, 2-0 Silva 49, 3-0 Torres 70, 4-0 Fàbregas 83

SPAIN: Casillas (C); Arbeloa, Piqué, Sergio Ramos, Jordi Alba; Busquets, Xabi Alonso (Javi Martínez 65); Silva, Xavi Hernández, Iniesta (Cazorla 80); Torres (Fàbregas 74)

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND: Given; O'Shea, Dunne, St Ledger, Ward; Duff (McClellan 76), Whelan (Green 80), Andrews, McGeady; Cox (Walters 46), Keane (C)

YELLOW CARDS: Xabi Alonso 54, Javi Martínez 76 (Spain); Keane 36, Whelan 45+1, St Ledger 84 (Republic of Ireland)

MAN OF THE MATCH: Torres

REFEREE: Pedro Proença (Portugal)

ASSISTANTS: Miranda, Santos / **FOURTH OFFICIAL:** Borski

ADDITIONAL ASSISTANTS: De Sousa, Gomes

ATTENDANCE: 39,150

ITALY 2-0 REP. OF IRELAND

Monday 18 June, 20.45,
Municipal Stadium Poznan



GOALS: 1-0 Cassano 35, 2-0 Balotelli 90

ITALY: Buffon (C); Abate, Barzagli, Chiellini (Bonucci 57), Balzaretti; Pirlo; Marchisio, Motta, De Rossi; Cassano (Diamanti 63), Di Natale (Balotelli 74)

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND: Given; O'Shea, Dunne, St Ledger, Ward; Duff (C), Whelan, Andrews, McGeady (Long 65); Doyle (Walters 76), Keane (Cox 86)

YELLOW CARDS: Balzaretti 28, De Rossi 71, Buffon 73 (Italy); Andrews 37, 89, O'Shea 39, St Ledger 84 (Republic of Ireland)

YELLOW-RED CARD: Andrews 89 (Republic of Ireland)

MAN OF THE MATCH: Cassano

REFEREE: Cüneyt Çakır (Turkey)

ASSISTANTS: Duran, Ongun / **FOURTH OFFICIAL:** Shvetsov

ADDITIONAL ASSISTANTS: Göçek, Yıldırım

ATTENDANCE: 38,794

Group C	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Spain	3	2	1	0	6	1	7
Italy	3	1	2	0	4	2	5
Croatia	3	1	1	1	4	3	4
Republic of Ireland	3	0	0	3	1	9	0

RESULTS

GROUP D

FRANCE 1-1 ENGLAND

Monday 11 June, 19.00,
Donbass Arena, Donetsk



GOALS: 0-1 Lescott 30, 1-1 Nasri 39

FRANCE: Lloris (C); Debuchy, Rami, Mexès, Evra; Diarra;

Cabaye (Ben Arfa 85), Malouda (Martin 85); Nasri, Ribéry; Benzema

ENGLAND: Hart; Johnson, Terry, Lescott, Cole; Milner, Gerrard (C),

Parker (Henderson 78), Oxlade-Chamberlain (Defoe 77); Young;

Welbeck (Walcott 90)

YELLOW CARDS: Oxlade-Chamberlain 34, Young 71 (England)

MAN OF THE MATCH: Nasri

REFEREE: Nicola Rizzoli (Italy)

ASSISTANTS: Faverani, Stefani / **FOURTH OFFICIAL:** Kralovec

ADDITIONAL ASSISTANTS: Rocchi, Tagliavento

ATTENDANCE: 47,400

UKRAINE 0-2 FRANCE

Friday 15 June, 19.00,
Donbass Arena, Donetsk



GOALS: 0-1 Ménez 53, 0-2 Cabaye 56

UKRAINE: Pyatov; Gusev, Mikhaliuk, Khacheridi, Selin; Tymoshchuk;

Yarmolenko (Aliyev 68), Nazarenko (Milevskiy 60), Konoplyanka;

Voronin (Dević 46), Shevchenko (C)

FRANCE: Lloris (C); Debuchy, Rami, Mexès, Clichy; Diarra; Cabaye

(M'Vila 68), Ménez (Martin 73); Nasri, Ribéry; Benzema (Giroud 76)

YELLOW CARDS: Selin 55, Tymoshchuk 87 (Ukraine); Ménez 40,

Debuchy 79, Mexès 81 (France)

MAN OF THE MATCH: Ribéry

REFEREE: Björn Kuipers (Netherlands)

ASSISTANTS: Van Roekel, Zeinstra / **FOURTH OFFICIAL:** Hagen

ADDITIONAL ASSISTANTS: Van Boekel, Liesveld

ATTENDANCE: 48,000

ENGLAND 1-0 UKRAINE

Tuesday 19 June, 21.45,
Donbass Arena, Donetsk



GOAL: 1-0 Rooney 48

ENGLAND: Hart; Johnson, Terry, Lescott, Cole; Milner (Walcott 70), Gerrard

(C), Parker, Young; Rooney (Oxlade-Chamberlain 87), Welbeck (Carroll 82)

UKRAINE: Pyatov; Gusev, Khacheridi, Rakitskiy, Selin; Tymoshchuk (C);

Yarmolenko, Garmash (Nazarenko 78), Konoplyanka; Dević (Shevchenko 70),

Milevskiy (Butko 77)

YELLOW CARDS: Gerrard 73, Cole 78 (England); Tymoshchuk 63,

Rakitskiy 74, Shevchenko 86 (Ukraine)

MAN OF THE MATCH: Gerrard

REFEREE: Viktor Kassai (Hungary)

ASSISTANTS: Erös, Ring / **FOURTH OFFICIAL:** Hagen

ADDITIONAL ASSISTANTS: Vad, Bogнар

ATTENDANCE: 48,700

UKRAINE 2-1 SWEDEN

Monday 11 June, 21.45,
Olympic Stadium, Kyiv



GOALS: 0-1 Ibrahimović 52, 1-1 Shevchenko 55, 2-1 Shevchenko 62

UKRAINE: Pyatov; Gusev, Mikhaliuk, Khacheridi, Selin; Tymoshchuk;

Yarmolenko, Nazarenko, Konoplyanka (Dević 90+3); Voronin (Rotan 85),

Shevchenko (C) (Milevskiy 81)

SWEDEN: Isaksson; Lustig, Mellberg, Granqvist, M. Olsson;

Larsson (Wilhelmsson 68), Elm, Källström, Toivonen (Svensson 62);

Ibrahimović (C), Rosenberg (Elmänder 71)

YELLOW CARDS: Källström 11, Elm 83 (Sweden)

MAN OF THE MATCH: Shevchenko

REFEREE: Cüneyt Çakır (Turkey)

ASSISTANTS: Duran, Ongun / **FOURTH OFFICIAL:** Borski

ADDITIONAL ASSISTANTS: Göçek, Yıldırım

ATTENDANCE: 64,290

SWEDEN 2-3 ENGLAND

Friday 15 June, 21.45,
Olympic Stadium, Kyiv



GOALS: 0-1 Carroll 23, 1-1 Johnson 49 (o.g.), 2-1 Mellberg 59,

2-2 Walcott 64, 2-3 Welbeck 78

SWEDEN: Isaksson; Granqvist (Lustig 66), Mellberg, J. Olsson,

M. Olsson; Larsson, Svensson, Källström, Elm (Wilhelmsson 81);

Ibrahimović (C), Elmänder (Rosenberg 79)

ENGLAND: Hart; Johnson, Terry, Lescott, Cole; Milner (Walcott 61),

Gerrard (C), Parker, Young; Welbeck (Oxlade-Chamberlain 90), Carroll

YELLOW CARDS: Mellberg 63, J. Olsson 72, Svensson 90+1 (Sweden);

Milner 58 (England)

MAN OF THE MATCH: Mellberg

REFEREE: Damir Skomina (Slovenia)

ASSISTANTS: Arhar, Žunič / **FOURTH OFFICIAL:** Meyer

ADDITIONAL ASSISTANTS: Jug, Vinčič

ATTENDANCE: 64,640

SWEDEN 2-0 FRANCE

Tuesday 19 June, 21.45,
Olympic Stadium, Kyiv



GOALS: 1-0 Ibrahimović 54, 2-0 Larsson 90+1

SWEDEN: Isaksson; Granqvist, Mellberg, J. Olsson, M. Olsson;

Larsson, Svensson (Holmén 79), Källström, Bajrami (Wilhelmsson 46);

Ibrahimović (C), Toivonen (Wernbloom 78)

FRANCE: Lloris (C); Debuchy, Rami, Mexès, Clichy; M'Vila (Giroud 83),

Diarra; Ben Arfa (Malouda 59), Nasri (Ménez 77), Ribéry; Benzema

YELLOW CARDS: Svensson 70, Holmén 81 (Sweden); Mexès 68 (France)

MAN OF THE MATCH: Ibrahimović

REFEREE: Pedro Proença (Portugal)

ASSISTANTS: Miranda, Santos / **FOURTH OFFICIAL:** Van Boekel

ADDITIONAL ASSISTANTS: De Sousa, Gomes

ATTENDANCE: 63,010

Group D	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
England	3	2	1	0	5	3	7
France	3	1	1	1	3	3	4
Ukraine	3	1	0	2	2	4	3
Sweden	3	1	0	2	5	5	3

RESULTS

QUARTER-FINALS

CZECH REPUBLIC 0-1 PORTUGAL

Thursday 21 June, 20.45,
National Stadium Warsaw



GOAL: 0-1 Cristiano Ronaldo 79

CZECH REPUBLIC: Čech (C); Gebre Selassie, Sivok, Kadlec, Limberský; Hübschman (Pekhart 86), Plašil; Jiráček, Darida (Rezek 61), Pilař; Baroš

PORTUGAL: Rui Patrício; João Pereira, Pepe, Bruno Alves, Coentrão; Miguel Veloso; Nani (Custódio 84), Moutinho, Meireles (Rolando 88), Cristiano Ronaldo (C); Hélder Postiga (Almeida 40)

YELLOW CARDS: Limberský 90 (Czech Republic); Nani 26, Miguel Veloso 27 (Portugal)

MAN OF THE MATCH: Cristiano Ronaldo

REFEREE: Howard Webb (England)

ASSISTANTS: Mullarkey, Van Roekel / **FOURTH OFFICIAL:** Eriksson

ADDITIONAL ASSISTANTS: Atkinson, Clattenburg

ATTENDANCE: 55,590

SPAIN 2-0 FRANCE

Saturday 23 June, 21.45,
Donbass Arena, Donetsk



GOALS: 1-0 Xabi Alonso 19, 2-0 Xabi Alonso 90+1p

SPAIN: Casillas (C); Arbeloa, Piqué, Sergio Ramos, Jordi Alba; Busquets, Xabi Alonso; Silva (Pedro 65), Xavi Hernández, Iniesta (Cazorla 84), Fàbregas (Torres 67)

FRANCE: Lloris (C); Réveillère, Rami, Koscielny, Clichy; Debuchy (Ménez 64),

Cabaye, M'Vila (Giroud 79), Malouda (Nasri 65), Ribéry; Benzema

YELLOW CARDS: Sergio Ramos 31 (Spain); Cabaye 42, Ménez 76 (France)

MAN OF THE MATCH: Xabi Alonso

REFEREE: Nicola Rizzoli (Italy)

ASSISTANTS: Faverani, Stefani / **FOURTH OFFICIAL:** Thomson

ADDITIONAL ASSISTANTS: Rocchi, Tagliavento

ATTENDANCE: 47,000

GERMANY 4-2 GREECE

Friday 22 June, 20.45,
Arena Gdansk



GOALS: 1-0 Lahm 39, 1-1 Samaras 55, 2-1 Khedira 61, 3-1 Klose 68, 4-1 Reus 74, 4-2 Salpingidis 89p

GERMANY: Neuer; Boateng, Hummels, Badstuber, Lahm (C); Khedira, Schweinsteiger; Reus (Götze 80), Özil, Schürrle (Müller 67); Klose (Gomez 80)

GREECE: Sifakis; Torosidis, K. Papadopoulos, Papastathopoulos, Tzavellas (Fotakis 46); Makos (Liberopoulos 72), Katsouranis (C), Maniatis; Ninis (Gekas 46), Samaras; Salpingidis

YELLOW CARDS: Samaras 14, Papastathopoulos 75 (Greece)

MAN OF THE MATCH: Özil

REFEREE: Damir Skomina (Slovenia)

ASSISTANTS: Arhar, Žunić / **FOURTH OFFICIAL:** Lannoy

ADDITIONAL ASSISTANTS: Vinčič, Jug

ATTENDANCE: 38,751

ENGLAND 0-0 ITALY (2-4 on penalties)

Sunday 24 June, 21.45,
Olympic Stadium, Kyiv



PENALTY SHOOT-OUT: (Italy started): 0-1 Balotelli,

1-1 Gerrard, 1-1 Montolivo (wide), 2-1 Rooney, 2-2 Pirlo,

2-2 Young (crossbar), 2-3 Nocerino, 2-3 Cole (saved), 2-4 Diamanti

ENGLAND: Hart; Johnson, Terry, Lescott, Cole; Milner (Walcott 61),

Gerrard (C), Parker (Henderson 94), Young; Rooney, Welbeck (Carroll 60)

ITALY: Buffon (C); Abate (Maggio 90+1), Barzagli, Bonucci, Balzaretti; Pirlo;

Marchisio, Montolivo, De Rossi (Nocerino 80), Cassano (Diamanti 78), Balotelli

YELLOW CARDS: Barzagli 82, Maggio 93 (Italy)

MAN OF THE MATCH: Pirlo

REFEREE: Pedro Proença (Portugal)

ASSISTANTS: Miranda, Santos / **FOURTH OFFICIAL:** Çakır

ADDITIONAL ASSISTANTS: De Sousa, Gomes

ATTENDANCE: 64,340

SEMI-FINALS

PORTUGAL 0-0 SPAIN (2-4 on penalties)

Wednesday 27 June, 21.45,
Donbass Arena, Donetsk



PENALTY SHOOT-OUT: (Spain started): 0-0 Xabi Alonso (saved), 0-0 Moutinho (saved), 0-1 Iniesta, 1-1 Pepe, 1-2 Piqué, 2-2 Nani, 2-3 Sergio Ramos, 2-3 Bruno Alves (crossbar), 2-4 Fàbregas

PORTUGAL: Rui Patrício; João Pereira, Pepe, Bruno Alves, Coentrão; Miguel Veloso (Custódio 106); Nani, Moutinho, Meireles (Varela 113), Cristiano Ronaldo (C); Hugo Almeida (Nélson Oliveira 81)

SPAIN: Casillas (C); Arbeloa, Piqué, Sergio Ramos, Jordi Alba; Busquets, Xabi Alonso; Silva (Jesús Navas 60), Xavi Hernández (Pedro 87), Iniesta, Negredo (Fàbregas 54)

YELLOW CARDS: Coentrão 45, Pepe 61, João Pereira 64, Bruno Alves 86, Miguel Veloso 90+3 (Portugal); Sergio Ramos 40, Sergio Busquets 60, Arbeloa 84, Xabi Alonso 113 (Spain)

MAN OF THE MATCH: Sergio Ramos

REFEREE: Cüneyt Çakır (Turkey)

ASSISTANTS: Duran, Ongun / **FOURTH OFFICIAL:** Skomina

ADDITIONAL ASSISTANTS: Göçek, Yıldırım

ATTENDANCE: 48,000

GERMANY 1-2 ITALY

Thursday 28 June, 20.45,
National Stadium Warsaw



GOALS: 0-1 Balotelli 20, 0-2 Balotelli 36, 1-2 Özil 90+2p

GERMANY: Neuer; Boateng (Müller 71), Hummels, Badstuber, Lahm (C); Khedira, Schweinsteiger; Özil, Kroos, Podolski (Reus 46), Gomez (Klose 46)

ITALY: Buffon (C); Balzaretti, Barzagli, Bonucci, Chiellini; Pirlo; Marchisio, Montolivo (Motta 64), De Rossi; Cassano (Diamanti 58), Balotelli (Di Natale 70)

YELLOW CARDS: Hummels 90+4 (Germany); Balotelli 37, Bonucci 61, De Rossi 84, Motta 89 (Italy)

MAN OF THE MATCH: Pirlo

REFEREE: Stéphane Lannoy (France)

ASSISTANTS: Cano, Annonier / **FOURTH OFFICIAL:** Webb

ADDITIONAL ASSISTANTS: Fautrel, Buquet

ATTENDANCE: 55,540

FINAL

SPAIN 4-0 ITALY

Sunday 1 July, 21.45,
Olympic Stadium, Kyiv



GOALS: 1-0 Silva 14, 2-0 Jordi Alba 41, 3-0 Torres 84, 4-0 Mata 88

SPAIN: Casillas (C); Arbeloa, Piqué, Sergio Ramos, Jordi Alba;
Busquets, Xabi Alonso; Silva (Pedro 59), Xavi Hernández,
Iniesta (Mata 87); Fàbregas (Torres 75)

ITALY: Buffon (C); Abate, Barzagli, Bonucci, Chiellini (Balzaretti 21); Pirlo;
Marchisio, Montolivo (Motta 57), De Rossi; Cassano (Di Natale 46), Balotelli

YELLOW CARDS: Piqué 25 (Spain); Barzagli 45 (Italy)

MAN OF THE MATCH: Iniesta

REFEREE: Pedro Proença (Portugal)

ASSISTANTS: Miranda, Santos / **FOURTH OFFICIAL:** Çakır

ADDITIONAL ASSISTANTS: De Sousa, Gomes

ATTENDANCE: 63,170



The mood of the final is illustrated by two expressions: Spain's No6 Andrés Iniesta looks calm and confident as he breaks clear with the ball; Italian defender Leonardo Bonucci has the distraught air of a man who has just missed the boat.



CROATIA



No	Player	Born	IRL	ITA	ESP	G	Club
GOALKEEPERS							
1	Stipe PLETIKOSA	08/01/79	90	90	90		FC Rostov
12	Ivan KELAVA	20/02/88					GNK Dinamo Zagreb
23	Danijel SUBAŠIĆ	27/10/84					AS Monaco FC
DEFENDERS							
2	Ivan STRINIĆ	17/07/87	90	90	90		FC Dnipro Dnipropetrovsk
3	Josip ŠIMUNIĆ	18/02/78					GNK Dinamo Zagreb
4	Jurica BULJAT	12/09/86					Maccabi Haifa FC
5	Vedran ČORLUKA	05/02/86	90	90	90		Tottenham Hotspur FC
6	Danijel PRANJIC	02/12/81		22	66		FC Bayern München
11	Darijo SRNA ¹	01/05/82	90	90	90		FC Shakhtar Donetsk
13	Gordon SCHILDENFELD	18/03/85	90	90	90		Eintracht Frankfurt
15	Šime VRSALJKO	10/01/92					GNK Dinamo Zagreb
21	Domagoj VIDA	29/04/89			66		GNK Dinamo Zagreb
MIDFIELDERS							
7	Ivan RAKITIĆ	10/03/88	89	90	90		Sevilla FC
8	Ognjen VUKOJEVIĆ	20/12/83	90	90	81		FC Dynamo Kyiv
10	Luka MODRIĆ	09/09/85	90	90	90		Tottenham Hotspur FC
14	Milan BADELJ	25/02/89					GNK Dinamo Zagreb
16	Tomislav DUJMOVIĆ	26/02/81	1				FC Dinamo Moskva
19	Niko KRANJČAR	13/08/84	18	1			Tottenham Hotspur FC
20	Ivan PERIŠIĆ	02/02/89	89	68	24		Borussia Dortmund
FORWARDS							
9	Nikica JELAVIĆ	27/08/85	72	83	24	1	Everton FC
17	Mario MANDŽUKIĆ	21/05/86	90	89	90	3	VfL Wolfsburg
18	Nikola KALINIĆ	05/01/88					FC Dnipro Dnipropetrovsk
22	EDUARDO Da Silva	25/02/83	1	7	9		FC Shakhtar Donetsk

G = Goals; S = Suspended; * = Started; + = Substitute; I = Injured/ill; ¹ Midfield v Spain



HEAD COACH

Slaven BILIĆ (11/09/1968)

Coaching staff: Nikola Jurčević (14/09/1966), Aljoša Asanović (14/12/1965)

GK: Marijan Mrmić (06/05/1965)

KEY FEATURES

- 4-1-3-2 with Vukojević the anchor in midfield
- Possession-based game with players equipped to retain the ball
- Attacks based on combination moves, many of them one-touch
- Fast attacking full-backs, especially Srna on right; good runs, quality crosses
- Two strong skilful strikers: Mandžukić, Jelavić
- Modrić the creative playmaker; excellent switches and supply to Srna on right
- Tactically disciplined; solid defending through central areas
- Fast collective counters ending with as many as five in the box
- Ability to control the tempo of the game
- Strong in the air; dangerous at set plays

Opponent	Ball	Distance Covered	PA	Acc
Rep. of Ireland	55%	113,771m	583	68%
Italy	47%	111,667m	526	67%
Spain	35%	111,744m	381	61%

PA = Passes attempted; Acc = Accuracy

Average attempted passes per game

long 77 (15% of total)

medium 302 (61%)

short 118 (24%)



v Republic of Ireland



CZECH REPUBLIC



KEY FEATURES

- 4-1-4-1 or 4-2-3-1
- Good possession game with frequent changes of tempo
- Regular use of direct, back-to-front passes to lone striker Baroš
- Occasional attempts to press high
- Well-organised, disciplined, hardworking, technically good
- Adventurous overlapping full-backs and influential wide players
- Threatening on set plays; good deliveries by Plašil
- Fluent, incisive middle-to-front passing; clever combinations
- Great transition speed: counterattacks and forming defensive block
- Top goalkeeper Čech; frequent use of his long, precise distribution

Opponent	Ball	Distance Covered	PA	Acc
Russia	51%	118,701m	628	72%
Greece	46%	113,401m	477	66%
Poland	56%	112,339m	557	76%
Portugal	44%	110,416m	462	59%

PA = Passes attempted; Acc = Accuracy

Average attempted passes per game

long 71 (13% of total)
medium 344 (64%)
short 122 (23%)



v Greece

No	Player	Born	RUS	GRE	POL	POR	G	Club
GOALKEEPERS								
1	Petr ČECH	20/05/82	90	90	90	90		Chelsea FC
16	Jan LAŠTŮVKA	07/07/82						FC Dnipro Dnipropetrovsk
23	Jaroslav DROBNÝ	18/10/79						Hamburger SV
DEFENDERS								
2	Theodor GEBRE SELASSIE	24/12/86	90	90	90	90		FC Slovan Liberec
3	Michal KADLEC	13/12/84	90	90	90	90		Bayer 04 Leverkusen
4	Marek SUCHÝ	29/03/88						FC Spartak Moskva
5	Roman HUBNÍK	06/06/84	90					Hertha BSC Berlin
6	Tomáš SIVOK	15/09/83	90	90	90	90		Beşiktaş JK
8	David LIMBERSKÝ	06/10/83		90	90	90		FC Viktoria Plzeň
MIDFIELDERS								
10	Tomáš ROSICKÝ	04/10/80	90	45*	I	I		Arsenal FC
11	Milan PETRŽELA	19/06/83	14					FC Viktoria Plzeň
12	František RAJTORAL	12/03/86		1	6			FC Viktoria Plzeň
13	Jaroslav PLAŠIL	05/01/82	90	90	90	90		FC Girondins de Bordeaux
14	Václav PILAŘ	13/10/88	90	90	88	90	2	VfL Wolfsburg
17	Tomáš HÜBSCHMAN	04/09/81	45+	90	90	86		FC Shakhtar Donetsk
18	Daniel KOLÁŘ	27/10/85		44+	90			FC Viktoria Plzeň
19	Petr JIRÁČEK	02/03/86	76	90	84	90	2	VfL Wolfsburg
22	Vladimír DARIDA	08/08/90				61		FC Viktoria Plzeň
FORWARDS								
7	Tomáš NECID	13/08/89						PFC CSKA Moskva
9	Jan REZEK	05/05/82	45*		2	29		Anorthosis Famagusta FC
15	Milan BAROŠ	28/10/81	85	64	89	90		Galatasaray AŞ
20	Tomáš PEKHART	26/05/89		26	1	4		1. FC Nürnberg
21	David LAFATA	18/09/81	5					FK Jablonec

G = Goals; S = Suspended; * = Started; + = Substitute; I = Injured/ill



HEAD COACH

Michal BÍLEK (13/04/1965)

Coaching staff: František Komňacký (15/11/1951), Jakub Dovalil (08/02/1974)

GK: Jan Stejskal (15/01/1962); **Fitness:** Jan Netscher (15/11/1975)



DENMARK



No	Player	Born	NED	POR	GER	G	Club
GOALKEEPERS							
1	Stephan ANDERSEN	26/11/81	90	90	90		Evian Thonon Gaillard FC
16	Anders LINDEGAARD	13/04/84					Manchester United FC
22	Kasper SCHMEICHEL	05/11/86					Leicester City FC
DEFENDERS							
3	Simon KJÆR	26/03/89	90	90	90		AS Roma
4	Daniel AGGER	12/12/84	90	90	90		Liverpool FC
5	Simon POULSEN	07/10/84	90	90	90		AZ Alkmaar
6	Lars JACOBSEN	20/09/79	90	90	90		FC København
12	Andreas BJELLAND	11/07/88					FC Twente
13	Jores OKORE	11/08/92					FC Nordsjælland
18	Daniel WASS	31/05/89					Evian Thonon Gaillard FC
MIDFIELDERS							
2	Christian POULSEN	28/02/80			12		Evian Thonon Gaillard FC
7	William KVIST	24/02/85	90	90	90		VfB Stuttgart
8	Christian ERIKSEN	14/02/92	74	90	90		AFC Ajax
9	Michael KROHN-DEHLI	06/06/83	90	89	90	2	Brøndby IF
14	Lasse SCHØNE	27/05/86	16	1			NEC Nijmegen
15	Michael SILBERBAUER	07/07/81					BSC Young Boys
19	Jakob POULSEN	07/07/83		74+	82		FC Midtjylland
20	Thomas KAHLENBERG	20/03/83					Evian Thonon Gaillard FC
21	Niki ZIMLING	19/04/85	90	16*	78		Club Brugge KV
FORWARDS							
10	Dennis ROMMEDAHL	22/07/78	84	60	1		Brøndby IF
11	Nicklas BENDTNER	16/01/88	90	90	90	2	Arsenal FC
17	Nicklas PEDERSEN	10/10/87					FC Groningen
23	Tobias MIKKELSEN	18/09/86	6	30	8		FC Nordsjælland

G = Goals; S = Suspended; * = Started; + = Substitute; I = Injured/ill



HEAD COACH

Morten OLSEN (14/08/1949)

Coaching staff: Peter Bonde (14/02/1958), Torben Storm (13/09/1946)

GK: Lars Høgh (14/01/1959); **Forwards:** Ebbe Sand (19/07/1972)

Fitness/physiology: Jens Bangsbo (02/10/1957)

KEY FEATURES

- 4-2-3-1 with variations according to match situations
- Impressive positive possession play
- Goalkeeper and defenders always tried to build from the back
- Overlapping full-backs; Jacobsen especially incisive on the right
- Quick middle-to-front transitions; good off-the-ball running
- In midfield, Eriksen the creator; Krohn-Dehli the finisher
- Extremely hardworking players in middle-to-front area
- Well-organised, compact defence with Agger as the leader
- Lone striker Bendtner a quality finisher; available to receive quick delivery
- Experienced team with good spirit and mental strength

Opponent	Ball	Distance Covered	PA	Acc
Netherlands	47%	112,882m	526	72%
Portugal	58%	113,400m	613	76%
Germany	43%	112,744m	561	72%

PA = Passes attempted; Acc = Accuracy

Average attempted passes per game

74 long (13% of total)

372 medium (66%)

121 short (21%)



v Netherlands



ENGLAND



No	Player	Born	FRA	SWE	UKR	ITA	G	Club
GOALKEEPERS								
1	Joe HART	19/04/87	90	90	90	120		Manchester City FC
13	Robert GREEN	18/01/80						West Ham United FC
23	Jack BUTLAND	10/03/93						Birmingham City FC
DEFENDERS								
2	Glen JOHNSON	23/08/84	90	90	90	120		Liverpool FC
3	Ashley COLE	20/12/80	90	90	90	120		Chelsea FC
5	Martin KELLY	27/04/90						Liverpool FC
6	John TERRY	07/12/80	90	90	90	120		Chelsea FC
12	Leighton BAINES	11/12/84						Everton FC
14	Phil JONES	21/02/92						Manchester United FC
15	Joleon LESCOTT	16/08/82	90	90	90	120	1	Manchester City FC
18	Phil JAGIELKA	17/08/82						Everton FC
MIDFIELDERS								
4	Steven GERRARD	30/05/80	90	90	90	120		Liverpool FC
8	Jordan HENDERSON	17/06/90	12			26		Liverpool FC
11	Ashley YOUNG	09/07/85	90	90	90	120		Manchester United FC
16	James MILNER	04/01/86	90	61	70	60*		Manchester City FC
17	Scott PARKER	13/10/80	78	90	90	94		Tottenham Hotspur FC
19	Stewart DOWNING	22/07/84						Liverpool FC
20	Alex OXLADE-CHAMBERLAIN	15/08/93	77	1	3			Arsenal FC
FORWARDS								
7	Theo WALCOTT	16/03/89	1	29	20	60+	1	Arsenal FC
9	Andy CARROLL	06/01/89		90	8	60+	1	Liverpool FC
10	Wayne ROONEY	24/10/85	S		87	120	1	Manchester United FC
21	Jermain DEFOE	07/10/82	13					Tottenham Hotspur FC
22	Danny WELBECK	26/11/90	89	89	82	60*	1	Manchester United FC

G = Goals; S = Suspended; * = Started; + = Substitute; I = Injured/ill



HEAD COACH

Roy HODGSON (09/08/1947)

Coaching staff: Stuart Pearce (24/04/1962), Ray Lewington (07/09/1956), Gary Neville (18/02/1975); **GK:** Ray Clemence (05/08/1948), Dave Watson (10/11/1973)

KEY FEATURES

- 4-4-2 or 4-4-1-1
- Deep, compact, well-organised, heroic defending (Terry the leader)
- Parker and Gerrard the driving forces in midfield
- Aerial power at back (Terry, Lescott) and front (Carroll)
- Brilliant deliveries by Gerrard (crosses and set plays)
- Fast transitions, especially when involving Walcott or Welbeck
- Sometimes tried to press high as a unit
- Extensive use of flanks: crosses and combinations
- Classic link-up play between Rooney and Carroll/Welbeck
- Brave, quick, influential goalkeeping by Hart

Opponent	Ball	Distance Covered	PA	Acc
France	38%	104,784m	455	68%
Sweden	52%	112,483m	616	71%
Ukraine	41%	112,581m	446	68%
Italy	36%	109,520m ¹	392 ¹	61%

PA = Passes attempted; Acc = Accuracy

¹ 146,027m/522 passes overall; converted to 90-minute values for sake of comparisons

Average attempted passes per game

79 long (15% of total)

300 medium (59%)

131 short (26%)



v Italy



FRANCE



No	Player	Born	ENG	UKR	SWE	ESP	G	Club
GOALKEEPERS								
1	Hugo LLORIS	26/12/86	90	90	90	90		Olympique Lyonnais
16	Steve MANDANDA	28/03/85						Olympique de Marseille
23	Cédric CARRASSO	30/12/81						FC Girondins de Bordeaux
DEFENDERS								
2	Mathieu DEBUCHY ¹	28/07/85	90	90	90	64		LOSC Lille Métropole
3	Patrice EVRA	15/05/81	90					Manchester United FC
4	Adil RAMI	27/12/85	90	90	90	90		Valencia CF
5	Philippe MEXÈS	30/03/82	90	90	90	S		AC Milan
13	Anthony RÉVEILLÈRE	10/11/79				90		Olympique Lyonnais
21	Laurent KOSCIELNY	10/09/85				90		Arsenal FC
22	Gaël CLICHY	26/07/85		90	90	90		Manchester City FC
MIDFIELDERS								
6	Yohan CABAYE	14/01/86	85	68	I	90	1	Newcastle United FC
11	Samir NASRI	26/06/87	90	90	77	25	1	Manchester City FC
12	Blaise MATUIDI	09/04/87						Paris Saint-Germain FC
15	Florent MALOUDA	13/06/80	85		31	65		Chelsea FC
17	Yann M'VILA	29/06/90		22	83	79		Stade Rennais FC
18	Alou DIARRA	15/07/81	90	90	90			Olympique de Marseille
19	Marvin MARTIN	10/01/88	5	17				FC Sochaux-Montbéliard
FORWARDS								
7	Franck RIBÉRY	07/04/83	90	90	90	90		FC Bayern München
8	Mathieu VALBUENA	28/09/84						Olympique de Marseille
9	Olivier GIROUD	30/09/86		14	7	11		Montpellier Hérault FC
10	Karim BENZEMA	19/12/87	90	76	90	90		Real Madrid CF
14	Jérémy MÉNEZ	07/05/87		73	13	26	1	Paris Saint-Germain FC
20	Hatem BEN ARFA	07/03/87	5		59			Newcastle United FC

G = Goals; S = Suspended; * = Started; + = Substitute; I = Injured/ill; ¹ = Midfield v Spain



HEAD COACH

Laurent BLANC (19/11/1965)

Coaching staff: Jean-Louis Gasset (09/12/1953),
Alain Boghossian (27/10/1970); **GK:** Franck Raviot (12/07/1973);
Physical: Philippe Lambert (15/07/1962)

KEY FEATURES

- 4-3-3 or 4-2-3-1
- Good use of wings; Ribéry and overlapping full-backs
- Generally short-passing game with incisive through balls
- Benzema and Ribéry the targets when playing out from the back
- Lloris an experienced, reliable goalkeeper
- Frequent long-range shooting (Benzema, Debuchy, Cabaye, etc.)
- Creative, mobile middle-to-front players (Nasri, Cabaye, etc.)
- Talented individuals (Ribéry, Nasri, Ménez and Benzema)
- Fast breaks, based particularly on running with the ball
- Compact, disciplined defending with one or two screening midfielders

Opponent	Ball	Distance Covered	PA	Acc
England	61%	103,943m	776	82%
Ukraine	52%	113,673m	614	76%
Sweden	57%	108,493m	619	79%
Spain	45%	112,705m	602	71%

PA = Passes attempted; Acc = Accuracy

Average attempted passes per game

56 long (9% of total)

412 medium (63%)

185 short (28%)



v Spain



GERMANY



KEY FEATURES

- 4-2-3-1
- Double midfield screen; Khedira more offensive
- Excellent attacking mobility and running off the ball
- Özil the creative force, usually starting wide on the right
- Outstanding incisive passing and combinations
- Good deliveries and crosses, especially from the right
- Set out to take the initiative; often high pressing
- Important use of attacking full-backs, especially Lahm
- Emphasis on building from the back; top goalkeeper in Neuer
- Big threat on counters, set plays and long-range shooting

Opponent	Ball	Distance Covered	PA	Acc
Portugal	56%	112,051m	600	70%
Netherlands	48%	111,087m	538	72%
Denmark	57%	111,567m	743	79%
Greece	67%	110,925m	785	84%
Italy	53%	110,731m	652	73%

PA = Passes attempted; Acc = Accuracy

Average attempted passes per game

61 long (9% of total)

452 medium (68%),

150 short (23%)



v Italy

No	Player	Born	POR	NED	DEN	GRE	ITA	G	Club
GOALKEEPERS									
1	Manuel NEUER	27/03/86	90	90	90	90	90		FC Bayern München
12	Tim WIESE	17/12/81							SV Werder Bremen
22	Ron-Robert ZIELER	12/02/89							Hannover 96
DEFENDERS									
3	Marcel SCHMELZER	22/01/88							Borussia Dortmund
4	Benedikt HÖWEDES	29/02/88							FC Schalke 04
5	Mats HUMMELS	16/12/88	90	90	90	90	90		Borussia Dortmund
14	Holger BADSTUBER	13/03/89	90	90	90	90	90		FC Bayern München
16	Philipp LAHM	11/11/83	90	90	90	90	90	1	FC Bayern München
17	Per MERTESECKER	29/09/84							Arsenal FC
20	Jérôme BOATENG	03/09/88	90	90	S	90	71		FC Bayern München
MIDFIELDERS									
2	İlkay GÜNDOĞAN	24/10/90							Borussia Dortmund
6	Sami KHEDIRA	04/04/87	90	90	90	90	90	1	Real Madrid CF
7	Bastian SCHWEINSTEIGER	01/08/84	90	90	90	90	90		FC Bayern München
8	Mesut ÖZIL	15/10/88	87	81	90	90	90	1	Real Madrid CF
15	Lars BENDER ¹	27/04/89	1	1	90			1	Bayer 04 Leverkusen
18	Toni KROOS	04/01/90	3	9	6		90		FC Bayern München
FORWARDS									
9	André SCHÜRRLE	06/11/90			26	67			Bayer 04 Leverkusen
10	Lukas PODOLSKI	04/06/85	90	90	64	45*	1		1. FC Köln
11	Miroslav KLOSE	09/06/78	10	18	16	80	45+	1	S.S. Lazio
13	Thomas MÜLLER	13/09/89	89	89	84	23	19		FC Bayern München
19	Mario GÖTZE	03/06/92					10		Borussia Dortmund
21	Marco REUS	31/05/89				80	45+	1	VfL Borussia Mönchengladbach
23	Mario GOMEZ	10/07/85	80	72	74	10	45*	3	FC Bayern München

G = Goals; S = Suspended; * = Started; + = Substitute; I = Injured/ill; ¹ Right-back v Denmark



HEAD COACH

Joachim LÖW (03/02/1960)

Coaching staff: Hansi Flick (24/02/1965); **Team manager:** Oliver Bierhoff (01/05/1968); **GK:** Andreas Köpke (12/03/1962); **Physical:** Shad Forsythe (08/06/1973), Yann-Benjamin Kugel (16/12/1979), Masaya Sakihana (13/06/1974); **Sport psychologist:** Hans-Dieter Hermann (14/05/1960)



GREECE



No	Player	Born	POL	CZE	RUS	GER	G	Club
GOALKEEPERS								
1	Kostas CHALKIAS	30/05/74	90	23*	I	I		PAOK FC
12	Alexandros TZORVAS	12/08/82						US Città di Palermo
13	Michalis SIFAKIS	09/09/84		67+	90	90		Aris Thessaloniki FC
DEFENDERS								
3	Giorgos TZAVELLAS	26/11/87			90	45*		AS Monaco FC
4	Stelios MALEZAS	11/03/85						PAOK FC
5	Kyriakos PAPADOPOULOS	23/02/92	53+	90	90	90		FC Schalke 04
8	Avraam PAPADOPOULOS	03/12/84	37*	I	I	I		Olympiacos FC
15	Vassilis TOROSSIDIS	10/06/85	90	90	90	90		Olympiacos FC
19	Sokratis PAPASTATHOPOULOS	09/06/88	44*	S	90	90		SV Werder Bremen
20	José HOLEBAS	27/06/84	90	90	26	S		Olympiacos FC
MIDFIELDERS								
2	Giannis MANIATIS	12/10/86	90	90	90	90		Olympiacos FC
6	Grigoris MAKOS	18/01/87			23	72		AEK Athens FC
10	Giorgos KARAGOUNIS	06/03/77	90	90	67	S	1	Panathinaikos FC
16	Giorgos FOTAKIS	29/10/81		45*		45+		PAOK FC
21	Kostas KATSOURANIS ¹	21/06/79	90	90	90	90		Panathinaikos FC
22	Kostas FORTOUNIS	16/10/92	22	71				1. FC Kaiserslautern
23	Giannis FETFATZIDIS	21/12/90						Olympiacos FC
FORWARDS								
7	Giorgos SAMARAS	21/02/85	90	90	90	90	1	Celtic FC
9	Nikos LIBEROPOULOS	04/08/75				18		AEK Athens FC
11	Kostas MITROGLOU	12/03/88		19				Atromitos FC
14	Dimitris SALPINGIDIS	18/08/81	45+	90	83	90	2	PAOK FC
17	Fanis GEKAS	23/05/80	68	45+	64	45+	1	Samsunspor
18	Sotiris NINIS	03/04/90	45*		7	45*		Panathinaikos FC

G = Goals; S = Suspended; * = Started; + = Substitute; I = Injured/ill; ¹ Central defender v Czech Republic



HEAD COACH

Fernando SANTOS (10/10/1954)

Coaching staff: Leonidas Vokolos (31/08/70), Ricardo Sousa Santos (01/09/81)

GK: Fernando Justino (14/10/60)

KEY FEATURES

- 4-3-3 or 4-2-3-1
- Compact, deep, determined defending in 4-5-1 formation
- Outstanding blocking, tackling and interceptions; physically strong
- Incisive passing from influential midfielders Maniatis and Karagounis
- Blend of long and short passing; Samaras the target (middle or left)
- Highly competitive, fighting qualities; mentally resilient with strong team ethic
- Many attacks based on individual actions
- Preference for diagonals and early crosses into the box
- Ability to control tempo, with or without ball, and frustrate opponents
- Dangerous set plays (inswingers and outswingers by Karagounis and Torossidis)

Opponent	Ball	Distance Covered	PA	Acc
Poland	48%	96,183m*	456	66%
Czech Republic	54%	109,675m	528	71%
Russia	38%	100,924m	374	52%
Germany	33%	103,884m	383	57%

PA = Passes attempted; Acc = Accuracy

* Greece played 46 minutes with 10

Average attempted passes per game

68 long (16% of total)

275 medium (63%)

93 short (21%)



v Poland



ITALY



KEY FEATURES

- 4-4-2 (with midfield diamond) and 3-5-2
- Often very high pressing with a compact unit
- Effective switches of play and mobility in attack
- Well organised in the art of defending set plays
- Attacks often created 1v1 situations in central and wide areas
- Attacking mentality; prepared to carry game to the opposition
- Top goalkeeper in Buffon; short distribution, building from the back
- Playmaker Pirlo, the architect at base of midfield diamond; clever short and long passing
- Full-backs responsible for giving width to attacks; good deliveries
- Effective set plays; Pirlo the provider

Opponent	Ball	Distance Covered	PA	Acc
Spain	40%	117,324m	517	66%
Croatia	53%	116,301m	578	71%
Rep. of Ireland	59%	109,475m	626	78%
England	64%	111,761m ¹	752 ¹	81%
Germany	47%	116,787m	587	69%
Spain	48%	102,754m ²	607	74%

PA = Passes attempted; Acc = Accuracy

¹ 149,014m/1,003 passes overall; converted to 90-minute values for sake of comparisons
² Playing with 10 for last 26 minutes

Average attempted passes per game

61 long (9% of total), 452 medium (68%), 150 short (23%)



First match v Spain. For Italy's 4-4-2 formation, please refer to the diagram on page 15

No	Player	Born	ESP	CRO	IRL	ENG	GER	ESP	G	Club
GOALKEEPERS										
1	Gianluigi BUFFON	28/01/78	90	90	90	120	90	90		Juventus
12	Salvatore SIRIGU	12/01/87								Paris Saint-Germain FC
14	Morgan DE SANCTIS	26/03/77								SSC Napoli
DEFENDERS										
3	Giorgio CHIELLINI	14/08/84	90	90	57	I	90	21*		Juventus
4	Angelo OGBONNA	23/05/88								Torino FC
6	Federico BALZARETTI	06/12/81			90	120	90	69+		US Città di Palermo
7	Ignazio ABATE	12/11/86			90	91		90		AC Milan
15	Andrea BARZAGLI	08/05/81	I	I	90	120	90	90		Juventus
19	Leonardo BONUCCI	01/05/87	90	90	33	120	90	90		Juventus
MIDFIELDERS										
2	Christian MAGGIO	11/02/82	90	90		29	S			SSC Napoli
5	Thiago MOTTA	28/08/82	89	62	90	I	26	7 ²		Paris Saint-Germain FC
8	Claudio MARCHISIO	19/01/86	90	90	90	120	90	90		Juventus
13	Emanuele GIACCHERINI	05/05/85	90	90						Juventus
16	Daniele DE ROSSI ¹	24/07/83	90	90	90	80	90	90		AS Roma
18	Riccardo MONTOLIVO	18/01/85		28		120	64	57		ACF Fiorentina
21	Andrea PIRLO	19/05/79	90	90	90	120	90	90	1	Juventus
22	Alessandro DIAMANTI	02/05/83			27	42	32			Bologna FC
23	Antonio NOCERINO	09/04/85	1			40				AC Milan
FORWARDS										
9	Mario BALOTELLI	12/08/90	56	69	16	120	70	90	3	Manchester City FC
10	Antonio CASSANO	12/07/82	65	83	63	78	58	45*	1	AC Milan
11	Antonio DI NATALE	13/10/77	34	21	74		20	45+	1	Udinese Calcio
17	Fabio BORINI	29/03/91								AS Roma
20	Sebastian GIOVINCO	26/01/87	25	7						FC Parma

G = Goals; S = Suspended; * = Started; + = Substitute; I = Injured/ill; ¹ Defender v Spain and Croatia; ² On in 57th min; injured 7 mins later



HEAD COACH

Cesare PRANDELLI (19/08/1957)

Coaching staff: Gabriele Pin (21/01/1962), Maurizio Viscidi (18/05/1962)

GK: Vincenzo di Palma (20/03/1952); **Physical:** Giambattista Venturati (25/06/1967), Nicolò Prandelli (19/04/1984)



NETHERLANDS



No	Player	Born	DEN	GER	POR	G	Club
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GOALKEEPERS

1	Maarten STEKELENBURG	22/09/82	90	90	90		AS Roma
12	Michel VORM	20/10/83					Swansea City AFC
22	Tim KRUL	03/04/88					Newcastle United FC

DEFENDERS

2	Gregory VAN DER WIEL	03/02/88	85	90	90		AFC Ajax
3	John HEITINGA	15/11/83	90	90			Everton FC
4	Joris MATHIJSEN	05/04/80		90	90		Málaga CF
5	Wilfred BOUMA	15/06/78					PSV Eindhoven
13	Ron VLAAR	16/02/85	90		90		Feyenoord
15	Jetro WILLEMS	30/03/94	90	90	67		PSV Eindhoven
21	Khalid BOULAHROUZ	28/12/81					VfB Stuttgart

MIDFIELDERS

6	Mark VAN BOMMEL	22/04/77	90	45*			AC Milan
8	Nigel DE JONG	30/11/84	71	90	90		Manchester City FC
10	Wesley SNEIJDER	09/06/84	90	90	90		FC Internazionale Milano
14	Stijn SCHAARS	11/01/84					Sporting Clube de Portugal
17	Kevin STROOTMAN	13/02/90					PSV Eindhoven
23	Rafael VAN DER VAART	11/02/83	19	45+	90	1	Tottenham Hotspur FC

FORWARDS

7	Dirk KUYT	22/07/80	5	7			Liverpool FC
9	Klaas-Jan HUNTELAAR	12/08/83	19	45+	90		FC Schalke 04
11	Arjen ROBBEN	23/01/84	90	83	90		FC Bayern München
16	Robin VAN PERSIE	06/08/83	90	90	90	1	Arsenal FC
18	Luuk DE JONG	27/08/90					FC Twente
19	Luciano NARSINGH	13/09/90					sc Heerenveen
20	Ibrahim AFELLAY	02/04/86	71	45*	23		FC Barcelona

G = Goals; S = Suspended; * = Started; + = Substitute; I = Injured/ill



HEAD COACH

Bert VAN MARWIJK (19/05/1952)

Coaching staff: Phillip Cocu (29/10/1970), Ernest Faber (27/08/1971), Dick Voorn (29/10/1948); **GK:** Ruud Hesp (31/10/1965); **Forwards:** René Eijkelkamp (06/04/1964); **Physical:** Egid Kiesouw (07/09/1962)

KEY FEATURES

- 4-2-3-1 (adapting to 4-1-3-2)
- Fluid ball circulation and incisive passing
- Van Persie a major threat at the apex of the attack
- Excellent long-range shooting
- Very creative middle-to-front players (Sneijder, Robben, Van der Vaart)
- Hard-tackling midfield screeners (De Jong and Van Bommel)
- Clever combination play in attacking third
- Top-level individualists (Van Persie, Robben, Sneijder)
- Capable of advanced pressing
- Gifted set-play specialists (Robben, Sneijder, Van der Vaart)

Opponent	Ball	Distance Covered	PA	Acc
Denmark	53%	108,783m	654	76%
Germany	52%	108,552m	676	76%
Portugal	59%	110,572m	673	77%

PA = Passes attempted; Acc = Accuracy

Average attempted passes per game

72 long (11% of total)
455 medium (68%)
141 short (21%)



v Denmark



POLAND



KEY FEATURES

- 4-2-3-1 (first game) or 4-3-3
- Rapid defence-to-attack transitions
- Equipped to sustain high tempo
- Good mobility in middle-to-front areas
- Frequent back-to-front passes using Lewandowski (physical presence) as target
- Big threat on crossing and finishing
- Occasional use of advanced pressing
- Often drop into contain-and-counter mode
- Dangerous set plays; left-footed deliveries by specialist Obraniak
- Strong team ethic, fighting spirit and character

Opponent	Ball	Distance Covered	PA	Acc
Greece	52%	103,256m	528	71%
Russia	43%	114,290m	486	66%
Czech Rep.	44%	111,464m	414	65%

PA = Passes attempted; Acc = Accuracy

Average attempted passes per game

56 long (12% of total)

318 medium (67%)

102 short (21%)



v Greece

No	Player	Born	GRE	RUS	CZE	G	Club
GOALKEEPERS							
1	Wojciech SZCZĘSNY	18/04/90	69	S			Arsenal FC
12	Grzegorz SANDOMIERSKI	05/09/89					KRC Genk
22	Przemysław TYTOŃ	04/01/87	20	90	90		PSV Eindhoven
DEFENDERS							
2	Sebastian BOENISCH	01/02/87	90	90	90		SV Werder Bremen
3	Grzegorz WOJTKOWIAK	26/01/84					KKS Lech Poznań
4	Marcin KAMIŃSKI	15/01/92					KKS Lech Poznań
13	Marcin WASILEWSKI	09/06/80	90	90	90		RSC Anderlecht
14	Jakub WAWRZYNIAK	07/07/83					Legia Warszawa
15	Damien PERQUIS	10/04/84	90	90	90		FC Sochaux-Montbéliard
20	Łukasz PIŚCZEK	03/06/85	90	90	90		Borussia Dortmund
MIDFIELDERS							
5	Dariusz DUDKA	09/12/83		73	90		AJ Auxerre
6	Adam MATUSZCZYK	14/02/89		5			Fortuna Düsseldorf
7	Eugen POLANSKI	17/03/86	90	85	56		1. FSV Mainz
8	Maciej RYBUS	19/08/89	70				FC Terek Grozny
10	Ludovic OBRANIAK	10/11/84	90	89	73		FC Girondins de Bordeaux
11	Rafał MURAWSKI	09/10/81	90	90	73		KKS Lech Poznań
16	Jakub BŁASZCZYKOWSKI	14/12/85	90	90	90	1	Borussia Dortmund
18	Adrian MIERZEJEWSKI	06/11/86		17	17		Trabzonspor AŞ
19	Rafał WOLSKI	10/11/92					Legia Warszawa
FORWARDS							
9	Robert LEWANDOWSKI	21/08/88	90	90	90	1	Borussia Dortmund
17	Artur SOBIECH	12/06/90					Hannover 96
21	Kamil GROSIĆKI	08/06/88			34		Sivasspor
23	Paweł BROŻEK	21/04/83		1	17		Celtic FC

G = Goals; S = Suspended; * = Started; + = Substitute; I = Injured/ill



HEAD COACH

Franciszek SMUDA (22/06/1948)

Coaching staff: Jacek Zieliński (10/10/1967), Hubert Małowiejski (09/08/1977)

GK: Jacek Kazimierski (17/08/1959); **Forwards:** Tomasz Frankowski (16/08/1974); **Fitness:** Remigiusz Rzepka (14/04/1973), Barry Solan (03/09/1980)

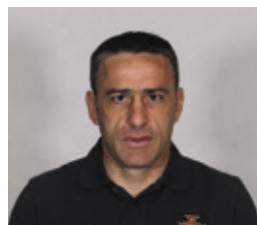


PORTUGAL



No	Player	Born	GER	DEN	NED	CZE	ESP	G	Club
GOALKEEPERS									
1	EDUARDO Carvalho	19/09/82							SL Benfica
12	RUI PATRÍCIO	15/02/88	90	90	90	90	120		Sporting Clube de Portugal
22	António Pimparel BETO	01/05/82							CFR 1907 Cluj
DEFENDERS									
2	BRUNO ALVES	27/11/81	90	90	90	90	120		FC Zenit St Petersburg
3	PEPE De Lima Ferreira	26/02/83	90	90	90	90	120	1	Real Madrid CF
5	Fábio COENTRÃO	11/03/88	90	90	90	90	120		Real Madrid CF
13	RICARDO COSTA	16/05/81							Valencia CF
14	ROLANDO Da Fonseca	31/08/85		1	3	2			FC Porto
19	MIGUEL LOPES	19/12/86							SC Braga
21	JOÃO PEREIRA	25/02/84	90	90	90	90	120		Sporting Clube de Portugal
MIDFIELDERS									
4	MIGUEL VELOSO	11/05/86	90	90	90	90	106		Genoa CFC
6	CUSTÓDIO	24/05/83			18	6	14		SC Braga
8	João MOUTINHO	08/09/86	90	90	90	90	120		FC Porto
15	RÚBEN Micael	19/08/86							Real Zaragoza
16	Raul MEIRELES	17/03/83	80	84	72	88	113		Chelsea FC
20	HUGO VIANA	15/01/83							SC Braga
FORWARDS									
7	Cristiano RONALDO	05/02/85	90	90	90	90	120	3	Real Madrid CF
9	Hugo ALMEIDA	23/05/84				50+	81		Beşiktaş JK
10	Ricardo QUARESMA	26/09/83							Beşiktaş JK
11	NÉLSON OLIVEIRA	08/08/91	20	26	26		39		SL Benfica
17	Luís Almeida NANI	17/11/86	90	89	87	84	120		Manchester United FC
18	Silvestre VARELA	02/02/85	10	6			7	1	FC Porto
23	HÉLDER POSTIGA	02/08/82	70	64	64	40*	I	1	Real Zaragoza

G = Goals; S = Suspended; * = Started; + = Substitute; I = Injured/ill



HEAD COACH

Paulo BENTO (20/06/1969)

Coaching staff: Leonel Pontes (09/07/1972), João Aroso (29/10/1972)

GK: Ricardo Peres (09/05/1974)

KEY FEATURES

- 4-3-3
- Dangerous on the flanks: full-backs and wingers
- Exceptional solo play by captain Ronaldo
- Great counters involving Nani and Ronaldo
- Set-play threat: Pepe, Ronaldo, Nani and Moutinho
- Brilliant through passes and crosses
- Middle-to-front mobility; wingers swap sides
- Effective long diagonals and long-range shooting
- Balanced midfield; Veloso the classic midfield anchor

Opponent	Ball	Distance Covered	PA	Acc
Germany	44%	112,818m	495	67%
Denmark	42%	114,447m	413	62%
Netherlands	41%	112,623m	428	67%
Czech Republic	56%	108,978m	597	72%
Spain	43%	107,825m ¹	432 ¹	60%

PA = Passes attempted; Acc = Accuracy

¹ 143,766m/547 passes overall; converted to 90-minute values for sake of comparisons

Average attempted passes per game

78 long (16% of total)

313 medium (63%)

105 short (21%)



v Spain



REPUBLIC OF IRELAND



KEY FEATURES

- 4-4-2 with twin screening midfielders
- Powerful in the air at both ends; a threat on attacking set plays
- Fierce pressure on ball, forcing opponents to play long
- Defence well equipped to deal with long balls and high crosses
- Frequent use of back-to-front passing and long diagonals
- Good 'second ball' mentality
- Two wingers looking to cut inside or play early diagonal crosses
- Emphasis on quick deliveries to classic twin strikers
- Heroic defending: blocks, interceptions, tackles
- Energetic and highly competitive; mentally strong; never-say-die attitude

Opponent	Ball	Distance Covered	PA	Acc
Croatia	45%	111,185m	501	61%
Spain	33%	113,509m	397	56%
Italy	41%	105,803m	351	56%

PA = Passes attempted; Acc = Accuracy

Average attempted passes per game

77 long (19% of total)
234 medium (56%)
105 short (25%)



v Spain

No	Player	Born	CRO	ESP	ITA	G	Club
GOALKEEPERS							
1	Shay GIVEN	20/04/76	90	90	90		Aston Villa FC
16	Keiren WESTWOOD	23/10/84					Sunderland AFC
23	David FORDE	20/12/79					Millwall FC
DEFENDERS							
2	Sean ST LEDGER	28/12/84	90	90	90	1	Leicester City FC
3	Stephen WARD	20/08/85	90	90	90		Wolverhampton Wanderers FC
4	John O'SHEA	30/04/81	90	90	90		Sunderland AFC
5	Richard DUNNE	21/09/79	90	90	90		Aston Villa FC
12	Stephen KELLY	06/09/83					Fulham FC
13	Paul McSHANE	06/01/83					Hull City AFC
18	Darren O'DEA	04/02/87					Celtic FC
MIDFIELDERS							
6	Glenn WHELAN	13/01/84	90	80	90		Stoke City FC
7	Aiden McGEADY	04/04/86	54	90	65		FC Spartak Moskva
8	Keith ANDREWS	13/09/80	90	90	89		West Bromwich Albion FC
11	Damien DUFF	02/03/79	90	76	90		Fulham FC
15	Darron GIBSON	25/10/87					Everton FC
17	Stephen HUNT	01/08/81					Wolverhampton Wanderers FC
21	Paul GREEN	10/04/83		10			Leeds United AFC
22	James McCLEAN	22/04/89		14			Sunderland AFC
FORWARDS							
9	Kevin DOYLE	18/09/83	53		76		Wolverhampton Wanderers FC
10	Robbie KEANE	08/07/80	75	90	86		LA Galaxy
14	Jon WALTERS	20/09/83	37	45+	14		Stoke City FC
19	Shane LONG	22/01/87	15		25		West Bromwich Albion FC
20	Simon COX	28/04/87	36	45*	4		West Bromwich Albion FC

G = Goals; S = Suspended; * = Started; + = Substitute; I = Injured/ill



HEAD COACH

Giovanni TRAPATTONI (17/03/1939)

Coaching staff: Marco Tardelli (24/09/1954)

GK: Alan Kelly (11/08/1968); Physical: Fausto Rossi (24/07/1950)



RUSSIA



No	Player	Born	CZE	POL	GRE	G	Club
GOALKEEPERS							
1	Igor AKINFEEV	08/04/86	I				PFC CSKA Moskva
13	Anton SHUNIN	27/01/87					FC Dinamo Moskva
16	Vyacheslav MALAFEEV	04/03/79	90	90	90		FC Zenit St Petersburg
DEFENDERS							
2	Aleksandr ANYUKOV	28/09/82	90	90	81		FC Zenit St Petersburg
3	Roman SHARONOV	08/09/76					FC Rubin Kazan
4	Sergei IGNASHEVICH	14/07/79	90	90	90		PFC CSKA Moskva
5	Yuri ZHIRKOV	20/08/83	90	90	90		FC Anzhi Makhachkala
12	Aleksei BEREZUTSKI	20/06/82	90	90	90		PFC CSKA Moskva
19	Vladimir GRANAT	22/05/87					FC Dinamo Moskva
21	Kirill NABABKIN	08/09/86					PFC CSKA Moskva
MIDFIELDERS							
6	Roman SHIROKOV	06/07/81	90	90	90	1	FC Zenit St Petersburg
7	Igor DENISOV	17/05/84	90	90	90		FC Zenit St Petersburg
8	Konstantin ZYRYANOV	05/10/77	90	90			FC Zenit St Petersburg
15	Dmitri KOMBAROV	22/01/87					FC Spartak Moskva
17	Alan DZAGOEV	17/06/90	84	79	90	3	PFC CSKA Moskva
18	Aleksandr KOKORIN	19/03/91	6				FC Dinamo Moskva
22	Denis GLUSHAKOV	27/01/87			72		FC Lokomotiv Moskva
23	Igor SEMSHOV	06/04/78					FC Dinamo Moskva
FORWARDS							
9	Marat IZMAILOV	21/09/82		11	9		Sporting Clube de Portugal
10	Andrey ARSHAVIN	29/05/81	90	90	90		FC Zenit St Petersburg
11	Aleksandr KERZHAKOV	27/11/82	73	70	45*		FC Zenit St Petersburg
14	Roman PAVLYUCHENKO	15/12/81	17	20	45+	1	FC Lokomotiv Moskva
20	Pavel POGREBNIYAK	08/11/83			18		Fulham FC

G = Goals; S = Suspended; * = Started; + = Substitute; I = Injured/ill



HEAD COACH

Dick ADVOCAAT (27/09/1947)

Coaching staff: Aleksandr Borodyuk (30/11/1962), Bert van Lingen (28/12/1945); **GK:** Sergei Ovchinnikov (10/11/1970); **Physical:** Rob Ouderland (29/04/1950)

KEY FEATURES

- Stable 4-3-3 with Denisov as screening midfielder
- Balanced team with talented middle-to-front midfielders
- Slick combination moves; able to play a possession game
- Preference for fast counterattacking moves
- Prepared to attack in numbers, pushing five or six players into the box
- High levels of technique; fluent middle-to-front movement
- Arshavin the 'free spirit'; excellent deliveries at set plays
- Attacking left-back Zhirkov good at exploiting spaces opened by Arshavin
- Ready to shoot from long range, especially Denisov, Dzagoev
- Quick, disciplined transitions into 4-5-1 when defending

Opponent	Ball	Distance Covered	PA	Acc
Czech Rep.	49%	113,302m	585	72%
Poland	57%	110,678m	712	77%
Greece	62%	106,183m	706	78%

PA = Passes attempted; Acc = Accuracy

Average attempted passes per game

57 long (8% of total)

445 medium (67%)

165 short (25%)



v Greece



SPAIN



No	Player	Born	ITA	IRL	CRO	FRA	POR	ITA	G	Club
GOALKEEPERS										
1	Iker CASILLAS	20/05/81	90	90	90	90	120	90		Real Madrid CF
12	VÍCTOR VALDÉS	14/01/82								FC Barcelona
23	José Manuel 'Pepe' REINA	31/08/82								Liverpool FC
DEFENDERS										
2	Raúl ALBIOL	04/09/85								Real Madrid CF
3	Gerard PIQUÉ	02/02/87	90	90	90	90	120	90		FC Barcelona
5	'JUANFRAN' Torres	09/01/85								Club Atlético de Madrid
15	SERGIO RAMOS	30/03/86	90	90	90	90	120	90		Real Madrid CF
17	Álvaro ARBELLOA	17/01/83	90	90	90	90	120	90		Real Madrid CF
18	JORDI ALBA	21/03/89	90	90	90	90	120	90	1	Valencia CF
MIDFIELDERS										
4	JAVI MARTÍNEZ	02/09/88		25						Athletic Club
6	Andrés INIESTA	11/05/84	90	80	90	84	120	87		FC Barcelona
8	XAVI Hernández	25/01/80	90	90	89	90	87	90		FC Barcelona
10	'Cesc' FÀBREGAS	04/05/87	74	16	17	67	66+	75	2	FC Barcelona
14	XABI ALONSO	25/11/81	90	65	90	90	120	90	2	Real Madrid CF
16	Sergio BUSQUETS	16/07/88	90	90	90	90	120	90		FC Barcelona
20	Santiago CAZORLA	13/12/84		10		6				Málaga CF
21	David SILVA	08/01/86	64	90	73	65	60*	59	2	Manchester City FC
FORWARDS										
7	PEDRO Rodríguez	28/07/87				25	33	31		FC Barcelona
9	Fernando TORRES	20/03/84	16	74	61	23		15	3	Chelsea FC
11	Álvaro NEGREDO	20/08/85			1		54*			Sevilla FC
13	Juan MATA	28/04/88						3	1	Chelsea FC
19	Fernando LLORENTE	26/02/85								Athletic Club
22	JESÚS NAVAS	21/11/85	26		29		60+		1	Sevilla FC

G = Goals; S = Suspended; * = Started; + = Substitute; I = Injured/ill

KEY FEATURES

- 4-3-3, with and without a striker
- Outstanding possession game; mesmerising middle-to-front mobility
- Intense pressing aimed at regaining the ball quickly
- Impressive individual ball retention: screening, turning, dribbling
- Top goalkeeper in Casillas; super distribution, occasional back-to-front deliveries
- Precise short-passing combinations and incisive passing/running
- Xavi the orchestrator, Iniesta the infiltrator
- Excellent tempo control and transition play
- Variety of set plays; deliveries by Xavi and Silva
- Self-belief; faithful to playing philosophy in all match situations

Opponent	Ball	Distance Covered	PA	Acc
Italy	60%	111,271m	834	81%
Rep. of Ireland	67%	111,446m	929	84%
Croatia	65%	109,821m	774	83%
France	55%	109,826m	800	80%
Portugal	57%	105,349m ¹	664 ¹	74%
Italy	52%	108,646m	671	79%

PA = Passes attempted; Acc = Accuracy

¹ 140,465m/885 passes overall; converted to 90-minute values for sake of comparisons

Average attempted passes per game

62 long (8% of total), 502 medium (62%), 244 short (30%)



Final v Italy



SWEDEN



No	Player	Born	UKR	ENG	FRA	G	Club
GOALKEEPERS							
1	Andreas ISAKSSON	03/10/81	90	90	90		PSV Eindhoven
12	Johan WILAND	24/01/81					FC København
23	Pär HANSSON	22/06/86					Helsingborgs IF
DEFENDERS							
2	Mikael LUSTIG	13/12/86	90	24			Celtic FC
3	Olof MELLBERG	03/09/77	90	90	90	1	Olympiacos FC
4	Andreas GRANQVIST	16/04/85	90	66	90		Genoa CFC
5	Martin OLSSON	17/05/88	90	90	90		Blackburn Rovers FC
13	Jonas OLSSON	10/03/83		90	90		West Bromwich Albion FC
15	Mikael ANTONSSON	31/05/81					Bologna FC
17	Behrang SAFARI	09/02/85					RSC Anderlecht
MIDFIELDERS							
6	Rasmus ELM	17/03/88	90	81			AZ Alkmaar
7	Sebastian LARSSON	06/06/85	68	90	90	1	Sunderland AFC
8	Anders SVENSSON	17/07/76	28	90	79		IF Elfsborg
9	Kim KÄLLSTRÖM	24/08/82	90	90	90		Olympique Lyonnais
16	Pontus WERNBLOOM	25/06/86			12		PFC CSKA Moskva
18	Samuel HOLMÉN	28/06/84			11		İstanbul BB SK
19	Emir BAJRAMI	07/03/88			45*		FC Twente
21	Christian WILHELMSSON	08/12/79	22	9	45+		Al-Hilal FC
FORWARDS							
10	Zlatan IBRAHIMOVIĆ	03/10/81	90	90	90	2	AC Milan
11	Johan ELMANDER	27/05/81	19	79			Galatasaray AŞ
14	Tobias HYSÉN	09/03/82					IFK Göteborg
20	Ola TOIVONEN	03/07/86	62		78		PSV Eindhoven
22	Markus ROSENBERG	27/09/82	71	11			SV Werder Bremen

G = Goals; **S** = Suspended; * = Started; + = Substitute; **I** = Injured/ill; One goal was an own goal by England's Glen Johnson



HEAD COACH

Erik HAMRÉN (27/06/1957)

Coaching staff: Marcus Allbäck (05/07/1973)

GK: Lars Ericsson (21/09/1965); **Physical:** Paul Balsom (11/09/1963)

KEY FEATURES

- 4-4-1-1 with double midfield screen
- Blend of direct passing and combination play
- Crossing and finishing a key aspect of the game
- Midfield mobility and overlapping full-backs (Granqvist, M. Olsson)
- Ibrahimović the 'free spirit' and attacking inspiration
- High fitness levels; excellent work rate
- Frequent high pressing; pressure on the ball
- Powerful long-range shooting a valuable weapon
- Very good inswinging corners and indirect free-kicks; aerial threat
- Compact, disciplined defensive block

Opponent	Ball	Distance Covered	PA	Acc
Ukraine	47%	111,860m	500	67%
England	48%	113,947m	606	72%
France	43%	113,516m	501	71%

PA = Passes attempted; **Acc** = Accuracy

Average attempted passes per game

77 long (14% of total)

316 medium (59%)

143 short (27%)



v England



UKRAINE



KEY FEATURES

- 4-1-3-2 with shadow striker behind main target player
- Very compact defence with Tymoshchuk the holding midfielder
- Gusev a highly attack-minded right-back
- Yarmolenko and Konoplyanka very fast wingers with good dribbling skills
- Nazarenko a key player, linking and balancing attack and defence
- Attacks sometimes based on direct passes to Shevchenko
- Fast counterattacking a major feature
- Emphasis on positive possession play (500+ passes per game)
- Dangerous deliveries on set plays
- Quick transitions into defensive block

Opponent	Ball	Distance Covered	PA	Acc
Sweden	53%	112,378m	536	70%
France	48%	112,103m	530	68%
England	59%	109,987m	590	74%

PA = Passes attempted; Acc = Accuracy

Average attempted passes per game

97 long (18% of total)

351 medium (64%)

104 short (19%)

(decimal points account for 'extra' 1%)



v Sweden

No	Player	Born	SWE	FRA	ENG	G	Club
GOALKEEPERS							
1	Maxym KOVAL	09/12/92					FC Dynamo Kyiv
12	Andriy PYATOV	28/06/84	90	90	90		FC Shakhtar Donetsk
23	Olexandr GORYAINOV	29/06/75					FC Metalist Kharkiv
DEFENDERS							
2	Yevhen SELIN	09/05/88	90	90	90		FC Vorskla Poltava
3	Yevhen KHACHERIDI	28/07/87	90	90	90		FC Dynamo Kyiv
5	Olexandr KUCHER	22/10/82					FC Shakhtar Donetsk
9	Oleh GUSEV	25/04/83	90	90	90		FC Dynamo Kyiv
13	Vyacheslav SHEVCHUK	13/05/79					FC Shakhtar Donetsk
17	Taras MIKHALIK	28/10/83	90	90			FC Dynamo Kyiv
20	Yaroslav RAKITSKIY	03/08/89			90		FC Shakhtar Donetsk
21	Bogdan BUTKO	13/01/91			13		FC Illychivets Mariupil
MIDFIELDERS							
4	Anatoliy TYMOSHCHUK	30/03/79	90	90	90		FC Bayern München
6	Denys GARMASH	19/04/90			78		FC Dynamo Kyiv
8	Olexandr ALIYEV	03/02/85		22			FC Dynamo Kyiv
14	Ruslan ROTAN	29/10/81	5				FC Dnipro Dnipropetrovsk
18	Serhiy NAZARENKO	16/02/80	90	60	12		SC Tavriya Simferopol
19	Yevhen KONOPLYANKA	29/09/89	89	90	90		FC Dnipro Dnipropetrovsk
FORWARDS							
7	Andriy SHEVCHENKO	29/09/76	81	90	20	2	FC Dynamo Kyiv
10	Andriy VORONIN	21/07/79	85	45*			FC Dinamo Moskva
11	Andriy YARMOLENKO	23/10/89	90	68	90		FC Dynamo Kyiv
15	Artem MILEVSKIY	12/01/85	9	30	77		FC Dynamo Kyiv
16	Yevhen SELEZNYOV	20/07/85					FC Shakhtar Donetsk
22	Marko DEVIĆ	27/10/83	1	45+	70		FC Shakhtar Donetsk

G = Goals; S = Suspended; * = Started; + = Substitute; I = Injured/ill



HEAD COACH

Oleh BLOKHIN (05/11/1952)

Coaching staff: Yuriy Kalitvintsev (05/05/1968); Andriy Bal (16/02/1958)

GK: Yuriy Romenskiy (01/08/1952); **Physical:** Vitaliy Kulyba (01/05/1985)

STATISTICS

DISCIPLINE

Referee/Assistants/ Additional Assistants	FIFA	Country
Cüneyt Çakır	2006	Turkey
Bahattin Duran	2003	
Tarik Ongun	2008	
Hüseyin Göçek	2008	
Bülent Yildirim	2007	
Jonas Eriksson	2002	Sweden
Stefan Wittberg	1997	
Mathias Klasenius	2007	
Stefan Johannesson	2003	
Markus Strömbergsson	2006	
Viktor Kassai	2003	Hungary
Gabor Erös	2002	
György Ring	2008	
Tamás Bogнар	2009	
István Vad	2007	
Björn Kuipers	2006	Netherlands
Sander van Roekel	2007	
Erwin Zeinstra	2010	
Richard Liesveld	2008	
Pol van Boekel	2008	
Stéphane Lannoy	2006	France
Eric Dansault	2006	
Frédéric Cano	2008	
Ruddy Buquet	2011	
Fredy Fautrel	2007	
Pedro Proença	2003	Portugal
Bertino Miranda	1998	
Ricardo Santos	2010	
Manuel De Sousa	2006	
Duarte Gomes	2002	
Nicola Rizzoli	2007	Italy
Renato Faverani	2007	
Andrea Stefani	2007	
Gianluca Rocchi	2008	
Paolo Tagliavento	2007	
Damir Skomina	2003	Slovenia
Primož Arhar	2003	
Marko Stančin	2005	
Matej Jug	2007	
Slavko Vinčič	2010	
Wolfgang Stark	1997	Germany
Jan-Hendrik Salver	2000	
Mike Pickel	2007	
Florian Meyer	2002	
Deniz Aytekin	2011	
Craig Thomson	2003	Scotland
Alasdair Ross	2011	
Derek Rose	2012	
Euan Norris	2009	
William Collum	2006	
Carlos Velasco Carballo	2008	Spain
Roberto Alonso Fernández	2007	
Juan Carlos Yuste Jiménez	2002	
David Fernández Borbalán	2010	
Carlos Clos Gómez	2009	
Howard Webb	2005	England
Mike Mullarkey	2007	
Peter Kirkup	2004	
Martin Atkinson	2006	
Mark Clattenburg	2006	

MATCH OFFICIALS

The ongoing experiment with two additional assistant referees meant that 12 five-man teams of match officials were selected for UEFA EURO 2012, along with four referees specifically assigned to the role of fourth official and four reserve assistant referees. Despite the distances involved, the 68-man squad was based in Warsaw and travelled to and from venues by air, rail or, in extreme cases, private jet. The referees had previously assembled for a winter training camp at Antalya on the Turkish coast and prior to the tournament members of UEFA's Referees Committee met with the players and coaches of all 16 finalists at their base camps in Poland and Ukraine. Special attention was also paid to the preparation of assistant referees and after the group stage UEFA's chief refereeing officer, Pierluigi Collina, expressed satisfaction at an accuracy rate of 95.7% in offside decisions.

Fourth Officials	FIFA	Country
Marcin Borski	2006	Poland
Tom Harald Hagen	2009	Norway
Pavel Kralovec	2005	Czech Republic
Viktor Shvetsov	2008	Ukraine



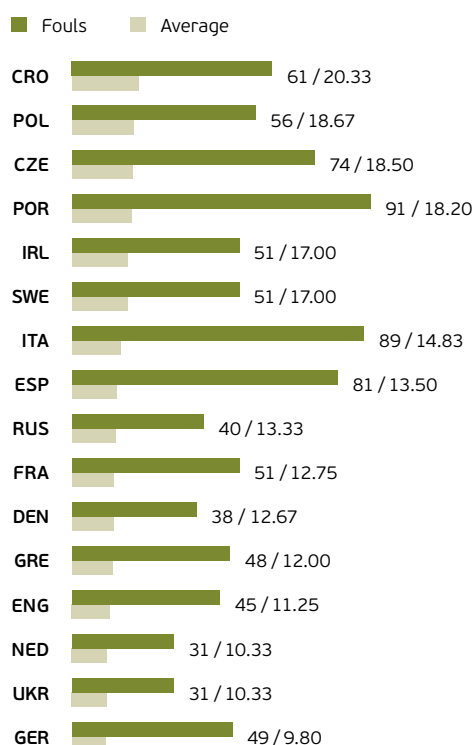
Portuguese referee Pedro Proença was selected to handle the final in Kyiv

FOULS

The pre-tournament briefings and the deterrent effect of the additional assistant referees may have contributed to a sharp drop in the number of fouls at UEFA EURO 2012. At the tournament in Portugal, six teams averaged more than 20 fouls per game and the 31 fixtures produced an average of 38.7 infractions per match – a figure which fell marginally to an average of 36 in 2008.

The total of 1,118 fouls committed in 2008 fell substantially to 887 at EURO 2012 – a drop of 20%. The Croatians were alone in averaging 20 infractions per game, the final between Spain and Italy yielded only 27 fouls, and the quarter-final between Italy and England, which went to extra time, produced only 26 infractions during two hours of football.

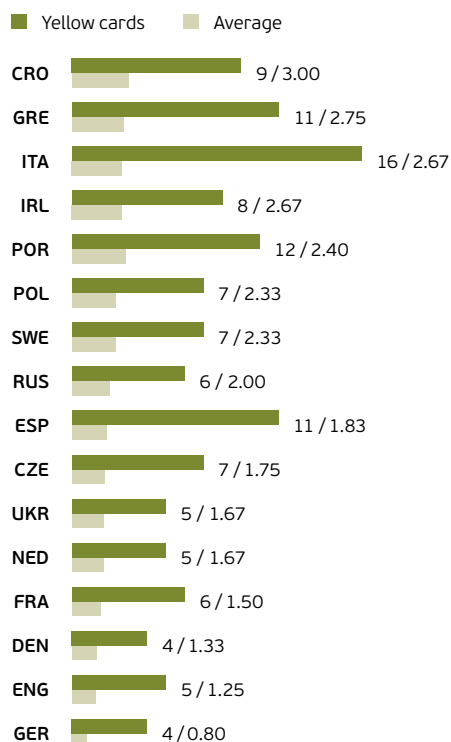
In individual terms, the salient feature is that four of the five players who committed the most fouls were forwards, with Spain's right-back Alvaro Arbeloa (16 fouls) sandwiched between Italy's Mario Balotelli (17), Czech striker Milan Baroš (16), Portugal's Nani (13) and Croatia's top scorer Mario Mandžukić (11). The three teams with the highest number of fouls evidently played more games than most, and special mention should be made of Germany's average of under ten per game, their main 'offender' being striker Mario Gomez (9).



CARDS

EURO 2012 maintained the levels set at UEFA EURO 2008, where the number of cautions had fallen by 21.8% in relation to UEFA EURO 2004 in Portugal. The total of 123 yellow cards displayed in Poland and Ukraine was just one more than in Austria and Switzerland four years earlier. Over the 31 matches, the average was therefore a decimal point below four cautions per game. As at EURO 2008, single yellow cards were wiped off the sheet after the quarter-finals, with a view to offering maximal possibilities for all players to be available for the final.

The number of dismissals was also identical to the level registered in 2008 when, after eight red cards in 2000 and six in 2004, the figure dropped to three. Two of the three at EURO 2012 were registered in the opening game, where, as mentioned elsewhere in this report, the Polish goalkeeper was dismissed after Greek defender Sokratis Papastathopoulos had earlier received two yellow cards in the space of nine minutes. The other red card was shown to the Republic of Ireland's Keith Andrews for a second bookable offence in the 89th minute of the game against Italy.



Despite the friendly gesture, Portuguese holding midfielder Miguel Veloso cannot avoid a yellow card from Howard Webb during the quarter-final against the Czech Republic

FAIR PLAY

Traditionally, a fair play rating of eight points or more is regarded as a mark of excellence, with the behaviour of supporters and officials having an influence on the figures, in addition to that of the players and coaches. At EURO 2012, seven of the participants achieved this high level, among them the champions, Spain. This compared with five of the finalists at EURO 2008.



Republic of Ireland winger Damien Duff shakes hands with Croatian playmaker Luka Modrić at the end of the Group C match in Poznan

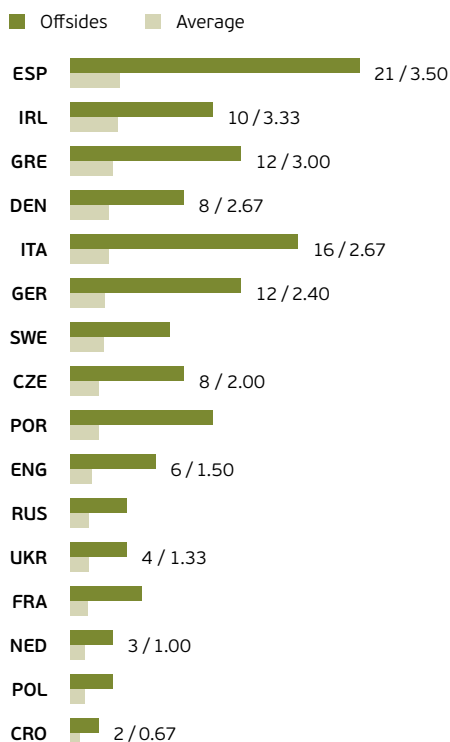
Pos.	Team	Total Points	Matches played
1	Ukraine	8.333	3
2	England	8.312	4
3	France	8.312	4
4	Spain	8.291	6
5	Netherlands	8.116	3
6	Czech Republic	8.125	4
7	Sweden	8.000	3
8	Italy	7.958	6
9	Germany	7.950	5
10	Russia	7.916	3
11	Denmark	7.833	3
12	Portugal	7.800	5
13	Rep. of Ireland	7.750	3
14	Poland	7.666	3
15	Greece	7.437	4
16	Croatia	7.083	3

STATISTICS

OFFSIDES

To what extent can the number of offside decisions be correlated with deeper defending? This question is pertinent in light of the statistics which emerged from UEFA EURO 2012. Since the turn of the century, the number of offside decisions has been steadily dropping. The average fell to 5.5 per match at UEFA EURO 2004 and at UEFA EURO 2008 the assistant referees raised their flags 162 times, bring the average down to marginally over 5 times per match. The number of offside decisions dropped a further 20% at EURO 2012. The flag was raised on 131 occasions at an average of 4.2 times per match.

These figures suggest a relationship with rapid transitions into defensive blocks. Summarising what he had seen in Poland and Ukraine, Gérard Houllier said: "I was really struck by the speed of replacement. Only two teams consistently stayed high to press." Dušan Fitzel, one of his colleagues in UEFA's technical team, added: "Many teams, even when attacking, had six players ready to drop back." In terms of catching opponents offside, the presence of Spain, Italy, Germany and Portugal among the table-toppers is a clear indication that these were the sides prepared to hold a high line.

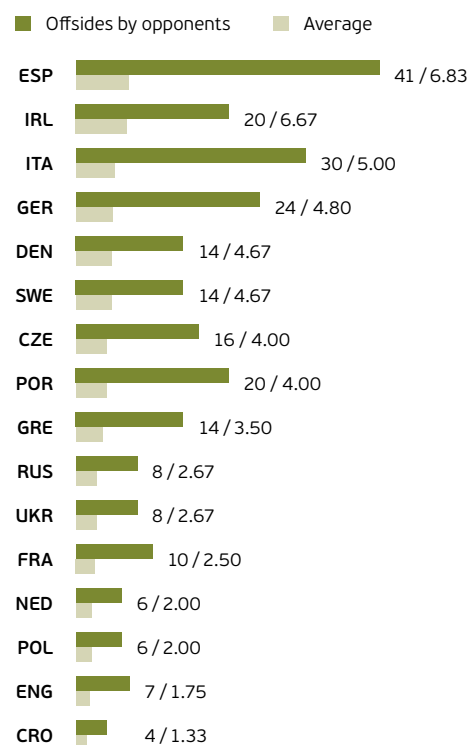


Antonio Nocerino thinks he has put Italy ahead in the 115th minute of the quarter-final against England but his 'goal' is disallowed for offside

England's matches against Sweden and Ukraine were the two EURO 2012 fixtures which failed to produce an offside decision.

One of the noticeable facts is that Spanish players were flagged more frequently than those of any other team. Fernando Torres was caught offside six times in his 189 minutes on the field of play. With Spain opting for a strikerless formation in most games, darting runs by David Silva, Pedro Rodríguez, Cesc Fàbregas and Andrés Iniesta took them into offside positions on eight occasions. A notable feature, however, was that right-back Álvaro Arbeloa was flagged four times and central defender Sergio Ramos once.

Individually, Italy's Antonio Di Natale, Irish striker Robbie Keane and Greece's Dimitris Salpingidis equalled Torres' total of six adverse decisions, followed by Portuguese striker Hugo Almeida, flagged five times during his 131 minutes on the pitch.

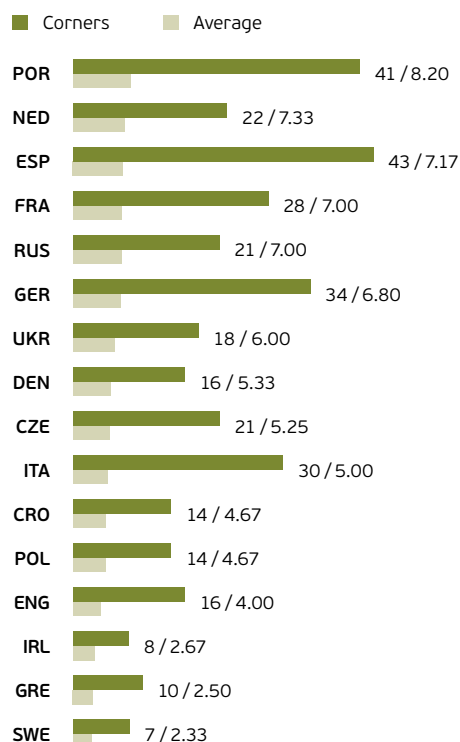


STATISTICS

CORNERS

After a 12% downturn at UEFA EURO 2008, the emphasis on wing play and crossing at UEFA EURO 2012 contributed to a return to previous levels. The 31 matches played in Poland and Ukraine produced a total of 343 corners at an average of 11 per game.

A variety of goals from corners found their way on to the list of the tournament's Best Set Play goals, such as Mario Balotelli's volley at the end of the Italy v Republic of Ireland match; near-post headers by Portugal's Pepe or Ukraine's Andriy Shevchenko against Denmark and Sweden respectively; or the strike by Cesc Fàbregas – also against the Irish – which had its origin in a short corner.



Ukrainian captain Andriy Shevchenko clinches a 2-1 win against Sweden by getting round Zlatan Ibrahimović and heading in a corner at the near post



Swedish defender Olof Mellberg successfully connects with a corner to put the ball past Joe Hart in the England goal during their Group D fixture

STATISTICS

BALL POSSESSION

As mentioned earlier in this report, FC Barcelona's most recent successes in the UEFA Champions League have alternated with less possession-oriented teams – FC Internazionale Milano in 2010 and Chelsea FC in 2012. In the UEFA European Football Championship, successive wins for Spain have, in similar fashion, contrasted with Greece, who took the European title in 2004 while averaging only 44% of the ball.

UEFA EURO 2012 offered similarly conflicting evidence. Three of the seven teams who consistently had more than 50% of possession were eliminated in the group stage, while three of the quarter-finalists were among the teams who did not base their game on possession of the ball – the most striking example being Portugal, who were within a penalty shoot-out of reaching the final with an average possession figure of only 45%. This provides a contrast with UEFA EURO 2008, where Luiz Felipe Scolari's Portugal topped the possession chart with an average of 56%.

Although Spain's style has become more possession-oriented (Luis Aragonés's side averaged 54% at EURO 2008 and had only 48% during the final against Germany), the statistics fall far short of Barcelona's UEFA Champions League benchmark, where the Catalan club consistently averages around 68% of the ball. During the EURO 2012 final against Italy, Spain had 47% of the ball during the first half but (with the fact that Italy were reduced to ten a conditioning factor) ended the match with a marginal 52-48 advantage in terms of ball possession.



Captain Andrey Arshavin leaves the pitch in Warsaw dejectedly after the Russians, who enjoyed a high share of the ball, had been eliminated by Greece



Midfielder Xavi Hernández, a master of twisting and turning his way out of trouble, is one of the lynchpins of Spain's possession-based playing style

Team	Ball	
	2012	2008
Spain	59%	54%
Germany	56%	51%
Russia	56%	54%
Netherlands	54%	55%
France	54%	52%
Ukraine	53%	-
Italy	52%	49%
Czech Republic	50%	43%
Denmark	49%	-
Sweden	46%	43%
Croatia	46%	48%
Poland	46%	50%
Portugal	45%	56%
England	43%	-
Greece	43%	50%
Rep. of Ireland	40%	-



Danish defender Daniel Agger spreads himself in a bid to prevent overlapping Dutch defender Gregory van der Wiel from successfully delivering a cross from the right

THE END PRODUCT

The 31 matches played in Poland and Ukraine produced 822 goal attempts at an average of 26.52 per game. This was significantly higher than the 738 goal attempts at UEFA EURO 2008 and the 729 at UEFA EURO 2004 – to be precise, an 11% increase on the number of attempts registered in Austria and Switzerland. However, the increased number of goal attempts did not lead to a greater number of goals. Spain, in winning the 2008 title, had 98 scoring opportunities of which 51 were on target. In 2012, their overall tally was similar (92) and 58 were on target.

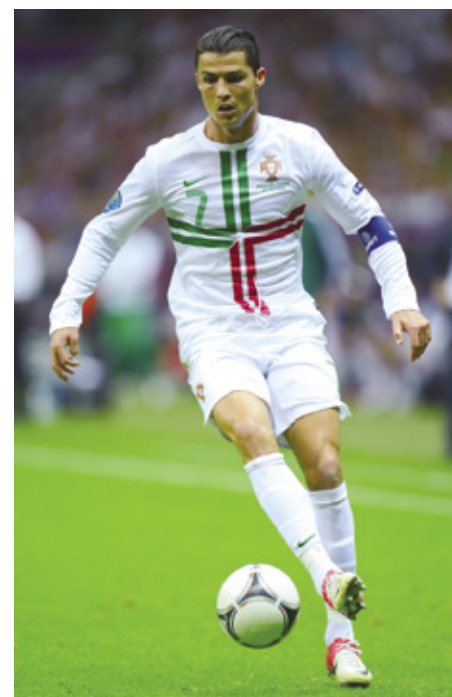
Over the 31 games played at UEFA EURO 2012, 52% of the finishing was on target. The teams with the least accurate goal attempts were Ukraine (32%), the Netherlands (35%), Russia (41%), Portugal (44%), the Republic of Ireland (44%) and Poland (45%). All the other teams hit the target more frequently than they shot wide of the mark, with the exception of Greece, who ended the tournament with a 50-50 balance.

At EURO 2012, it took an average of 10.82 attempts to produce a goal. In this respect, the Greek team was the most efficient, with 5 goals from 28 attempts (1 goal per 5.6 attempts), while the Dutch side, prolific in terms of shooting at goal, were rewarded only twice in 54 attempts at an average, obviously, of 27 shots per goal. Curiously, Italy were among the least effective in terms of

converting opportunities into goals. The silver medallists recorded 6 goals in 108 attempts – in other words, 18 shots or headers per goal. This statistic was heavily weighted by their quarter-final against England, when Cesare Prandelli's team had 35 attempts but failed to score.

In individual terms, Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo was, by far, the most prolific in terms of scoring attempts, with an average of almost six per game and 44% of his team's total over their six matches. None of his team-mates had more than three on-target attempts during the tournament. In terms of hitting the target consistently, Spain's Andrés Iniesta managed to get 14 of his 18 goal attempts on target. At the other end of the scale, only 3 of Arjen Robben's 12 shots hit the mark, while Russian striker Aleksandr Kerzhakov was on target once and struck the ball wide on 11 occasions. Spain's strikerless formation meant that, apart from Iniesta, Cesc Fàbregas (9), David Silva, Xavi Hernández, Xabi Alonso (all 10) and even defender Sergio Ramos (7) returned healthy figures in terms of goal attempts – though Fernando Torres managed 10 attempts at goal during the 189 minutes when he led the champions' attack. This ratio was bettered by Italian striker Antonio Di Natale, who struck the ball goalwards 12 times in 193 minutes of play. Our table (right) shows the players who recorded the highest numbers in relation to on-target finishing during the final tournament.

Player	Team	On target	Off target	Mins	Goals
Cristiano Ronaldo	Portugal	15	20	480	3
Mario Balotelli	Italy	14	12	421	3
Andrés Iniesta	Spain	14	4	551	0
Karim Benzema	France	12	6	346	0
Antonio Cassano	Italy	9	6	393	1
Antonio Di Natale	Italy	8	4	193	1
David Silva	Spain	8	2	411	2
Fernando Torres	Spain	7	3	189	3
Robin van Persie	Netherlands	7	6	270	1
Zlatan Ibrahimović	Sweden	7	3	270	2
Václav Pilař	Czech Rep.	7	3	358	2
Xavi Hernández	Spain	7	4	536	0
Claudio Marchisio	Italy	7	4	570	0



Portuguese captain Cristiano Ronaldo topped the tournament's charts in terms of goal attempts

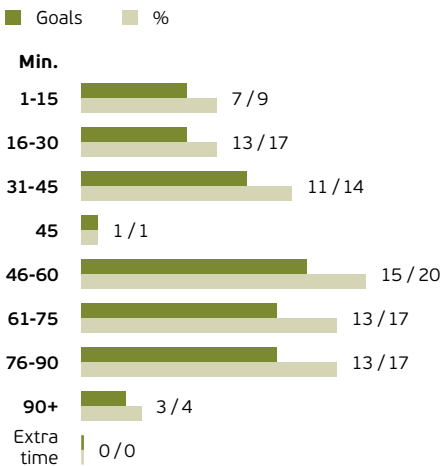
Team	Shots off target	Average	Shots on target	Average per game	Goals	Attempts per goal
Croatia	10	3.33	20	6.67	4	7.50
Czech Republic	17	4.25	20	6.67	4	9.25
Denmark	7	2.33	20	6.67	4	6.75
England	17	4.25	19	4.75	5	7.20
France	26	6.50	37	9.25	3	21.00
Germany	34	6.80	41	8.20	10	7.50
Greece	14	3.50	14	3.50	5	5.60
Italy	47	7.83	61	10.17	6	18.00
Netherlands	35	11.67	19	6.33	2	27.00
Poland	24	8.00	20	6.67	2	22.00
Portugal	45	9.00	35	7.00	6	13.33
Rep. of Ireland	14	4.67	11	3.67	1	25.00
Russia	29	9.67	20	6.67	5	9.80
Spain	34	5.67	58	9.67	12	7.67
Sweden	15	5.00	21	7.00	5	7.20
Ukraine	26	8.67	12	4.00	2	19.00

STATISTICS

GOALS, PASSES AND SAVES

WHEN THE GOALS WERE SCORED

At UEFA EURO 2012, 58% of the goals were scored after the half-time interval – and none during the hour of extra time played in the Italy v England quarter-final and the Spain v Portugal semi-final. The goalscoring pattern was very similar to UEFA EURO 2008, the main variation being that, whereas in Austria and Switzerland the most prolific period was between the 61st and 75th minutes, this drifted in 2012 towards the opening quarter-hour of the second half.



Decimal points account for the missing 1%



Italian striker Antonio Cassano looks almost amused as he is challenged by England captain Steven Gerrard

PASSING JUDGEMENT

The paradoxes associated with the passing game have been mentioned in the technical topics section of this report and a breakdown of passing patterns has been included in each of the team pages. The overview, however, confirms the trend away from a long-passing game. For statistical purposes, a 'long pass' is defined as one of 30 metres or more; a 'medium pass' is between 10 and 30 metres and 'short passes' are those which cover less than 10 metres.

In the Spanish style of play, long passes accounted for only 8% of the team's total. Italy, their opponents in the Kyiv final, recorded an average of 11%. It is risky, however, to relate the preference for shorter passing with success. The Russian team equalled Spain with 8% of long passes. France and Germany ended with an average of 9%. The Dutch team equalled Italy's figure of 11%. At the other end of the scale, the Portuguese team, normally associated with a short-passing game,

Team	Acc	PA	PC	Crosses
Spain	80%	4,893	3,915	57
France	77%	2,611	2,020	57
Germany	76%	3,319	2,526	50
Netherlands	76%	2,003	1,527	49
Russia	76%	2,004	1,521	34
Italy	74%	3,918	2,913	68
Denmark	73%	1,700	1,247	68
Ukraine	71%	1,656	1,172	37
Sweden	70%	1,607	1,122	32
Czech Republic	69%	2,125	1,469	54
Poland	68%	1,430	969	41
England	67%	2,039	1,365	55
Portugal	66%	2,480	1,636	83
Croatia	66%	1,490	978	57
Greece	63%	1,743	1,091	32
Rep. of Ireland	58%	1,249	725	37

Acc=Accuracy; PA=Passes attempted; PC=Passes completed

dedicated 16% of their passing to direct passes to strikers or long switches of play. Almost one-fifth (18%) of the Ukrainian team's passing was long and the Republic of Ireland headed the ranking with 19% of their passing covering more than 30 metres.

The Ukrainian team was the only one to average under 20% in terms of short passing. Nobody made more use of the short pass than Spain (30%), though they were closely followed by France (28%) and, more surprisingly bearing in mind their traditions, Sweden (27%) and England (26%).

Our table (below left) demonstrates that the two finalists were among the frontrunners when it came to accurately passing to team-mates. The table is in descending order of passing accuracy and the figures include crosses as 'passes'.



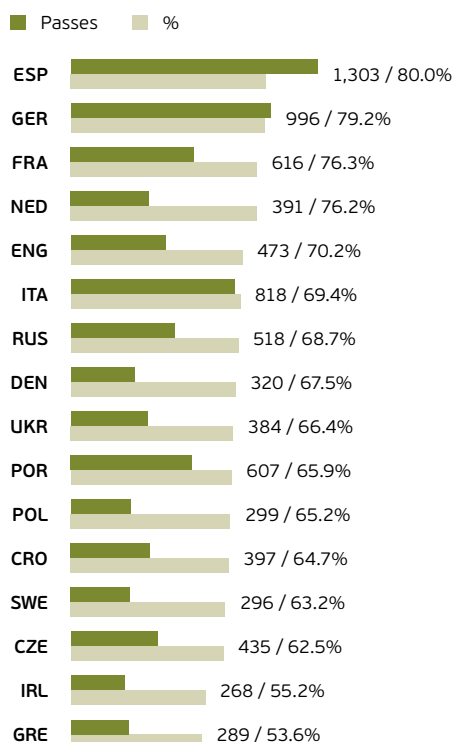
Spanish midfielder Xabi Alonso, looking for the telling pass, celebrated his 100th cap by scoring twice during the quarter-final against France

THE KEY AREA

This table shows the number of passes made in the attacking third of the pitch and the percentage successfully received by a team-mate.



Daniele De Rossi, initially fielded at the back when Italy played a three-man defence, emerged as an influential figure in Italian midfield build-ups



HANDS AND FEET

This was the subtitle given to one of the technical topics recorded in the technical report on the 2011/12 UEFA Champions League. The basis for discussion was that, during the final in Munich, neither Chelsea FC's Petr Čech nor FC Bayern München's Manuel Neuer had been required to make a great number of saves. "The facts emphasised the need for goalkeepers to be coached in the art of maintaining concentration during periods of inactivity," the report commented. "On the other hand, the minimal need to deal with shots at goal did not signify 'inactivity'. The modern goalkeeper is expected to be an integral part of attack-building processes and is usually required to take decisions and react quickly in order to fulfil duties as 'sweeper' behind the defence. For today's goalkeeper, the traditional virtues of bravery and a safe pair of hands are not enough." Discussion could be furthered by an examination of the number of saves the goalkeepers were obliged to make during EURO 2012 and the number of goals they conceded.

Goalkeeper	Team	Saves	Goals
Iker Casillas	Spain	15	1
Wojciech Szczęsny	Poland	1	1
Przemysław Tytoń	Poland	6	2
Kostas Chalkias	Greece	2	3
Joe Hart	England	22	3
Vyacheslav Malafeev	Russia	10	3
Stipe Pletikosa	Croatia	13	3
Andriy Pyatov	Ukraine	13	4
Rui Patrício	Portugal	10	4
Michalis Sifakis	Greece	11	4
Stephan Andersen	Denmark	10	5
Andreas Isaksson	Sweden	8	5
Hugo Lloris	France	6	5
Maarten Stekelenburg	Netherlands	12	5
Petr Čech	Czech Rep.	9	6
Manuel Neuer	Germany	10	6
Gianluigi Buffon	Italy	20	7
Shay Given	Rep. of Ireland	17	9



England keeper Joe Hart flies high to his right to tip the ball on to the post and register one of his 22 saves



GOALKEEPERS

Gianluigi BUFFON	Italy
Iker CASILLAS	Spain
Manuel NEUER	Germany

DEFENDERS

Fábio COENTRÃO	Portugal
JORDI ALBA	Spain
Philipp LAHM	Germany
PEPE	Portugal
Gerard PIQUÉ	Spain
SERGIO RAMOS	Spain

MIDFIELDERS

Sergio BUSQUETS	Spain
Daniele DE ROSSI	Italy
Steven GERRARD	England
Andrés INIESTA	Spain
Sami KHEDIRA	Germany
Mesut ÖZIL	Germany
Andrea PIRLO	Italy
XABI ALONSO	Spain
XAVI Hernández	Spain

FORWARDS

Mario BALOTELLI	Italy
Cesc FÀBREGAS	Spain
Zlatan IBRAHIMOVIĆ	Sweden
Cristiano RONALDO	Portugal
David SILVA	Spain

UEFA TECHNICAL TEAM'S ALL-STAR SQUAD

Selecting an all-star squad is a fascinating exercise for UEFA's technical team. Proposals are bounced around, shortlists of candidates are drawn up and decisions are taken immediately after the final has been played.

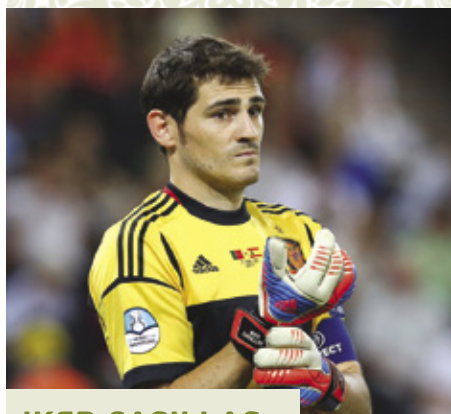
At UEFA EURO 2012, there were some easy choices. Andrea Pirlo, Andrés Iniesta and Xavi Hernández, for example, would have been difficult to leave out. But for every easy decision there tend to be a lot of difficult ones. Some outstanding performers might miss out simply

because their team was eliminated during the group stage, or even during the quarter-finals. The search for the players who shaped the final tournament inevitably starts with the teams which made the most impact, with the result that all-star squads tend to be dominated by players from the four semi-finalists.

This was the verdict of the UEFA technical team, with UEFA's technical director, Andy Roxburgh, trying to reduce to a few words the reasons behind their selection.

Leadership,
all-round talent
and youthful
enthusiasm

GOALKEEPERS



IKER CASILLAS

"Unassuming in the way he goes about the job, but a dominant personality with all-round talent and a great aptitude for distributing the ball. One of the world's best"



GIANLUIGI BUFFON

"A genuine superstar goalkeeper who combines agility, bravery, great presence and remarkable leadership qualities"



MANUEL NEUER

"Powerful and a great shot-stopper. Mobile, lively and goes into games with youthful enthusiasm"

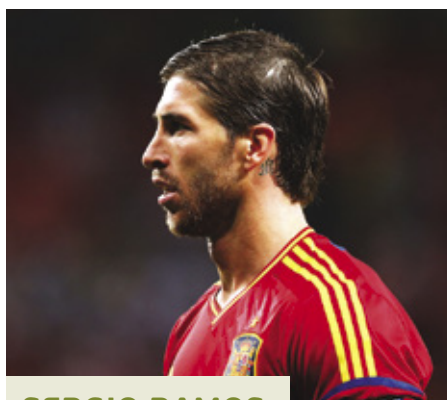
UEFA TECHNICAL TEAM'S ALL-STAR SQUAD

Elegance,
strength
and attacking
vocation



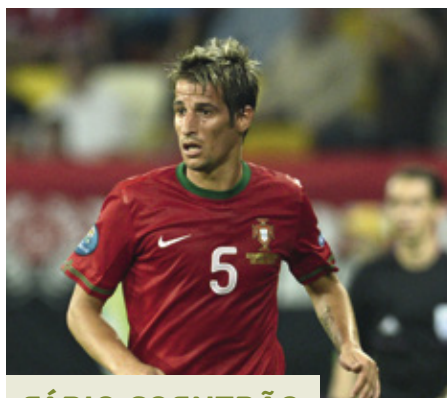
JORDI ALBA

"Young, quick, direct, excellent left-footed attacking full-back who made a significant contribution"



SERGIO RAMOS

"Uncompromising, quick centre-back who is strong in the air and the consummate all-round footballer"



FÁBIO COENTRÃO

"One of the modern breed of full-back: technically gifted, attack-minded and outstanding ability to deliver crosses"

DEFENDERS



GERARD PIQUÉ

"An elegant defender with wonderful distribution of the ball, technical skill, aerial strength and quick, clever feet"



PEPE

"A great athlete who defends effectively with aerial power and robust tackling, yet is technically accomplished and can build from the back"



PHILIPP LAHM

"Also an attack-minded, overlapping full-back who reads the game well, times his runs brilliantly and is a major influence within the team"

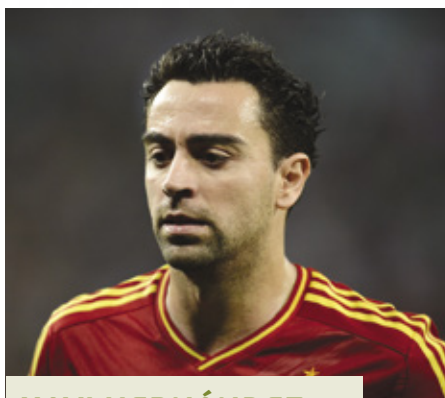
Artists, potent forces, team players, orchestrators and maestros

MIDFIELDERS



DANIELE DE ROSSI

"A potent midfield force with exceptional tactical awareness and maturity; a wonderful competitor"



XAVI HERNÁNDEZ

"Simply the greatest orchestrator in the world, who can also find the net"



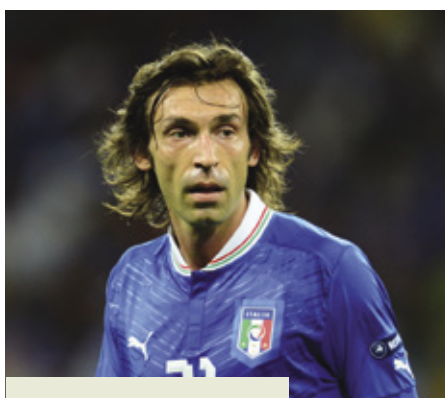
XABI ALONSO

"A marvellous team-player; forceful yet stylish with a great range of passing"



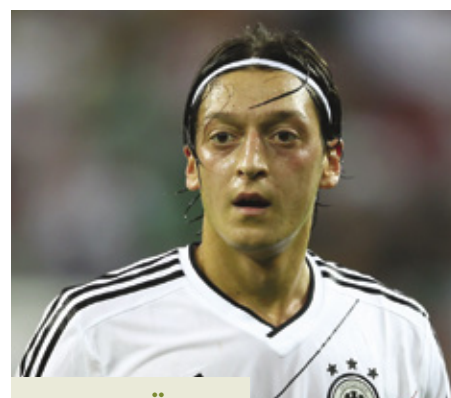
STEVEN GERRARD

"Superb passing skills, a strong character and always a major threat in the attacking area"



ANDREA PIRLO

"The midfield maestro; one of the best of his generation. Graceful and wonderfully effective in delivering passes and set plays"



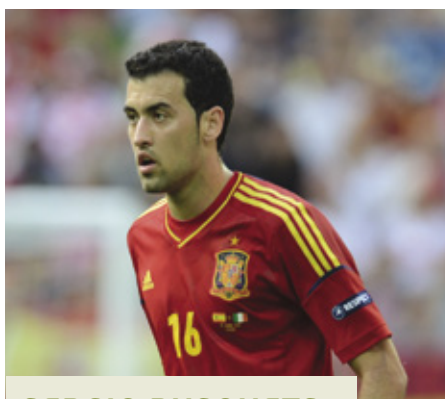
MESUT ÖZIL

"An extraordinarily talented left-footed midfielder capable of making and taking goalscoring chances"



SAMI KHEDIRA

"Young, dynamic midfield player with an urge to push forward and link defence with attack"



SERGIO BUSQUETS

"The screening midfielder par excellence, with great anticipation and an outstanding capacity for initiating attacks"



ANDRÉS INIESTA

"The king of incisive running, dribbling and movement, and an artist with the ball"

UEFA TECHNICAL TEAM'S ALL-STAR SQUAD

FORWARDS



CRISTIANO RONALDO

"A brilliant technician and an impressive athlete with the ability to make the difference"



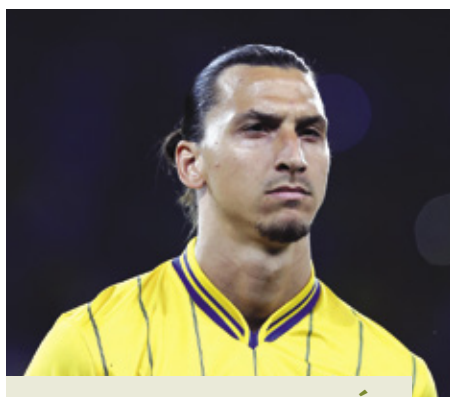
MARIO BALOTELLI

"Young, enigmatic striker with ability to lead the line and to finish – often spectacularly"



CESC FÁBREGAS

"Wonderful timing of runs from midfield; a total footballer with flair and heart"



ZLATAN IBRAHIMOVIĆ

"Free-spirited attacker with a sensational touch and the ability to score great goals"



DAVID SILVA

"Graceful yet a dynamic force with a cultured left foot and a clever footballing brain"

Free spirits,
enigmas,
athletes,
clever brains
and total
footballers

PLAYER OF THE TOURNAMENT

ANDRÉS INIESTA

Andrés Iniesta was with the rest of the Spanish squad at Kyiv airport on the day after the final when he received an SMS. "You are player of the tournament." His immediate reply was: "Don't fool around with me". Then came a stream of messages. Is it official? When will it be released? It wasn't until two hours later, when he was guided through the right pages on UEFA.com, that his disbelief was finally dispelled – a disbelief which illustrates the modesty of the Spain and FC Barcelona midfielder. In some sectors, the distinction represented an overdue reward for a player who, despite scoring the extra-time goal which won the FIFA World Cup in 2010, had been rated an unsung hero for club and country – largely because of the high quality of his team-mates at both levels. The decision by UEFA's technical team to name him player of the tournament was, however, taken exclusively on the basis of his contribution to UEFA EURO 2012.

It was a tough decision to take and the technical team admitted that had Italy won the final, the acclaim could easily have been for Andrea Pirlo. "Pirlo was magnificent and obviously circumstances didn't help him in the final," said UEFA's technical director, Andy Roxburgh. "Xabi Alonso, Xavi Hernández and Iniesta were all superb. In the case of Xavi, he won the award in 2008 and he could easily have won it again. But we felt that Iniesta deserved it. In many ways, he symbolised the tournament – the creative, incisive runner, with and without the ball. We felt that he epitomised a lot of what we saw and the elements which eventually won the title for his team."

Iniesta was influential in all departments of the game. He worked hard to implement Spain's philosophy of high ball-winning; his passing was accurate, often inspired; dispossessing him was a challenge; his infiltrations on the left flank provided Spain's strikerless formation with one of its major weapons; his off-the-ball movement opened spaces for team-mates, notably left-back Jordi Alba; and he was the Spanish player who most shot at goal.

A week after the Kyiv final, Andrés was in Tarragona to marry his fiancée, Anna, in a ceremony that provided front pages for the celebrity press, before returning to his native Fuentealbilla, a town of 2,000 inhabitants in the province of Albacete, where the wines of his Bodegas Iniesta are produced. He then contributed to a cartoon film, providing the voice-over for the hero – an albino pirate. Agreeing to do so, he maintained, had nothing to do with his own habitually pallid countenance. "I identified with a lot of his values," Iniesta explained. "He is very loyal to his captain and his group. He has a deep team spirit. And he's very shy." Andrés was shy enough to disbelieve that he was player of the tournament at EURO 2012. But he was – and deservedly so.

He symbolised
the tournament –
the creative, incisive
runner, with and
without the ball



BEST GOALS

OPEN PLAY

It is a significant fact that the UEFA technical team wished to highlight no fewer than 20 of the 60 open-play goals. It strongly suggests that, in order to break down compact defensive blocks, something special was often required. Pride of place was given to three brilliant pieces of individual skill which converted two crosses and one through ball into stunning goals. Zlatan Ibrahimović narrowly took top place with a breathtaking volley as the ball came in at waist height from the right; Mario Balotelli's explosive finish in the semi-final against Germany was a fitting reward for Riccardo Montolivo's through ball; and Danny Welbeck produced an inspired back-heeled finish to a ball supplied from the right by Theo Walcott.

	Goalscorer	Game	Time
1	Zlatan Ibrahimović	Sweden v France	54
2	Mario Balotelli	Italy v Germany	36
3	Danny Welbeck	England v Sweden	78
4	Jordi Alba	Spain v Italy	41
5	Jakub Błaszczykowski	Poland v Russia	57
6	Sami Khedira	Germany v Greece	61
7	David Silva	Spain v Italy	14
8	Cristiano Ronaldo	Portugal v Netherlands	74
9	Xabi Alonso	Spain v France	19
10	Andy Carroll	England v Sweden	23
11	Petr Jiráček	Czech Republic v Poland	72
12	Mario Gomez	Germany v Netherlands	24
13	Rafael van der Vaart	Netherlands v Portugal	11
14	Philipp Lahm	Germany v Greece	39
15	David Silva	Spain v Rep. of Ireland	49
16	Robert Lewandowski	Poland v Greece	17
17	Andriy Shevchenko	Ukraine v Sweden	55
18	Theo Walcott	England v Sweden	64
19	Robin van Persie	Netherlands v Germany	73
20	Samir Nasri	France v England	39

1. ZLATAN IBRAHIMOVIĆ

Sweden v France



French defender Philippe Mexès can only take evasive action as Zlatan Ibrahimović spectacularly volleys Sweden into the lead



Kim Källström fed Sebastian Larsson on the right and his cross was powerfully volleyed into the net by Zlatan Ibrahimović

2. MARIO BALOTELLI

Italy v Germany



Philipp Lahm arrives too late to prevent Mario Balotelli from blasting the ball past wrong-footed Manuel Neuer to put Italy 2-0 ahead

3. DANNY WELBECK

England v Sweden



With Swedish defender Olof Mellberg wrong-footed, Danny Welbeck lifts his right foot high enough to clinch England's 3-2 win with a delightful back-heeled goal

4. JORDI ALBA

Spain v Italy



The Spanish left-back, making a blistering run from his own half, receives a pass delivered with millimetric precision by Xavi Hernández and beats Gianluigi Buffon to put his team 2-0 ahead in the final

5. JAKUB BŁASZCZYKOWSKI

Poland v Russia



Polish captain Jakub Błaszczykowski cuts in from the right and unleashes a powerful inswinging left-footed shot which beats Russian keeper Vyacheslav Malefiev at the far post

6. SAMI KHEDIRA

Germany v Greece



After an elaborate build-up, the cross is met by German midfielder Sami Khedira who, after a fast upfield run, beats the Greek goalkeeper with an unstoppable volley

BEST GOALS

OPEN PLAY

7. DAVID SILVA

Spain v Italy



An inspired run by Cesc Fàbregas took him to the byline, where he cut back a lofted pass for David Silva to head past Gianluigi Buffon and put Spain 1-0 ahead in the final against Italy

8. CRISTIANO RONALDO

Portugal v Netherlands



Receiving a cross from Nani, Cristiano Ronaldo cut the ball back past Dutch defender Gregory van der Wiel to score his and Portugal's second goal in the 2-1 Group B victory

9. XABI ALONSO

Spain v France



A great run from midfield earns Xabi Alonso enough space to powerfully head Jordi Alba's cross past Hugo Lloris to put Spain 1-0 ahead against France

10. ANDY CARROLL

England v Sweden



The Swedish defenders crouch as Andy Carroll rises to head in Steven Gerrard's cross and put England 1-0 up in the Group D game

BEST GOALS

SET PLAYS

Italy dominated the nominations with three goals among the top ten. Top place went to the only direct free-kick on the list, superbly struck by Andrea Pirlo into the Croatian net. Numbers two and three stemmed from corners, with Mario Balotelli producing an acrobatic overhead volley into the Irish net and Cesc Fàbregas also punishing the Irish after latching onto a short corner and putting heart and soul into a shot that ricocheted in off the far post. Below those three, all but one of the selected set-play goals were headers.

	Goalscorer	Game	Time
1	Andrea Pirlo	Italy v Croatia	39
2	Mario Balotelli	Italy v Rep. of Ireland	90
3	Cesc Fàbregas	Spain v Rep. of Ireland	83
4	Pepe	Portugal v Denmark	24
5	Andriy Shevchenko	Ukraine v Sweden	55
6	Olof Mellberg	Sweden v England	59
7	Joleon Lescott	England v France	30
8	Miroslav Klose	Germany v Greece	68
9	Alan Dzagoev	Russia v Poland	37
10	Antonio Cassano	Italy v Rep. of Ireland	35

1. ANDREA PIRLO

Italy v Croatia



Croatian goalkeeper Stipe Pletikosa makes a despairing dive but fails to prevent the free-kick brilliantly struck by Andrea Pirlo's right boot from hitting the net and putting Italy 1-0 ahead in the Group C fixture

2. MARIO BALOTELLI

Italy v Republic of Ireland



From a corner on the right, Mario Balotelli connects with an acrobatic overhead volley to seal Italy's 2-0 victory over the Irish in the 90th minute of the Group C game

3. CESC FÀBREGAS

Spain v Republic of Ireland



From a short corner, Spanish substitute Cesc Fàbregas hammers the ball between Keith Andrews and Irish goalkeeper Shay Given, his shot rebounding in off the far post and clinching a 4-0 win for the defending champions

THE TEAM BEHIND THE REPORT

UEFA TECHNICAL TEAM



Back row: Jean-Paul Brigger, Holger Osieck, Michel Platini, Walter Gagg, Gérard Houllier, Lars Lagerbäck **Front row:** Jerzy Engel, Dušan Fízel, György Mezey, Mordechai Spiegler, Andy Roxburgh

The UEFA technical team was composed primarily of current and former national team coaches. Although 11 names appear on the team sheet, only 10 were on duty simultaneously, as Fabio Capello, due to prior engagements, left the tournament after the first week and was replaced by Holger Osieck, whose duties as Australian national team coach had prevented him from travelling to Poland/Ukraine at the start.

The team, captained by UEFA's technical director, Andy Roxburgh, comprised Fabio Capello (Italy), Jerzy Engel (Poland), Dušan Fízel (Czech Republic), Gérard Houllier (France), Lars Lagerbäck (Sweden), György Mezey (Hungary) and Holger Osieck (Germany), plus Jean-Paul Brigger and Walter Gagg representing FIFA and Mordechai Spiegler providing the link to UEFA's Development and Technical Assistance Committee.

For logistical reasons, the team was divided into two groups – one based in Warsaw, the other in Kyiv. At least two members of the team attended each of the 31 matches played. After a pre-tournament briefing in Warsaw, the group was reunited again in Kyiv for a plenary meeting to discuss the salient features of the tournament on the day of the final. After the match at the Olympic Stadium, the team met again to finalise its all-star squad and to select UEFA's player of the tournament. These decisions were announced to the media by Andy Roxburgh on the morning after the final.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Produced by UEFA

EDITORIAL TEAM

Andy Roxburgh
Graham Turner

PRODUCTION TEAM

Michael Harrold
Catherine Wilson
André Vieli
Dominique Maurer
UEFA Language Services
Trevor Haylett (Writer/Researcher)

DESIGN AND LAYOUT

Designwerk, London, UK

PRINTING

Artgraphic Cavin SA, CH-Grandson

ILLUSTRATIONS

Getty Images, Action Images
Olé Andersen (Graphics)
Delta Tre (Statistics)

TECHNICAL TEAM

Fabio Capello
Jerzy Engel
Dušan Fitzel
Gérard Houllier
Lars Lagerbäck
György Mezey
Holger Osieck
Andy Roxburgh (UEFA Technical Director)
Jean-Paul Brigger (FIFA)
Walter Gagg (FIFA)
Mordechai Spiegler (UEFA Development
and Technical Assistance Committee)

ADMINISTRATION

Frank Ludolph
Monica Namy
Stéphanie Tétaz
Matthieu Bulliard





UEFA
Route de Genève 46
CH-1260 Nyon 2
Switzerland
Telephone +41 848 00 27 27
Telefax +41 848 01 27 27
UEFA.com

Union des associations
européennes de football

