



UNDER17™
CHAMPIONSHIP
Slovenia 2012



**UEFA European Under-17 Championship
Final Round 2012 – Slovenia**

INTRODUCTION

CONTENTS

Route to the Final	3
The Final	4
Technical Topics	6
Talking Points	10
Winning Coach	12
UEFA Technical Team	13
Team Analysis: Belgium	14
Team Analysis: France	15
Team Analysis: Georgia	16
Team Analysis: Germany	17
Team Analysis: Iceland	18
Team Analysis: Netherlands	19
Team Analysis: Poland	20
Team Analysis: Slovenia	21
Results	22

The final tournament of the 11th European Under-17 Championship was the first to be staged in Slovenia and served to underline the high turnover rate in a highly competitive competition. As in 2011, the eight finalists included only three of the previous season's qualifiers – France and the two teams who reached the 2011 final, Germany and the Netherlands. While major powers such as England, Italy, Portugal and Spain were absent, Georgia and Poland made their first appearances in the final tournament for a decade; Iceland qualified for the first time in five years; and the debut by the Slovenian hosts brought the overall total of participants in the final tournament to 32 of UEFA's 53 member associations.

The 12 group matches were played at four venues in two centres, Group A being contested in Ljubljana and Domžale, Group B in Maribor and Lendava. After the conclusion of the group stage, the three knockout matches were played in Ljubljana, with the two semi-finals staged as a double-header at the new National Arena. The crowd of 11,674 that watched the final between Germany and the Netherlands brought the cumulative attendance for the final tournament to 41,420 (a 39% increase on the 2011 total of 29,739) and live or delayed coverage of 12 matches was made available to a pan-European TV audience by Eurosport, with Slovenian TV also screening the host team's games and Georgian TV providing blanket coverage of the country's historic run to the semi-finals.

As the Under-17 finals represent the first experience of an international event for most of the participants, briefings on doping controls and the dangers of match fixing were written into the tournament diary.

Published by UEFA

Editorial Team:
Andy Roxburgh (UEFA
Technical Director)
Graham Turner

Production Team:
André Vieli
Dominique Maurer

Administration:
Catherine Maher
Stéphanie Tétaz
UEFA Language Services

Technical Observers:

Ross Mathie
John Peacock

Pictures:
(unless otherwise indicated)
Matt Browne & Diarmuid Greene,
Sportsfile
Ole Andersen (Graphics)

Setting:
Atema Communication SA, CH-Gland

Printing:
Artgraphic Cavin SA, CH-Grandson

ROUTE TO THE FINAL



UEFA
UNDER17
CHAMPIONSHIP
Slovenia 2012

The final tournament was shaped by expectations. The clear objective for Albert Stuivenberg's Dutch squad was to become only the third nation in two decades to successfully defend the title. Germany's aim was also to reach the final for the second successive year, while the French, four-time finalists since the turn of the century, travelled to Ljubljana with the clear intention of going home with gold medals. The other contestants, while secretly dreaming of lifting the trophy, publicly declared that their aim was to give a good account of themselves. However, variations on the definition of "good account" were translated into different tactical approaches.

In Group A, Iceland's team spirit, commitment and attention to set plays allowed them to come back from 2-0 down to draw with France and, after a first half against Germany when the emphasis was on direct forward passing as soon as the ball was won, they settled into a more organised game and came close to equalising. Against Georgia, they were seven minutes away from a semi-final place when they conceded the decisive goal.

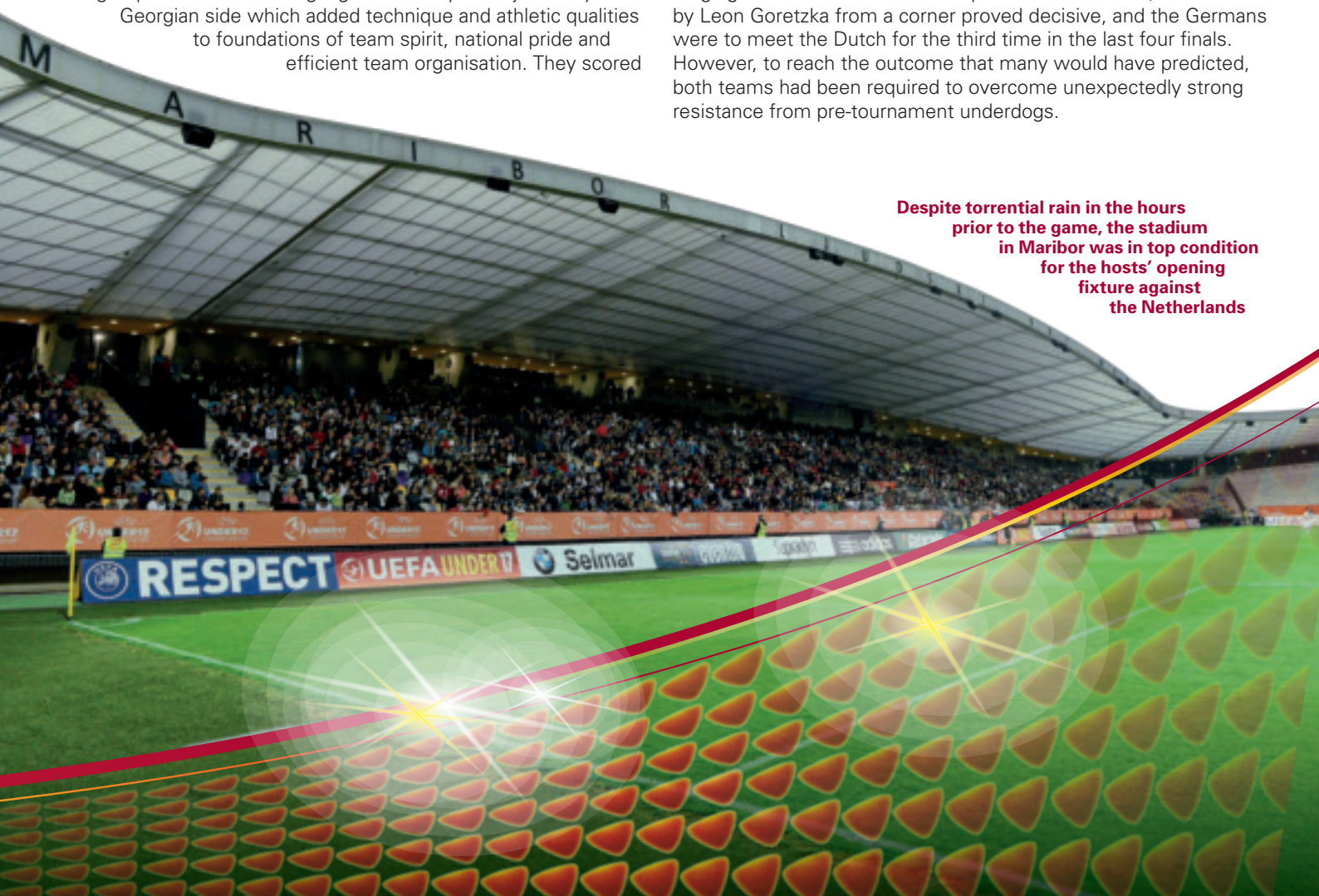
France accompanied them to the airport. After two draws, Jean-Claude Giuntini's side needed to beat Germany. But, for all their fluent approach play and solo skills, they were unable to deliver telling blows and were comprehensively defeated by Germany's superior punching power. The 3-0 win allowed Germany to top the group without conceding a goal and they were joined by a Georgian side which added technique and athletic qualities to foundations of team spirit, national pride and efficient team organisation. They scored

two and conceded two en route to their semi-final against the Dutch, which was marked by the dismissal of their captain after only 16 minutes. Unfazed, composed and athletically outstanding, Vasil Maisuradze's team's heroic resistance was not broken down until the Dutch scored in the 79th minute and again after 80+2.

The Dutch had negotiated Group B with a degree of comfort, although the opening 3-1 victory over the hosts was followed by two goalless draws. The Belgian team, after holding the upper hand for much of their opener against Poland, were punished for wayward finishing and one defensive mistake which allowed Marcin Dorna's side to post a 1-0 win which was to prove decisive in the outcome of the group. The Poles then conceded two points in a 1-1 draw with Slovenia, but successfully secured a goalless draw with the Dutch on the final matchday to send them into the semi-finals.

Their opponents were a German side which had made an uncharacteristically cautious start against the Georgian underdogs; played out an edgy, identical 1-0 scoreline against Iceland; and, with a changed lineup, had finally burst into top gear and scored three times during the second half against France. Reverting to their original lineup, Stefan Böger's team was made to fight all the way during a hard-fought semi-final against Poland, when their clearest chances came late in the game while the Poles were surging forward in search of an equaliser. In the event, the header by Leon Goretzka from a corner proved decisive, and the Germans were to meet the Dutch for the third time in the last four finals. However, to reach the outcome that many would have predicted, both teams had been required to overcome unexpectedly strong resistance from pre-tournament underdogs.

Despite torrential rain in the hours prior to the game, the stadium in Maribor was in top condition for the hosts' opening fixture against the Netherlands



THE FINAL

TT triumphs (again)



German No 10 Max Meyer and team-mate Timo Werner look concerned as Dutch midfielder Thom Haye weaves his way goalwards during the final in Ljubljana

The scene was set for a memorable Under-17 final, with Germany and the Netherlands facing each other for the third time in four years, both with a victory in the title-deciding matches, and the Dutch coach, Albert Stuivenberg, hoping for back-to-back gold medal performances,

following the resounding 5-2 victory against their arch-rivals in 2011. A crowd of 11,674 greeted the players in Slovenia's national stadium in Ljubljana – the weather was cold, but the reception was warm from the biggest attendance ever at an U17 final not involving a host nation. Maybe expectations were too high, but it would take some time before the drama would manifest itself.

The first half was, in the main, a case of shadow boxing, although the teams were set up for a positive approach.

The Netherlands favoured a 4-3-3 formation with two wingers, while Stefan Böger's Germany lined up in a 4-2-3-1 structure, with the highly rated Max Meyer licensed to play the "free spirit" in between middle and front. Perhaps it was the effects of five games in two weeks, or the nervous tension which inevitably captures the minds of young players on such occasions, or the efficiency of the two defences (only one goal conceded between them in the final tournament), but apart from sporadic moments, caution prevailed. A combination of innocuous passing and half-hearted attempts to penetrate dulled the senses of those watching.



UEFA
UNDER17
CHAMPIONSHIP
Slovenia 2012

Glimpses of sunshine were few and far between, literally and metaphorically speaking. Yes, the crossbar was tested by Germany's Timo Werner in the 22nd minute – the VfB Stuttgart striker took one touch before launching a powerful right-foot shot. And yes, a short time after the only corner of the first period, the Dutch came close with a drive from striker Queensy Menig in the 38th minute (the AFC Ajax youngster's effort cannoned off the underside of the bar and bounced back into play). But that was it. Two near misses, two fouls by each team, and a lot of misplaced passes produced a less than exciting spectacle for a crowd in desperate need of something to warm them up.

At the start of the second half, German coach Stefan Böger stoked the fire by sending on the lively Marc Stendera from Eintracht Frankfurt to play behind the striker. The move had an immediate effect with Germany taking more of the initiative. Two corners, in the first four minutes of the half, were brilliantly delivered by the new arrival, Germany's No20. On the first, Nico Brandenburger headed over, while on the second, an inswinger from the left, captain Leon Goretzka arrived at the near post to head home the opening goal. The Germans had the lead and the added confidence of knowing that nobody had breached their defence up to that point in the competition. Both sides opened up, and Germany, showing great mobility in the attacking half, threatened to add to their lead on a number of occasions. Meanwhile, the Netherlands, a team that had not been behind in the tournament,

Dutch No 10 Tonny Trindade de Vilhena watches anxiously as Germany's attacking midfielder Max Meyer controls the ball in front of Djavan Anderson

started to press, to gain territorial advantage and to put Germany into contain-and-counter mode. In fairness, Stefan Böger's team never looked vulnerable despite the frantic pressure exerted on them. Their captain and goalscorer Leon Goretzka was substituted in the 80th minute, and few would have predicted, at that moment, that the VfL Bochum youngster would not be lifting the European trophy.

However, the Netherlands were not prepared to give up, and one minute into addedtime, Albert Stuivenberg's team saved the day. A cross from AZ Alkmaar's Thom Hays flew from the right across the penalty box, narrowly missing attackers and defenders alike. But, hovering beyond the back post was Elton Acolatse. The Ajax starlet took one touch, and volleyed the ball back across the goal and into the far corner of the net. What happened next seemed almost surreal. The referee blew for full time, and before the Germans could

come to terms with the shock, a penalty decider was underway. The euphoric Dutch scored all five, but by a strange twist of fate, Germany's No20, the substitute who had changed the game in the second half and who had created the goal, became the unfortunate one to miss from the spot. It was a cruel blow for the boy and for his team-mates who had dominated all the statistics, except for the final scoreline. The Netherlands, with a Houdini act, turned defeat into victory before misbelieving eyes. Tonny Trindade de Vilhena of Feyenoord dispatched the winning penalty with his trusted left foot and, in so doing, made himself and the Dutch U17s champions of Europe for the second successive season. TT had triumphed again, albeit by a less emphatic margin than the first time.

Andy Roxburgh
UEFA Technical Director



Getty Images

TECHNICAL TOPICS

“Questioning the quality of finishing in a tournament that produced 48 goals at an average of three per game might appear churlish. Yet, in a series of open, end-to-end matches, the ratio of goals to chances was low. How can finishing skills be further developed?”

The observation and the question have their origins in the technical report on the European Under-17 Championship final tournament played in Italy as far back as 2005. The fact that goalscoring has emerged as a perennial technical topic during the ensuing seven years offers irrefutable indications of a marked trend in youth football at this level. The 2012 final tournament in Slovenia offered further evidence by producing only 28 goals – 40% lower than the total in 2005 and a 15% drop on the previous all-time low of 33 set at the 2009 final round in Germany. The 2012 finals produced a miserly average of 1.87 goals per match. By way of comparison, the UEFA Champions League where, it could be argued, defensive mechanisms are more smooth-running, averages 2.61 per match.

THE ULTIMATE GOAL

There is a general consensus that standards at Under-17 level have risen. As Belgium’s coach, Patrick Klinkenberg, commented: “Fluidity and movement have become more apparent qualities in teams and the level of players in terms of technical/tactical understanding has also improved.” The matches played in Slovenia were of undisputable technical quality and, in most cases, were contested at high tempo – so high that Miloš Kostič, head coach of the host nation, admitted that his players, accustomed to the parameters of the Slovenian domestic competition, struggled



Slovene goalkeeper Gregor Zabret can't get a hand to the ball as winger Jeroen Lumu heads in a cross from Wouter Marinus to put the Dutch 2-0 up in the opening game

to maintain it over 80 minutes. But cutting edges were lacking. The Belgian team, widely lauded by the other coaches as one of the best in the tournament, provided a prime example of good-quality approach work which was not translated into goals. Squandering chances in the opening match against Poland – which they lost 1-0 – gave them an uphill task and, after the goalless draw with the eventual champions on the second matchday, Albert Stuijvenberg admitted that the Belgians had given them a rough ride – but had failed to take their chances. As John Peacock, a member of UEFA’s technical team, remarked: “We were short of predators – the clinical finishers who can win games for you.” Two matches ended goalless and five with 1-0 on the scoreboard. Germany reached the final without conceding a goal, winning three games 1-0 – and were within seconds of lifting the trophy with a fourth. When the Dutch finally broke down Georgian resistance with a 79th-minute goal by defender Jorrit Hendrix in the semi-final, they had, for all their possession and

accomplished combination play, gone 258 minutes without scoring. It was noticeable that, even when teams were in must-score situations (by the third matchday none of the eight teams had been mathematically eliminated), they struggled to find a knockout punch. No team came from 1-0 down to win.

SHAPING UP

The continuing trend towards a 4-2-3-1 structure was a feature of the tournament, with all four semi-finalists adopting that formation. Slovenia switched from 4-3-3 to 4-2-3-1 for their final fixture against Belgium – only to end in 4-2-2 formation when reduced to nine players. The French and Belgians operated a 4-3-3 system, with Seko Fofana and Leander Dendoncker in single screening roles. Georgia occasionally deployed Giorgi Gorozia in a solitary holding role (always ready to drop into the back four) but usually fielded a twin pivot (with Chiaber Chechelashvili or Giorgi Aburjania) in midfield. In general, substitutions signified changes of personnel rather than changes of team structure. Switches to three at the back were rare. The Dutch, even when the Georgians were down to ten and defending with a deep-lying 4-4-1, maintained four at the back and only withdrew a defender for



UEFA
UNDER17
CHAMPIONSHIP
Slovenia 2012

the closing minutes of the final when trailing 1-0 to Germany. The common denominator throughout the tournament was, however, a single striker.

STRIKING FACTS

The difficulties facing the lone strikers in Slovenia can be illustrated by statistics. Only two players found the net more than once, both of them Germans, neither of them strikers. Max Meyer, top scorer with three, operated as shadow striker or wide on the left in the line of three in their 4-2-3-1; Leon Goretzka, a powerful upfield runner from a screening-midfielder position, scored two from set plays. Stefan Böger alternated target man Said Benkarit and the smaller, more elusive Timo Werner in the striking role. Both had chances, but neither scored. Seven of the tournament's 28 goals were scored by strikers.

"Workhorse probably isn't the right word," John Peacock commented, "but the strikers were certainly asked to work hard as the first line of defence." This was borne out by the fact that five of the tournament's top seven in terms of fouls committed were strikers. "Very often, their role was to take central defenders out to create spaces for runs from midfield," added Ross Mathie, "rather than to go for goal themselves." There were 62 offside decisions at an average of just over four per match.

FOOTBALL BY UNITS

The trend towards a 4-2-3-1 structure implies that outfield players are coached in four units – with the strikers in an obvious minority. All teams fielded a flat back four; all teams sought a nice defending/attacking balance between the two screening midfielders; and much of the teams' attacking personalities hinged on the characteristics of the wide players in the line of three supporting the lone striker. UEFA's technical team talked about "flexible forwards" rather than "wingers" in the sense that very few had a vocation to run at defenders and try to create defensive imbalances via 1 v 1 skills. The Dutch team provided exceptions, especially Queensy Menig on the left, although in the final he was switched into the shadow striker role, with Tonny Trindade de Vilhena operating wide on the left. Julian Brandt, on the German right, was the side's nearest approximation to a traditional winger. The French side featured two athletic wingers – usually Corentin Jean and Hervin Ongenda – who did try to take on opponents and penetrate on the flanks. "By and large," Ross Mathie commented, "the wide players were required to track back

to defend and,
when attacking,

to make space for the full-backs to come forward." There were relatively few instances of wide players making it to the byline and delivering crosses.

BUILDING ATTACKS

The tournament highlighted the trend towards possession-based, patient build-ups. Although the long clearance has by no means disappeared from the repertoire, goalkeepers mainly opted to serve defenders who, very often, indulged in inter-passing moves before launching a forward pass or a diagonal to switch the focus of the attack. There were slight variations on one of the common themes of recent years, when central defenders have generally stood their ground and left adventurous forward runs to overlapping full-backs. In both the Belgian (Corentin Fiore and Frederik Spruyt) and the Polish teams (Igor Lasicki and Gracjan Horoszkiewicz), the central defenders were prepared to push forward into midfield with the ball under control – with a screening midfielder dropping deep to cover their backs.

If opponents exerted high pressure (relatively rarely) there was no hesitation in playing the ball back to the keeper and starting afresh. Goalkeepers thus intervened frequently in play but were seldom called upon to make

Getty Images

Iceland's No 4 Orri Sigurdur Omarsson and German striker Said Benkarit compete for the ball during the group game in Ljubljana



TECHNICAL TOPICS



German striker Said Benkarit tries to find a way past Igor Lasicki and Polish No 17 Rafal Wlodarczyk during the semi-final in Ljubljana

decisive saves. They were, by and large, not required to be outstanding and their role was primarily ball distribution rather than shot stopping. In general, they were fast to react to through passes, cutting off potentially dangerous situations by gathering at the edges of the box. It was therefore difficult to judge goalkeeping standards – but mistakes were also a rarity. The German keeper, Oliver Schnitzler, remained unbeaten for 400 minutes.

COUNTERATTACKS

Fast counters were an important attacking weapon for most teams, with the Germans and Georgians especially adept at breaking

at speed from the back – very often after defending at set plays when opposing defenders moved upfield. The German team generally focused on rapid attack-to-defence transitions and countered at speed if their ball-winning attempts in the middle third were successful. Albert Stuienberg succinctly summarised the characteristics of the tournament, however, while analysing the Dutch team’s performance against the Belgians: “When we won the ball there were chances for us on the counterattack but we did a poor job in the final third of the pitch.”

ATTITUDES

This aspect is difficult to quantify. But a tournament involving so many infrequent participants offered invitations for teams to adopt the “underdog role” and to focus on compact defending and risk management rather than panache and entertainment

value. This prompted the technical observers to discuss the trend towards reducing or eliminating the competitive element at grassroots levels – and at what stage work should be done in this department with a view to developing winning mentalities.

HOW THE GOALS WERE SCORED

Set plays accounted for five (18%) of the tournament’s goals. Iceland headed their two goals against France (one by a forward, one by a defender) from a corner and a free kick; Germany headed two goals (both by midfielder Leon Goretzka) from corners in the semi-final against Poland and the final against the Dutch; and Georgia converted one of the two penalties awarded during the finals. The other, in favour of the French when they were still 0-0 in their must-win match, was saved by German goalkeeper Oliver Schnitzler. The three goals from corners represented a success rate of 1 in 43 of the 129 awarded during the tournament.

Eight of the goals (29%) came from cross-and-finish moves – half of them headers. Six stemmed from individual skills, although none could be described as Messi-style solo runs. Cutbacks to the edge of the box produced four goals. Two were direct shots from distance, one was a header from a defensive rebound, and only two goals were the end product of elaborate combination moves.

The 28 goals came from 259 attempts – a success rate of approximately 1 in 9. The “average” column in the table indicates the average number of on-target goal attempts per match.

Team	Attempts	On target	Average	Goals
Belgium	29	18	6.00	3
France	32	16	5.33	3
Georgia	25	11	2.75	2
Germany	64	32	6.40	7
Iceland	12	9	3.00	2
Netherlands	46	22	4.40	6
Poland	33	14	3.50	2
Slovenia	18	8	2.67	3



UEFA
UNDER17
CHAMPIONSHIP
Slovenia 2012

WHEN THE GOALS WERE SCORED

The theory that teams adopted an initially cautious approach is endorsed by the fact that 61% of the goals were scored during the final half-hour of the 15 matches. It would be risky to attribute this to fatigue in a tournament marked by exceptional fitness levels.

Minutes	Goals	%
1-10	3	11
11-20	3	11
21-30	2	7
31-40	2	7
41-50	1	4
51-60	5	18
61-70	5	18
71-80	5	18
80+	2	7

Decimal points account for the "extra" 1%

FAILING TO PREPARE = PREPARING TO FAIL?

Preparations for the final tournament varied substantially. The Polish squad, for example, had spent 60 days together during the season. Specific preparations for the final tournament had started with a five-day get-together with a training match against the Under-19s, a two-week programme to be conducted at their clubs, and five days immediately prior to the first game in Slovenia. The Georgian squad had warmed up for their elite round group against Spain, England and Ukraine with a two-week training camp in Luxembourg (including two friendly matches), followed by a seven-day training camp prior to the first match. As preparation for the finals, the squad had two further weeks together, including

an 11-day training camp in Austria before crossing the border into Slovenia. The German annual schedule features a ten-day training camp in La Manga, Spain, during January and 30 days together over a ten-month period. Specific preparations featured an eight-day training camp after the elite round plus a one-day, non-football-related team-building exercise in the country. The squad met five days before the opening match against Georgia.

The stark contrast was provided by Belgium. The squad had only one day of preparation, on the basis that the players were tired at the end of a long season. The feeling was that injuries needed to be avoided and that rest was more beneficial than a training camp.

CARDS ON THE TABLE

At the final tournament in Slovenia, referees reached for the yellow card 68 times.

In 2010, a 38% increase in the number of cautions (to 52) had raised eyebrows, while the 2011 finals had yielded 53 at an average of 3.53 per match. The 2012 finals therefore set a new record, with a further 28% increase. As Ross Mathie commented:

"The tournament was certainly played with energy and commitment but it would be wrong to interpret the statistics as an indication of malice. Dissent was not a major issue, and the tournament, in my opinion, was played in fair spirit."

Four players were dismissed, two of them during the final group game against Belgium, which the hosts' Slovenia disputed with nine men as from the 63rd minute. The other two were in the semi-finals, and both dismissals were the result of two cautions within a minute. The yellow-red shown to Igor Lasicki brought Poland down to ten with a minute to play. But the other semi-final was more profoundly influenced when Georgian captain Nika Tchanturia was cautioned for a foul on the edge of the box and then for rushing out to charge down the ensuing free kick. With the Georgians facing 64 minutes with ten against the Dutch, their coach Vasil Maisuradze admitted that his team's ambition was to shut down spaces with a deep-lying 4-4-1 and attempt to reach a penalty shoot-out. They were a minute away from succeeding. A total of 333 free kicks were awarded during the tournament, meaning that one in five fouls was adjudged to have been a yellow card offence.

With his left forearm heavily bandaged, French striker Anthony Martial wrong-foots Iceland's goalkeeper Fannar Hafsteinsson to put his side 2-0 ahead



TALKING POINTS

The “art nouveau” of defending?

One of the strange facts to emerge from the final tournament was that, of the top 20 players in terms of fouls committed, only one was a defender. Before we go any further, let us avoid any risk of misinterpretation by clarifying that the 15 games played in Slovenia were not by any stretch of the imagination marked by “serious foul play”. In the aforementioned top 20, only two players reached double figures in the final balance of free kicks whistled against them. The significance of the statistics is more related to a trend in the manner of defending than to foul play.

The final outcome of the tournament may or may not have been influenced by some superbly timed tackles in emergency situations – as illustrated by the central defenders of both teams during the final. Yet the overall impression was one of a tournament where tackling in the defensive third did not emerge as a salient feature. With the tackle from behind long since outlawed, tackling from the side has also become a risky business, especially in last-man situations where an ill-timed challenge can easily incur a red card.

In Slovenia, UEFA’s technical team highlighted a generalised trend towards defensive play focused on interceptions rather than tackles. As in the senior game, defenders were generally wary about giving away free kicks in the danger areas. The emphasis in terms of ball-winning was therefore on anticipation rather than physical challenges. The most eye-catching defenders were those who excelled in reacting swiftly to danger by getting their body across the opponent and making

the interception. At the same time, in the middle-to-back areas, ball-winning was frequently based on a defending player getting a touch on the ball and a team-mate reading the situation quickly enough to control it and to turn away from trouble – also by screening the ball with his body. The art of spoiling the attack, by “nicking” the ball out of the attacker’s close control can often prevent the flow of the attack from progressing. Good balance, awareness and appreciation of danger are all important factors in defending in today’s modern game.

The tournament goalscoring statistics hint strongly at “better defending”. Or do they? UEFA’s technical team, while debating this topic, acknowledged that defensive work was generally very well organised. Attack-to-defence transitions were rapid; attacking play was often cautious in terms of the number of players

ahead of the ball; and, as a point to provoke discussion, it could be argued that the efficiency of defensive play was to a

greater extent attributable to resolute defending in numbers than to individual competences in the art of defending. The technical team felt that there was an easily detectable trend towards FC Barcelona-style defending based on advanced full-backs and two ball-playing central defenders who were technically equipped to launch the team’s attacking moves, notably by delivering accurate switches of play to the other flank.

The question for the coaching profession is therefore to ask whether the trend towards skilful defenders is leading to a deficit in terms of more traditional defensive skills. Is there an increasing reliance on numbers rather than defensive expertise in heading or tackling? Are we losing the “art of defending”? Or is it simply being modified? At the top end of the senior game, the development of clever, inventive players such as Messi, Agüero, etc. highlights the need to develop top-quality young defenders capable of coping with 1 v 1 situations, to deal with the “maverick” type of player. Taking comfort from a numerical advantage in defence is not always reliable. The game is now quicker athletically and also in terms of ball speed: defenders need to be able to react to both with skilful defending and high levels of mental concentration.

The art of the modern day coach developer is to enhance these qualities by good teaching and realistic practices.

PERFECT TIMING?

The climax to the 2012 final in Ljubljana could hardly have been more dramatic.

The last-gasp equaliser allowed the Dutch to go into the penalty shoot-out with greater confidence than their thunderstruck

Fleet-footed Belgian attacker Tuur Dierckx powers past Poland’s Gracjan Horoszkiewicz during the group game in Lendava, where Belgium had more chances but Poland took the points





UEFA
UNDER17
CHAMPIONSHIP
Slovenia 2012



Georgia's No6 Chiaber Chechelashvili sends goalkeeper Mike Maignan the wrong way to put his side ahead during the 1-1 draw with France

opponents. The debating point is whether the sequence of events is ideal. As it happened, the Dutch equaliser was timed at 80+1, leaving the Germans just enough time to restart the game but no "right to reply" in open play. Whereas in the past, 2 x 10 minutes of extra time were played, the current regulations for the final tournament have been changed to stipulate that no extra time is to be played. Is this a correct approach?

On the one hand, the move is more than justifiable in terms of protecting the players from excesses of fatigue. Or is it? For example, Tonny Trindade de Vilhena, the scorer of the winning penalty for the Dutch, had already achieved first-team status at his club – Feyenoord – and was therefore accustomed to playing 90 minutes. How many of the other players in Slovenia were in the same situation? Is it fair to go straight into the lottery of a penalty shoot-out after 80 minutes? Or should there be an opportunity to settle the issue in open play – maybe via a compromise solution of 2 x 5 minutes?

TWIN TRACK IS THE RIGHT TRACK?

The Belgian squad contained players from every month of the year except December. A piece of trivia, you might think. But one of the perennial talking points at Under-17 level is about the opportunities offered to players born in the last six months of the year. Statistically, 32% of the players in Slovenia were born in January or February (less than the peak of 41% in 2009 but more than the 28% in 2011) and 44% in the first three months of the year – 20% in January. But the significance of the Belgian squad is that the more even distribution over the calendar year is attributable to the Belgian association's Futures Programme, a twin-track system which caters for the late developers. Some of the squad in Slovenia had emerged from the programme and the Belgians felt that it was important to expose them to international football, even though they might be, in terms of physical stature at least, behind their older team-mates. Is this a scheme that other national associations should look at?

A PART-TIME JOB?

How much importance or recognition is given to youth development and to the coaches responsible for it? One of the success stories to emerge from Slovenia was the Georgian team which, after finishing ahead of England and Spain in the elite round, also reached the semi-finals at the expense of France, to arouse unprecedented interest in the Georgian media and to prompt the country's president to fly to Ljubljana for the semi-final against the Dutch. All credit to the team's head coach, Vasil Maisuradze, who combines part-time work for the national association with the role of academy/reserve team coach at FC Dinamo Tbilisi (who provided six of the squad that travelled to Slovenia). Ditto Patrick Klinkenberg, a teacher by profession who is one of the part-time national team coaches at the Belgian FA. In Germany, 35% of the 42 Bundesliga clubs have no full-time youth coaches – a situation which is currently under review. Should it be under review within other national associations?

WINNING COACH

Stuivenberg's shoot-out smile

"Equalising in the last second gave us confidence going into penalties, which we had practised. We took them very well, giving the German keeper no chance. And one, of course, was stopped by our keeper – which is why I am smiling." Even though winning the title for the second successive year gave him every reason to smile, Albert remained his usual unassuming self, acknowledging that Lady Luck had smiled on his team at the critical moments of a campaign which had produced two wins and three draws, six goals scored and two conceded. Lifting the trophy in Ljubljana put a memorable end to a season which had, for many of his squad members, involved something between 50 and 60 matches. In Slovenia, his emphasis had therefore been on rest and recovery rather than calorie burning on the training pitch. Albert stresses the importance of UEFA's decision to build extra rest days into the tournament schedule. Successfully defending the title represented a remarkable achievement.

Albert did not see his squad between the October qualifiers and January, when a single game allowed him to select a squad for the Algarve tournament in February. This was followed by a friendly against Belgium prior to the elite round at

the end of March. In the last week of April, a three-day training camp allowed Albert to whittle down a 26-player squad to 18. They had one day at home and then flew to Slovenia three days before their opening fixture against the hosts – except for Tonny Trindade de Vilhena, a gold medallist in 2011 who had since made the first team at Feyenoord and flew into Ljubljana at the last moment.

In Slovenia, Albert focused on combinations of theory and practical work which did not add to the workload but prepared the squad for match situations, such as the approaches to winning or losing by a single goal, or playing with or against 10. "This is something that the clubs don't always work on," Albert explains.

Albert also stresses the value of good relationships between national teams and clubs. "We go into the clubs and we give them DVD footage

of individual players," he commented in Slovenia. "We've also adopted a new initiative which we call the 'Orange Days'. Before our elite round match against Albania in Venray, we got all our Under-16 and Under-17 coaches together at the venue; gave them our preparation information, our training programme, our analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the Albanian team; and then gave them tasks and asked them questions. We basically asked them 'What would you do?' and it served as a challenge for them and for us."

Albert celebrated success in Ljubljana without losing sight of the longer-term perspectives. His record since returning from Abu Dhabi to take charge of the Dutch Under-17s in 2006 speaks for itself. His teams qualified for the finals of his first three European Championships and won silver medals (against Germany in Germany) in 2009. After missing out in 2010, the Dutch took the Under-17 title for the first time in 2011. "The truly important thing," Albert maintains, "is player development. And in the last five or six years I've seen that most of the Under-17 players have progressed into first-team environments. That is a really satisfying aspect of the job."

Jubilant Dutch players hold aloft their coach Albert Stuivenberg after the dramatic victory over Germany in the final



UEFA TECHNICAL TEAM



UEFA
UNDER17
CHAMPIONSHIP
Slovenia 2012

At the final tournament in Slovenia, UEFA fielded two technical observers, reinforced by the presence of technical director Andy Roxburgh for the final in Ljubljana.

Ross Mathie of Scotland was at his fourth successive final tournament, having also been a member of the technical teams in Germany, Liechtenstein and Serbia. Ross joined the Scottish FA in 1981 and led Scotland's Under-18, Under-16 and Under-15 sides in addition to the Under-17 team that he took to the European Championship finals in Turkey in 2008.

John Peacock made his debut as a technical team member, having been much more accustomed to leading England's Under-17 team into the final tournament. John made over 200 appearances as a player for Scunthorpe United. His first coaching role was in football development



From left to right, John Peacock and Ross Mathie with UEFA's technical director Andy Roxburgh

at Coventry City, and he first joined The Football Association in England in 1990. After four years as academy director at

Derby County, he returned to The FA as a national coach in 2002 and led England to the Under-17 title in 2010.

TOURNAMENT SELECT SQUAD

No.	Name	Country
-----	------	---------

Goalkeepers

1	Nick Olij	Netherlands
1	Oliver Schnitzler	Germany

Defenders

3	Jeremy Dudziak	Germany
4	Corentin Fiore	Belgium
4	Jorrit Hendrix	Netherlands
5	Hjörtur Hermannsson	Iceland
2	Otar Kakabadze	Georgia
4	Marian Sarr	Germany

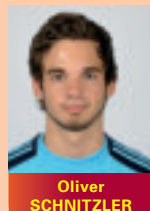
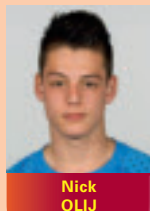
Midfielders

8	Nathan Ake	Netherlands
8	Pieter Gerkens	Belgium
8	Leon Goretzka	Germany
18	Giorgi Gorozia	Georgia
6	Thom Haye	Netherlands
8	Dino Hotič	Slovenia
8	Oliver Sigurjonsson	Iceland
10	Tonny Trindade de Vilhena	Netherlands

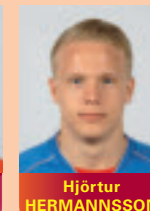
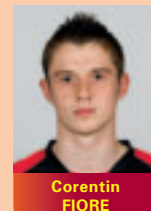
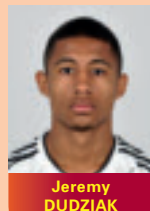
Attackers

7	Julian Brandt	Germany
11	Tuur Dierckx	Belgium
7	Corentin Jean	France
10	Max Meyer	Germany
20	Marc Stendera	Germany
9	Mariusz Stepinski	Poland

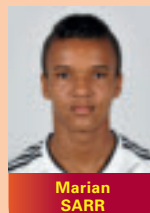
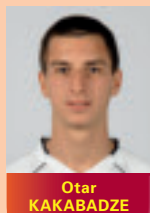
Goalkeepers



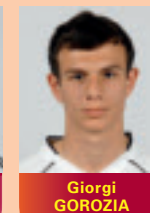
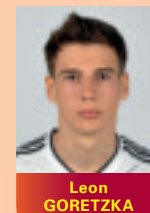
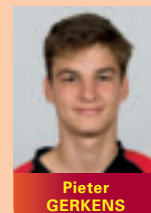
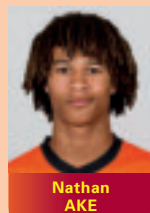
Defenders



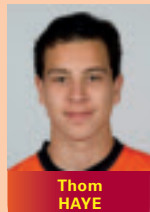
Defenders



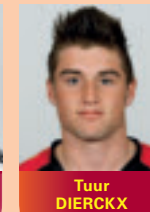
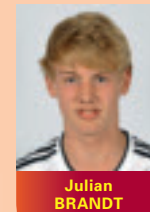
Midfielders



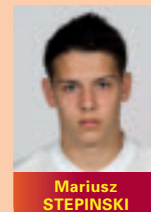
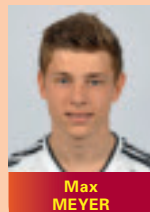
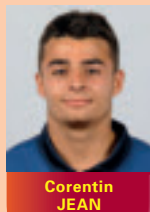
Midfielders



Attackers



Attackers





BELGIUM



COACH

Patrick KLINKENBERG
13/01/1963



“It was a new experience for the players and, in the first game, I didn't recognise my team. We lost the ball too quickly and had to run and run. There were periods when we played well but lacked spontaneity and didn't try hard enough to score. In the last game, we produced the performance that we had been waiting for and we should have reached the semi-finals, considering the quality of the football we played. But we are happy because they are the future of Belgian football.”

No.	Player	Born	Pos.	POL	NED	SVN	G	Club
1	Lucas PIRARD	10/03/95	GK	80	80	80		R. Standard de Liège
2	Sébastien LOCIGNO	02/09/95	DF	59	80	80		R. Standard de Liège
3	Benjamin VAN DEN ACKERVEKEN	29/06/95	DF		80	80		R. Standard de Liège
4	Corentin FIORE	24/03/95	DF	80	80	80		R. Standard de Liège
5	Ali YASAR	08/03/95	DF	80				R. Standard de Liège
6	Leander DENDONCKER	15/04/95	MF	80	80	79		RSC Anderlecht
7	Paulo DA SILVA	17/11/95	FW	29				KRC Genk
8	Pieter GERKENS	17/02/95	MF	80	80	80	1	KRC Genk
9	Siebe SCHRIJVERS	18/07/96	FW	51	80	72	1	KRC Genk
10	Deni MILOSEVIC	09/03/95	MF	80	73	40*		R. Standard de Liège
11	Tuur DIERCKX	09/05/95	FW	80	80	80	1	Club Brugge KV
12	Alexandro CRANINX	21/10/95	GK					Real Madrid CF (ESP)
13	Anthony RIVITUSO	06/01/95	DF	21				RSC Anderlecht
14	Frederik SPRUYT	23/05/95	DF	80	80	80		KRC Genk
15	François MARQUET	17/04/95	MF		66	40+		R. Standard de Liège
16	Pierre BISCOTTI	06/01/95	FW			8		K. Sint-Truidense VV
17	Muhammed MERT	09/02/95	MF	18	14	80		KRC Genk
18	Joren DEHOND	08/08/95	MF	62	7	1		Oud-Heverlee Leuven

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



- Flexible 4-3-3 with 6, Dendoncker, as single screening midfielder
- Well organised with strong central defenders (14, 4) in flat back four
- Emphasis on playing through opponents; patient build-ups from back
- Centre-backs willing to venture into midfield; wide players ready to support striker
- Great combinations in middle-to-front areas with good technical ability
- Good width on both flanks; effective use of diagonal passes (especially by 4)
- Creativity and excellent combination play not translated into goals



COACH

Jean-Claude GIUNTINI
14/12/1956



I was disappointed by the number of chances we created and our lack of efficiency. We made some basic mistakes in terms of our mental and physical engagement on the pitch. We had a must-win situation against Germany and planned to dominate possession. But we found it hard to keep the ball and play our football. The players were too far apart so, when we won the ball, it was difficult to get into our usual passing game. Missing a penalty at 0-0 was a decisive moment and I was very disappointed not to reach the last four.

No.	Player	Born	Pos.	ISL	GEO	GER	G	Club
1	Mike MAIGNAN	03/07/95	GK	80	80	80		Paris Saint-Germain FC
2	Yarouba CISSAKO	08/01/95	DF	78	11	27*		AS Monaco FC
3	Rémi WALTER	26/04/95	MF	80		15		AS Nancy-Lorraine
4	Brian LANDINI	01/01/95	DF	80		80		Le Havre AC
5	Clément LENGLET	17/06/95	DF	80	80	80		AS Nancy-Lorraine
6	Seko FOFANA	07/05/95	MF	S	80	80		FC Lorient
7	Corentin JEAN	15/07/95	FW	80	80	80		ES Troyes Aube
8	Franck BAMBOCK	07/04/95	DF	S	69			Paris Saint-Germain FC
9	Wesley SAID	19/04/95	FW	53	24	23		Stade Rennais FC
10	Mohamed CHEMLAL	08/02/95	MF	71	40*	57	1	SM Caen
11	Hervin ONGENDA	24/06/95	FW	80	56			Paris Saint-Germain FC
12	Thomas LEMAR	12/11/95	MF	9	40+	65	1	SM Caen
13	Louis NGANIONI	03/06/95	DF	80	80	80		Olympique Lyonnais
14	Anthony MARTIAL	05/12/95	FW	27	80	80	1	Olympique Lyonnais
15	Jean-Charles CASTELLETTO	26/01/95	DF	2	80	53+		AJ Auxerre
16	Axel KACOU	01/08/95	GK					AS Saint-Etienne
17	Zakarie LABIDI	08/02/95	MF	S	80	80		Olympique Lyonnais
18	Jonathan MEXIQUE	10/03/95	MF	80				Le Mans FC

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



- Variations on 4-3-3 with single or twin (MD2) screening midfielders
- Emphasis on possession play with patient build-ups through midfield
- High levels of individual technique throughout the team
- Effective use of flanks via overlapping full-backs, interchanging wide midfielders
- Good switches of play from midfield and centre-backs (notably 5)
- Fast counterattacks a valuable weapon; often initiated by goalkeeper
- Periods of high pressure; good athletic condition; balance of left and right-footers



GEORGIA



COACH

Vasil MAISURADZE
10/01/1971



We showed heart and commitment and achieved a big, big result for our little country. The match against France was physically demanding and I think it was the hardest game of my coaching career. After we had qualified against Iceland, I was exhausted by emotion and, against the Dutch, the red card was always going to hurt us. After that, knowing what a challenge it would be, my aim was to use a zonal defence and get to penalties. But then, in the last minute, we were broken. I felt proud of our nation and our players. We had no experience of tournaments like this, so to get to the semi-finals for the first time has to be considered a success.

No.	Player	Born	Pos.	GER	FRA	ISL	NED	G	Club
1	Aleksandre ADAMIA	09/04/95	GK	80	80	80	80		FC Olimpi Tbilisi
2	Otar KAKABADZE	27/06/95	DF	80	80	80	80		FC Dinamo Tbilisi
3	Lasha DVALI	14/05/95	DF	80	80	80	S		FC Olimpi Tbilisi
4	Nika TCHANTURIA	19/01/95	DF	80	80	45	16*		FC Lokomotivi Tbilisi
5	Giga SAMKHARADZE	28/04/95	DF	80	80	80	80		FC Dinamo Tbilisi
6	Chiaber CHECHELASHVILI	10/10/95	MF	80	68		9	1	FC Dinamo Tbilisi
7	Giorgi ABURJANIA	02/01/95	MF		12	80	71		FC Olimpi Tbilisi
8	Giorgi PAPUNASHVILI	02/09/95	MF	80	80	80	80		FC Dinamo Tbilisi
9	Vano TSILOSANI	09/11/95	FW	80	52		80		FC Dinamo Tbilisi
10	Nikoloz AKHVLEDIANI	20/05/95	MF	71	28	10			FC Baia Zugdidi
11	Dato DARTSIMELIA	28/01/95	FW	15	40+	18	80	1	FC Lokomotivi Tbilisi
12	Nika SHERMADINI	08/01/95	GK						FC Gagra
13	Mate TSINTSADZE	07/01/95	MF	17		35			FC Lokomotivi Tbilisi
14	Davit JIKIA	10/01/95	FW	65	40*	62	20		FC Lokomotivi Tbilisi
15	Aleko MZEVASHVILI	10/03/95	FW	9	80	80	60		FC Lokomotivi Tbilisi
16	Giorgi GABADZE	02/03/95	DF				80		FC Lokomotivi Tbilisi
17	Archili MESKHI	02/11/95	MF			70			FC Dinamo Tbilisi
18	Giorgi GOROZIA	26/03/95	MF	63	80	80	80		FC Lokomotivi Tbilisi

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



- 4-2-3-1 based on compact defending and outstanding athletic condition
- Strength in depth with high levels of technique and pace in all departments
- Exceptional team ethic; rapid attack-to-defence transitions throughout games
- Patient build-up from back; good diagonal switches from both full-backs
- Screening midfielder 18 and more advanced 8 the dynamos of the team
- Fluent, high-tempo combinations in midfield; darting runs by lone striker
- Excellent discipline, composure and mental resilience in adverse situations



GERMANY



COACH

Stefan BÖGER
01/06/1966



“ We improved steadily after our opening game, in terms of running, moving and playing good football. I aged a lot during the semi-final against Poland because we missed so many chances. After the final, I was shell-shocked, like my players and my staff. We had a good tournament, with bad luck at the last minute. We were clearly disappointed but, overall, it was a great experience and a valuable one for a group of players who, I hope, will have gone home with clear ambitions to reach more finals during their careers. ”

No.	Player	Born	Pos.	GEO	ISL	FRA	POL	NED	G	Club
1	Oliver SCHNITZLER	13/10/95	GK	80	80	80	80	80		Bayer 04 Leverkusen
2	Pascal ITTER	03/04/95	DF	80	80	80	80	80		1. FC Nürnberg
3	Jeremy DUDZIAK	28/08/95	DF	80	80	80	80	80		BV Borussia Dortmund
4	Marian SARR	30/01/95	DF	80	80	80	80	80		Bayer 04 Leverkusen
5	Niklas SÜLE	03/09/95	DF	80	80		80	80		TSG 1899 Hoffenheim
6	Nico BRANDENBURGER	17/01/95	MF	80	28	80	80	80		VfB Borussia Mönchengladbach
7	Julian BRANDT	02/05/96	FW	79	57	58	80	73		VfL Wolfsburg
8	Leon GORETZKA	06/02/95	MF	80	52		80	79	2	VfL Bochum 1848
9	Said BENKARIT	12/01/95	FW	80	80	16	50			BV Borussia Dortmund
10	Maximilian MEYER	18/09/95	MF	73	80	64	78	80	3	FC Schalke 04
11	Maximilian DITTGEN	03/03/95	MF	40*	23	80	13	40*	1	FC Schalke 04
12	Marvin SCHWÄBE	25/04/95	GK							Eintracht Frankfurt
14	Marc Oliver KEMPF	28/01/95	DF	1	80	50	2	7		Eintracht Frankfurt
15	Kevin AKPOGUMA	19/04/95	DF	7		80		1		Karlsruher FC
16	Niklas STARK	14/04/95	MF			30				1. FC Nürnberg
19	Timo WERNER	06/03/96	FW		4	80	30	80		VfB Stuttgart
20	Marc STENDERA	10/12/95	MF	40+	76		67	40+	1	Eintracht Frankfurt
22	Felix LOHKEMPER	26/01/95	FW			22				VfB Stuttgart

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



- Well organised 4-2-3-1 with high levels of technique and fitness
- Attacks based on patient build-up at back and fast middle-to-front combinations
- Good use of width with play effectively switched from one flank to the other
- Meyer, 10, a permanent threat in wide areas or as shadow striker
- Powerful forward runs by inspirational captain, 8, Goretzka
- Rapid transition to compact, low-pressure defending from mid third
- Dangerous high-tempo collective counters; well-delivered set plays



COACH

Gunnar GUDMUNDSSON
04/08/1969



“ We showed character and, even though this was a new experience, my players handled the pressure very well. We stuck to the style which got us there and in every game we improved. We were underdogs but we had our chances. The boys are very young and I hope this experience will make them hungry for more. It is a difficult path at that age – you are talented, but you’re a long way from being a good player. They have to keep working hard and stay grounded. The players were heroes for me. I hope that I have made them better. They have definitely made me a better coach. ”

No.	Player	Born	Pos.	FRA	GER	GEO	G	Club
1	Alex RUNARSSON	18/02/95	GK			80		KR Reykjavik
2	Adan Örn ARNARSON	27/08/95	DF	80	80	80		Breidablik
3	Osvald Jarl TRAUSTASON	22/10/95	DF	80	80	80		Breidablik
4	Orrí Sigurdur OMARSSON	18/02/95	DF	80	80	80		AGF Århus (DEN)
5	Hjörtur HERMANNSSON	08/02/95	DF	80	80	80	1	Fylkir
6	Emil ASMUNDSSON	08/01/95	MF	80	80	26*		Fylkir
7	Ævar JOHANNESSEN	31/01/95	MF	80	79	78		KA Akureyri
8	Oliver SIGURJONSSON	03/03/95	MF	80	80	80		AGF Århus (DEN)
9	Stefan Thor PALSSON	31/05/95	FW	65	23	54+		Breidablik
10	Kristján FINNBOGASON	12/01/95	FW	77	69	80		FH Hafnarfjörður
11	Páll OLGEIR THORSTEINSSON	31/10/95	MF	7	11	53		Breidablik
12	Fannar HAFSTEINSSON	30/06/95	GK	80	80			KA Akureyri
13	Gunnlaugur BIRGISSON	04/06/95	FW	15	57	2	1	Breidablik
14	Ingiberg JONSSON	03/03/95	DF					Breidablik
15	Aron Heiddal RUNARSSON	30/01/95	DF					Stjarnan
16	Sindri BJÖRNSSON	29/03/95	MF			80		Leiknir
17	Elias Mar OMARSSON	18/01/95	FW	3	1			KR Keflavik
18	Dadi BERGSSON	11/03/95	DF	73	80	27		Thróttur Reykjavik

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



- 4-2-3-1 with strong back four, commanding centre-backs
- Well organised and disciplined with very strong team ethic, mental resilience
- Attacks often initiated by centre-backs receiving from keeper in wide positions
- Occasional use of direct attacking with long passes into space behind opposing defence
- Main emphasis, however, was on combination play through midfield
- 5 and 8 influential in central areas of defence and midfield
- Well-rehearsed set plays with quality deliveries by 8, long throws by 4



NETHERLANDS



COACH

Albert STUIVENBERG
05/08/1970



This was a good educational experience because the players had to react to different footballing cultures. Against Belgium, we were poor in defence, gave too much space to our opponents and did a poor job in the final third when we had chances to counter. There were a lot of wrong choices. Against Poland, Georgia and Germany in the final, it was all about patience and staying positive. In the final, we kept faith and in the last second our hard work paid off and sent us into the shoot-out with confidence.

No.	Player	Born	Pos.	SVN	BEL	POL	GEO	GER	G	Club
1	Nick OLIJ	01/08/95	GK	80	80	80	80	80		AZ Alkmaar
2	Djavan ANDERSON	21/04/95	DF	80	80	80	80	71		AFC Ajax
3	Riechedly BAZOER	12/10/96	DF	73	80	80	80	80		PSV Eindhoven
4	Jorrit HENDRIX	06/02/95	DF	80	80	80	80	80	1	PSV Eindhoven
5	Joris VOEST	08/01/95	DF	80	80	80	80	80		SC Heerenveen
6	Thom HAYE	09/02/95	MF	80	80	80	80	80	1	AZ Alkmaar
7	Elton ACOLATSE	25/07/95	FW	80	53		10	23	1	AFC Ajax
8	Nathan AKE	18/02/95	MF	80	80	80	80	80	1	Chelsea FC (ENG)
9	Rai VLOET	08/05/95	FW	80	60	10	58	64	1	PSV Eindhoven
10	Tonny TRINDADE DE VILHENA	03/01/95	MF	S	80	80	80	80		Feyenoord / Excelsior
11	Jeroen LUMU	27/05/95	FW	62	80	S	70	57	1	Willem II / RKC Walwijk
12	Bram VAN VLERKEN	07/10/95	DF							PSV Eindhoven
13	Sandy WALSH	14/03/95	DF	7						KRC Genk (BEL)
14	Branco VAN DEN BOOMEN	21/07/95	MF	1				9		AFC Ajax
15	Pascal HUSER	17/04/95	MF			70	22	16		SC Heerenveen
16	Mike HAVEKOTTE	12/09/95	GK							FC Utrecht
17	Wouter MARINUS	18/02/95	FW	79	20	80				SC Heerenveen
18	Queensy MENIG	19/08/95	FW	18	27	80	80	80		AFC Ajax

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



- Flexible 4-3-3 with switches to 4-2-3-1; good tactical understanding
- Faithful to possession game, fluent passing, outstanding pace in key areas
- Patient build-ups with wingers staying wide to invite switches of play
- Emphasis on penetration in wide areas, with 11, 18 or 7 ready to interchange
- Technically strong midfield triangle, usually 6, 8 and 10
- Periods of high pressure; reading of game permitted good interceptions
- Good variations on set plays, including short corners; well-delivered crosses



POLAND



COACH

Marcin DORNA
17/09/1979



Our approach was based on physical and tactical preparation and on the technical ability of the players. We gave our all and it was tough to maintain our level during four games in ten days. Football is not a game for individuals and I think we showed some strong team values during the tournament. We were sad to lose to Germany because we thought that a goal was going to come. Unfortunately, it didn't but we had performed well against very strong opponents. We were disappointed but the tournament has to be considered a success – and it was a great adventure for all of us.

No.	Player	Born	Pos.	BEL	SVN	NED	GER	G	Club
1	Oskar POGORZELEC	09/05/95	GK	80	80	80	80		KP Legia Warszawa
2	Patryk STEPINSKI	16/01/95	DF	80	80	80	80		RTS Widzew Lodz
3	Konrad BUDEK	08/11/95	MF			80	68		KSP Polonia Warszawa
4	Gracjan HOROSZKIEWICZ	18/03/95	DF	80	80	80	80		Hertha BSC Berlin (GER)
5	Igor LASICKI	26/06/95	DF	80	80	80	79		Zaglebie Lubin
6	Karol LINETTY	02/02/95	MF	80	80	80	80		KKS Lech Poznan
7	Piotr AZIKIEWICZ	21/04/95	DF	8					Zaglebie Lubin
8	Sebastian RUDOL	21/02/95	MF	80	80	80	39*		Pogon 04 Szczecin
9	Mariusz STEPINSKI	12/05/95	FW	80	79	80	80	1	RTS Widzew Lodz
10	Adrian CIERPKA	06/01/95	MF	80	80	80	75		KKS Lech Poznan
11	Vincent RABIEGA	14/06/95	MF	72	67	64	80	1	Hertha BSC Berlin (GER)
12	Aleksander WANDZEL	12/01/95	GK						KKS Lech Poznan
13	Lukasz ZEGLEN	09/06/95	MF	1	13		5		Gwarek Zabrze
14	Sebastian ZIELENIECKI	16/02/95	DF				12		UKS SMS Lodz
15	Dariusz FORMELLA	21/10/95	FW	24	27				Arka Gdynia
16	Damian KUGIEL	30/05/95	FW		1				Lechia Gdansk
17	Rafal WLODARCZYK	26/01/95	DF	79	80	80	80		LKS Mazur Karczew
18	Karol ZWIR	12/06/95	MF	56	53	16	41+		OKS 1945 Olsztyn

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



- 4-2-3-1 based on strong back four; centre-backs 4 and 5 key figures
- Emphasis on collective virtues, team ethic, discipline and resolute defending
- Compact collective defending as from halfway line; occasional high pressure
- Dangerous counters, based on supply to wide players 11, 18 or 3
- Good interceptions by centre-backs, who were willing to advance into midfield
- Lone striker 9 worked tirelessly and linked well with supporting midfield players
- Attractive combinations in midfield; difficulties in translating possession into chances



SLOVENIA



COACH

Miloš KOSTIČ
23/11/1971



This was our first experience at this level and our opponents were tactically advanced. The goals we conceded were due to our mistakes, which were due to inexperience and a lack of concentration at certain moments. But these are young players who play in a league which is not at the same level as some of our opponents'. But I cannot fault my players because they gave absolutely everything. We were not always focused enough throughout the games, but this is how the players gain experience.

No.	Player	Born	Pos.	NED	POL	BEL	G	Club
1	Gregor ZABRET	18/08/95	GK	80	80	80		NK Domžale
2	Dino PALJUŠIČ	21/04/95	DF	80	80	59		NK Zagreb (CRO)
3	Simon HVAŠTIJA	23/07/95	DF	80	80			NK Bravo Ljubljana
4	Daniel VUJČIČ	12/04/95	MF	80		11		NK Maribor
5	Emir DAUTOVIČ	05/02/95	DF	80	80	63		NK Maribor
6	Damjan VUKLIŠEVIČ ¹	28/06/95	DF	80	40*	–		NK Maribor
7	Roy RUDONJA	26/02/95	FW	5	72			Sheffield Wednesday FC (ENG)
8	Dino HOTIČ	26/07/95	MF	80	80	80		NK Maribor
9	Bian Paul ŠAUPERL	15/04/95	FW	80	80	80	1	NK Maribor
10	Sven DODLEK	28/09/95	MF	54	47			NK Maribor
11	Maks BARIŠIČ	06/03/95	FW	75	33	25		FC Koper
12	Zoki CVETKOVIČ	02/08/95	GK					FC Koper
13	Luka ZAHOVIČ	15/11/95	FW	26	8	69	1	NK Maribor
14	Tilen KLEMENČIČ	21/08/95	DF		40+	80		ND Triglav Kranj
15	Domen ČRNIGOJ	18/11/95	MF	30	80	60		FC Koper
16	Bine KAVČIČ	14/01/95	MF			80		ND Gorica
17	Domen RUPNIK	05/04/95	MF			21		NK IB Ljubljana
18	Petar STOJANOVIČ	07/10/95	MF	50	80	55	1	NK Maribor
20	Haris HELJEZOVIC	27/02/95	DF	–	–	80		NK Bravo Ljubljana

Pos. = Position; G = Goals; S = Suspended; * = Started; + = Substitute; I = Injured/Ill

¹ Replaced by Haris Heljezovic after Matchday 2 due to injury



- 4-3-3 or 4-2-3-1 with deep-lying single or twin screen in midfield
- Variations of tempo with high ball circulation during opening phases
- Compact defensive play with wide players covering central areas when ball lost
- 4-5-1 defensive structure with intense pressure from mid third
- Attacks built preferentially by trying to play through midfield
- Midfielders ready to support central striker whenever possible
- Strong work ethic; team spirit fostered by support for host nation

RESULTS

GROUP A

4 May 2012

Georgia – Germany 0-1 (0-0)

0-1 Max Meyer (60)

Attendance: 600 at ŠRC Stožice Stadium, Ljubljana; KO 18.30

Yellow cards: GEO: Chiaber Chechelashvili (28), Nika Tchanturia (68)

Referee: Ivan Kruzliak (Slovakia) / **Assistants:** Križarić; Djukić /

Fourth official: Balažič

France – Iceland 2-2 (1-0)

1-0 Mohamed Chemlal (7) 2-0 Anthony Martial (56) 2-1 Gunnlaugur Birgisson (66)

2-2 Hjörtur Hermannsson (77)

Attendance: 1,024 at Športni Park, Domžale; KO 20.30

Yellow cards: FRA: Yarouba Cissako (76) / ISL: Hjörtur Hermannsson (55),

Adam Örn Arnarson (80+1)

Referee: Alan Mario Sant (Malta) / Hashimov; Gençerler / Lechner

7 May 2012

France – Georgia 1-1 (0-1)

0-1 Chiaber Chechelashvili (30-pen) 1-1 Thomas Lemar (67)

Attendance: 1,228 at Športni Park, Domžale; KO 17.30

Yellow cards: FRA: Anthony Martial (19), Franck Bambock (30) /

GEO: Giorgi Papunashvili (34), Aleko Mzevashvili (37), Dato Dartsimelia (48),

Giorgi Aburjania (73), Lasha Dvali (80)

Referee: Harald Lechner (Austria) / Gavin; Gudermanis / Balažič

Iceland – Germany 0-1 (0-1)

0-1 Marc Stendera (20)

Attendance: 1,154 at ŠRC Stožice Stadium, Ljubljana; KO 18.30

Yellow cards: ISL: Kristján Finnbogason (22), Ósvald Traustason (42) /

GER: Leon Goretzka (38), Marc Stendera (73), Niklas Süle (74)

Referee: Emir Alečković (Bosnia-Herzegovina) / Opland; Wicht / Avram

10 May 2012

Germany – France 3-0 (0-0)

1-0 Max Meyer (54) 2-0 Max Meyer (56) 3-0 Max Dittgen (62)

Attendance: 4,552 at ŠRC Stožice Stadium, Ljubljana; KO 19.30

Yellow cards: GER: Marc Oliver Kempf (46)

Referee: Marius Avram (Romania) / Križarić; Gavin / Žganec

Iceland – Georgia 0-1 (0-0)

0-1 Dato Dartsimelia (73)

Attendance: 763 at Športni Park, Domžale; KO 19.30

Yellow cards: ISL: Sindri Björnsson (42) / GEO: Lasha Dvali (19),

Archili Meskhi (40), Giorgi Gorozia (60)

Referee: Mattias Gestranius (Finland) / Wicht; Gençerler / Kruzliak

GROUP STANDINGS

Pos.	Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1	Germany	3	3	0	0	5	0	9
2	Georgia	3	1	1	1	2	2	4
3	France	3	0	2	1	3	6	2
4	Iceland	3	0	1	2	2	4	1

GROUP B

4 May 2012

Poland – Belgium 1-0 (0-0)

1-0 Mariusz Stepinski (65)

Attendance: 693 at Športni Park, Lendava; KO 14.00

Yellow cards: POL: Karol Zwir (32), Adrian Cierpka (40+1) /

BEL: Tuur Dierckx (10), Joren Dehond (60), Frederik Spruyt (80+4)

Referee: Mattias Gestranius (Finland) / Gudermanis; Opland / Žganec

Slovenia – Netherlands 1-3 (0-2)

0-1 Rai Vloet (13) 0-2 Jeroen Lumu (35) 0-3 Nathan Ake (61) 1-3 Luka Zahovič (74)

Attendance: 8,132 at Ljudski vrt Stadium, Maribor; KO 20.15

Yellow cards: SVN: Dino Paljušič (32), Maks Barišič (34) / NED: Jorrit Hendrix (8),

Jeroen Lumu (25)

Referee: Marius Avram (Romania) / Wicht; Gavin / Alečković

7 May 2012

Netherlands – Belgium 0-0

Attendance: 812 at Ljudski vrt Stadium, Maribor; KO 17.00

Yellow cards: NED: Jeroen Lumu (69) / BEL: Corentin Fiore (78),

Sébastien Locigno (80)

Referee: Ivan Kruzliak (Slovakia) / Gençerler; Križarić / Žganec

Slovenia – Poland 1-1 (1-1)

0-1 Vincent Rabiega (10) 1-1 Bian Paul Šaupertl (26)

Attendance: 1864 at Športni Park, Lendava; KO 20.15

Yellow cards: SVN: Damjan Vuklišević (18), Sven Dodlek (45),

Tilen Klemenčič (75), Dino Hotič (80+2) / POL: Patryk Stepinski (25),

Sebastian Rudol (31), Karol Linetty (78)

Referee: Alan Mario Sant (Malta) / Djukić; Hashimov / Gestranius

10 May 2012

Belgium – Slovenia 3-1 (1-1)

1-0 Siebe Schrijvers (2) 1-1 Petar Stojanović (13) 2-1 Pieter Gerkens (53)

3-1 Tuur Dierckx (80)

Attendance: 6,211 at Ljudski vrt Stadium, Maribor; KO 17.30

Yellow cards: BEL: Corentin Fiore (34), Pieter Gerkens (65) /

SVN: Luka Zahovič (14), Domen Črnigoj (28, 60), Gregor Zabret (63)

Yellow-red card: Domen Črnigoj (60)

Red card: Emir Dautović (63)

Referee: Harald Lechner (Austria) / Gudermanis; Djukić / Sant

Netherlands – Poland 0-0

Attendance: 537 at Športni Park, Lendava; KO 17.30

Yellow cards: NED: Nathan Ake (48) / POL: Rafal Wlodarczyk (26),

Mariusz Stepinski (59)

Referee: Emir Alečković (Bosnia-Herzegovina) / Opland; Hashimov / Balažič

GROUP STANDINGS

Pos.	Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1	Netherlands	3	1	2	0	3	1	5
2	Poland	3	1	2	0	2	1	5
3	Belgium	3	1	1	1	3	2	4
4	Slovenia	3	0	1	2	3	7	1



UNDER17.
CHAMPIONSHIP
Slovenia 2012

SEMI-FINALS

13 May 2012

Germany – Poland 1-0 (1-0)

1-0 Leon Goretzka (34)

Attendance: 1,629 at ŠRC Stožice Stadium, Ljubljana; KO 17.30

Yellow cards: GER: Niklas Süle (28), Pascal Itter (70), Timo Werner (80+3) / POL: Sebastian Rudol (29), Konrad Budek (68), Igor Lasicki (78, 79)

Yellow-red card: POL: Igor Lasicki (79)

Referee: Emir Alečković (Bosnia-Herzegovina) / Gençlerler; Opland / Kruzliak

Netherlands – Georgia 2-0 (0-0)

1-0 Jorrit Hendrix (79) 2-0 Thom Haye (80+2)

Attendance: 547 at ŠRC Stožice Stadium, Ljubljana; KO 20.30

Yellow cards: NED: Joris Voest (20) / GEO: Nika Tchanturia (15, 16), Giorgi Aburjania (19), Otar Kakabadze (69)

Yellow-red card: Nika Tchanturia (16)

Referee: Marius Avram (Romania) / Djukić; Gudermanis / Gestranis

FINAL

16 May 2012

Germany – Netherlands 1-1 (0-0) 4-5 in penalty shoot-out

1-0 Leon Goretzka (45) 1-1 Elton Acolatse (80+1)

Penalty shoot-out (Germany started): 1-0 Marian Sarr 1-1 Pascal Huser 2-1 Timo Werner 2-2 Nathan Ake 3-2 Pascal Itter 3-3 Elton Acolatse 3-3 Marc Stendera (saved) 3-4 Jorrit Hendrix 4-4 Marc Oliver Kempf 4-5 Tonny Trindade de Vilhena

Germany: Oliver Schnitzler; Pascal Itter, Niklas Süle, Marian Sarr, Jeremy Dudziak; Leon Goretzka (capt.) (Kevin Akpoguma 80), Nico Brandenburger; Julian Brandt (Marc Oliver Kempf 73); Max Meyer, Max Dittgen (Marc Stendera 41); Timo Werner

Netherlands: Nick Olij; Djavan Anderson (Branco van den Boomen 71), Riechedly Bazoer, Joris Voest; Thom Haye, Nathan Ake (capt.); Queensy Menig, Tonny Trindade de Vilhena, Jeroen Lumu (Elton Acolatse 57), Rai Vloet (Pascal Huser 64)

Attendance: 11,674 at ŠRC Stožice Stadium, Ljubljana; KO 18.00

Yellow cards: GER: Niklas Süle (55), Oliver Schnitzler (79)

Referee: Ivan Kruzliak (Slovakia) / Gudermanis; Djukić / Gestranis

TOP SCORERS

Goals	Player	Country
3	Max MEYER	Germany
2	Leon GORETZKA	Germany

FAIR PLAY RANKINGS

Pos.	Team	Points	Matches played
1	Germany	8.199	5
2	Iceland	8	3
3	France	7.904	3
4	Netherlands	7.771	5
5	Belgium	7.619	3
6	Georgia	7.357	4
7	Poland	6.857	4
8	Slovenia	6.75	3

MATCH OFFICIALS

Name	Country	Date of birth	FIFA
Referees			
Emir ALEČKOVIĆ	Bosnia-Herzegovina	14.08.1979	2010
Marius AVRAM	Romania	09.08.1979	2010
Mattias GESTRANIUS	Finland	07.06.1978	2009
Ivan KRUZLIAK	Slovakia	24.03.1984	2011
Harald LECHNER	Austria	30.07.1982	2010
Alan Mario SANT	Malta	16.08.1980	2010
Assistant referees			
Milutin DJUKIĆ	Montenegro	23.07.1979	2012
Mark GAVIN	Republic of Ireland	23.09.1979	2010
Serkan GENÇERLER	Turkey	06.09.1978	2003
Haralds GUDERMANIS	Latvia	14.10.1979	2008
Mubariz HASHIMOV	Azerbaijan	19.02.1981	2010
Borut KRIŽARIĆ	Croatia	05.08.1979	2008
Leif OPLAND	Norway	17.05.1980	2010
Jean-Yves WICHT	Switzerland	17.01.1980	2012
Fourth officials			
Dejan BALAŽIĆ	Slovenia	23.09.1980	–
Mitja ŽGANEC	Slovenia	26.02.1983	2012





UEFA

UNDER17™
CHAMPIONSHIP
Slovenia 2012

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

