



UEFA
UNDER21TM
CHAMPIONSHIP
CZECH REPUBLIC 2015



17-30 JUNE 2015

OFFICIAL PROGRAMME





ENJOY IT WITH A SMILE



Contents

- 4 Flashback
- 7 UEFA President's message
- 9 Welcome to the Czech Republic
- 11 News and match officials
- 12 The contenders
- 14 Big interview: Petr Čech
- 16 Class of 2002
- 17 Player watch: Václav Kadlec
- 20 Stadium tour
- 21 Match schedule
- 22 Technical area: An eye on the future
- 27 Player watch: Michael Keane
- 28 First steps
- 30 Player watch: Andreas Christensen
- 31 Player watch: Marko Petković
- 32 Road to the Czech Republic
- 34 Qualifying facts and figures
- 35 Player watch: Domenico Berardi
- 36 History: Title deeds
- 41 Player watch: Bernardo Silva
- 42 Pavel Nedvěd: My Czech Republic
- 44 Player watch: Marc-André ter Stegen
- 45 Player watch: John Guidetti

TEAM PROFILES

- 47 Czech Republic
- 48 Denmark
- 49 Germany
- 50 Serbia
- 51 England
- 52 Italy
- 53 Portugal
- 54 Sweden

Editor Michael Harrold
Assistant editor Phil Atkinson
Design Alex Fanning
Contributors Jim Agnew, Aleksandar Bosković, Peter Bruun, Chris Burke, Sujay Dutt, Pedro Gonçalves, Patrick Hart, Simon Hart,

Martyn Hindley, Ian Holyman, Libero Language Lab, Pedro Marques, Elodie Masson, Paolo Menicucci, Paul Murphy, Claudio Negroni, Laura Piccolo, Luis Piedade, Hugo Pietra, José Nuno Pimentel, Steffen Potter, Philip Röber, Alfredo

Rodríguez, Jim Wirth, Ondřej Zlámal

Photography Getty Images, Sportsfile, UEFA

Maps by Free Vector Maps
<http://freevectormaps.com>

Designed and produced by Haymarket Network on behalf of UEFA.

©UEFA 2015. All rights reserved. The UEFA word, the UEFA logo and all marks related to UEFA and competitions, are protected by trade marks and/or copyright of UEFA. No use for commercial purposes may be made of such trade marks.





Spain strike gold

Luca Caldirola looks on as Thiago Alcántara fires in Spain's second goal in the 2013 UEFA European Under-21 Championship final at Teddy Stadium in Jerusalem. Spain's captain scored a

first-half hat-trick in the 4-2 win to ensure his side retained the trophy – their fourth title in all. Thiago, alongside David de Gea, Martín Montoya, Diego Mariño and Iker Muniain, played in both the 2011 and 2013

triumphs, and the 2013 team – packed with talent including Marc Bartra, Asier Illarramendi, Koke, Isco and Álvaro Morata – never looked like relinquishing their grip on the trophy in Israel.

“We had excellent teams at both tournaments,” Thiago said. “The majority of both teams, about 90%, are now playing in the Primera División. At the second [tournament] we had a strong

feeling from the very first minute that it was ours. The first was more of a battle. In the semi-final against Belarus we scored the equaliser in the last minute to force extra time before winning it. The final

against Switzerland was also hard. In the second tournament we won the first and second games because of the quality of our players and our desire to win. Everything went perfectly.”



NO TO RACISM



UEFA President's message

Welcome to the final tournament of the 20th UEFA European Under-21 Championship, where three of the visiting teams can make history by writing their name on the trophy for the first time.

The Czech Republic may be making its debut hosting this competition, but it is not the first time that this nation has held a major UEFA event – far from it. After staging the final round of the UEFA European Under-16 Championship in 1999, Jablonec was the venue for a memorable UEFA European Under-19 Championship final in 2008 and then, in 2013, Stadion Eden in Prague provided the setting for the UEFA Super Cup.

German teams were the winners in Jablonec and Prague, but the other contenders for this year's Under-21 title will be aiming to make a hat-trick as difficult as possible – among them the hosts, who have played two finals in this competition and lifted the trophy in 2002.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to the Football Association of the Czech Republic (FAČR), and in particular to its president, Miroslav Pelta, for acting as hosts once again and showing so much passion for youth football. I am sure this will be a highly competitive, exciting and successful final tournament.

Michel Platini
UEFA President

“Three of the visiting teams can make history by writing their name on the trophy for the first time”

Poselství prezidenta UEFA

Vítejte na závěrečném turnaji 20. mistrovství Evropy UEFA do 21 let, na němž tři účastníci se týmy mohou vstoupit do historie tím, že svoje jméno napíší na pohár poprvé.

Česká republika debutuje v roli hostitele tohoto šampionátu, ale není to poprvé, co tento národ pořádá velkou akci pod hlavičkou UEFA – ani zdaleka. Po závěrečném turnaji mistrovství Evropy UEFA do 17 let v roce 1999 byl Jablonec památným dějištěm finále mistrovství Evropy UEFA do 19 let v roce 2008 a potom, v roce 2013, Stadion Eden v Praze poskytl jeviště pro Superpohár UEFA.

V Jablonci a v Praze zvítězily německé týmy, ale ostatní uchazeči o letošní titul do 21 let se budou snažit o to, aby jim hattrick co nejvíce ztížili – mezi jinými i hostitelé, kteří se v této soutěži dostali do finále dvakrát a pohár zvedli nad hlavy v roce 2002.

Rád bych vyjádřil upřímné poděkování Fotbalové asociaci České republiky, obzvláště jejímu předsedovi, Miroslavu Peltovi, za to, že znovu vystupují jako hostitelé a prokazují takovou vášně pro mládežnický fotbal. Jsem si jistý, že tento závěrečný turnaj bude velmi vyrovnaný, napínavý a úspěšný.

Michel Platini
Prezident UEFA

“Tři ze zúčastněných týmů mohou vstoupit do historie tím, že svoje jméno napíší na pohár poprvé”

Land on the horizon



We gazed into the distance as if from the mast of a ship, marvelling at the breathtaking scenery of Bohemian Paradise. All around us stood towering rock formations reminiscent of sailing ships. After all, millions of years ago this area was covered by a sea, whose vestiges remain in the rocks to this day.

www.czechtourism.com



Bohemian Paradise



Welcome to the Czech Republic

On behalf of the Football Association of the Czech Republic (FAČR), I warmly welcome you to the 2015 UEFA European Under-21 Championship final tournament, which we are proud to host in Prague, Olomouc and Uherské Hradiště. We hope that the many visitors to this prestigious event will enjoy full stadiums with a wave of euphoria accompanying high-level football in our country.

We have never before held an event as significant as the Under-21 final tournament, and thank UEFA for its trust and faith in us to organise this. The efforts of the local organising committee promise to deliver a successful event. We know that many foreign coaches and scouts will see the environment in which Czech football works and that it belongs among the strongest footballing countries in Europe.

We have worked very hard to create good infrastructure for our football; we have raised interest among young people and are developing academies across the country. We hope that this tournament will give our youngsters extra inspiration to succeed.

I would like to wish all tournament participants and supporters a memorable stay in the Czech Republic and hope you enjoy seeing tomorrow's stars of our game in action.

Miroslav Pelta
FAČR President

"We hope this tournament will give our youngsters extra inspiration to succeed"

Vítejte v České republice

Jménem Fotbalové asociace České republiky (FAČR) vás srdečně vítám na závěrečném turnaji UEFA Mistrovství Evropy ve fotbale hráčů do 21 let 2015, který hrdě hostíme v Praze, Olomouci a Uherském Hradišti. Doufáme, že naši četní hosté si užijí plné stadiony s vlnou euforie, která bude doprovázet fotbal vysoké úrovně v naší zemi.

Ještě jsme nikdy nepořádali tak významnou událost jako závěrečný turnaj jedenadvacítka a děkujeme UEFA za důvěru v naši schopnost zorganizovat tento šampionát. Úsilí místního pořadatelského výboru slibuje přinést úspěšný turnaj. Víme, že mnozí zahraniční trenéři a skauti, kteří uvidí prostředí, v němž funguje český fotbal, rovněž shledají, že Česko patří mezi nejsilnější fotbalové země v Evropě.

Pracovali jsme velmi tvrdě na tom, abychom pro náš fotbal zavedli silnou infrastrukturu; vzbudili jsme zájem mladých lidí a rozvíjíme akademie v celé zemi. Doufáme, že tento turnaj dá mladým extra inspiraci k touze po úspěchu.

Rád bych všem účastníkům turnaje a fanouškům popřál nezapomenutelný pobyt v České republice a doufám, že si užijete možnost vidět v akci budoucí hvězdy této hry.

Miroslav Pelta
Předseda FAČR

"Doufáme, že tento turnaj dá mladým extra inspiraci k touze po úspěchu"



Nový Hyundai i30 Splněný sen českých řidičů

Nový Hyundai i30 je vůz, o kterém jste vždy snili. Jeho přitažlivý design bude pastvou pro oči, zatímco vylepšené jízdní vlastnosti, zdokonalené motory včetně 1,6 Turbo GDI a nová 7stupňová dvouspojková převodovka vás přímo nadchnou. S adaptivními bixenonovými světlomety a chytrým parkovacím asistentem se vyhnete stresovým situacím a budete si moct plně užívat pohodlí ventilovaných předních sedadel, která nabídne jako jediný vůz ve své třídě. Spolehnout se můžete i na prostorný interiér a velký zavazadlový prostor s objemem až 1642 litrů i na špičkovou kvalitu podloženou 5letou zárukou bez omezení.

Otestujte novou i30 u nejbližšího partnera Hyundai!



Hyundai i30 – kombinovaná spotřeba: 3,9–7,3 l/100 km, emise CO₂: 102–169 g/km.
Porovnejte nový Hyundai s jinými vozy na www.porovnejhyundai.cz. Hyundai Infocentrum 800 800 900.
Fotografie je pouze ilustrativní. Nabídka platí u participujících autorizovaných prodejců Hyundai.



Building for the future

UEFA is helping fund the Czech FA's new headquarters

The Football Association of the Czech Republic (FAČR) has been working with UEFA through the HatTrick programme to support the sustainable development of football in the country.

The association is currently expanding its headquarters in Prague with UEFA assistance (artist's impression above), having won a UEFA HatTrick special project award in 2013. Also ongoing is the restructuring of the player registration process to create a sophisticated directory of players from all 12 regional football associations. The streamlining of that process has freed up funds for other projects, such as the hosting of regular youth tournaments and the purchase of new equipment.

"HatTrick is the bricks and mortar of our new headquarters, which we believe will make a huge difference to the management and growth of football in the Czech Republic," said the FAČR president, Miroslav Pelta. "We cannot necessarily afford such development projects independently, so external assistance and financial partnerships are vital. Placing our employees in a central working environment will facilitate communications and lead to a

stronger workforce and a more efficient governance structure."

The UEFA HatTrick programme was launched in 2003, using investment funding, knowledge-sharing, training and educational initiatives to the benefit of European football's future. It is entirely funded by revenue from the UEFA European Championship and therefore runs in four-year cycles parallel to the competition. Under HatTrick IV, which runs from 2016 to 2020, UEFA's 54 member associations will share a total budget of €600m – more than ever before.

The FAČR has also used the programme to stage a medical workshop for national team and club doctors, providing both theory and practical sessions to enable participants to better understand and adhere to UEFA's minimum medical requirements.

"UEFA shows solidarity, shares its revenue and helps its member associations – large and small – to develop themselves and their football infrastructure," said the UEFA President, Michel Platini, in a publication reviewing the first decade of HatTrick. "There is no finer programme, and no finer philosophy."



MATCH OFFICIALS

France

Referee Clément Turpin
Assistant referees Frédéric Cano, Nicolas Danos
Additional assistant referees Fredy Fautrel, Bastien Benoît

Greece

Referee Anastasios Sidiropoulos
Assistant referees Damianos Efthymiadis, Polychronis Kostaras
Additional assistant referees Michael Koukoulakis, Stavros Tritsonis

Netherlands

Referee Danny Makkelie
Assistant referees Mario Diks, Hessel Steegstra
Additional assistant referees Kevin Blom, Jochem Kamphuis

Russia

Referee Sergey Karasev
Assistant referees Anton Averyanov, Tikhon Kalugin
Additional assistant referees Sergey Lapochkin, Sergey Ivanov

Spain

Referee Xavier Estrada Fernández
Assistant referees Miguel Martínez, Teodoro Sobrino
Additional assistant referees Alejandro Hernández, Jesús Gil Manzano

Poland

Referee Szymon Marciniak
Assistant referees Paweł Sokolnicki, Tomasz Listkiewicz
Additional assistant referees Paweł Raczkowski, Tomasz Musiał

Czech Republic

Fourth officials Jan Paták, Ondřej Pelikán



WIN A MATCH BALL

For the chance to win an official 2015 UEFA European Under-21 Championship final tournament ball, keep your eyes on the @UEFAUnder21 Twitter account on the day of the final, 30 June. As well as details of how to win the adidas Conext 2015 ball, @UEFAUnder21 has all the latest news throughout the tournament.



The Contenders

The lowdown on the eight nations vying for the title



Italy

The Azzurri have won the UEFA European Under-21 Championship a record five times, so by those high standards they are suffering something of a drought. It is 11 years since the last of their triumphs, though they did come close in Israel in 2013, reaching the final only to be beaten 4-2 by holders Spain in Jerusalem. Captain Matteo Bianchetti (above) is among the players who lost that day and are back to make amends.



Portugal

Rui Jorge's side registered ten wins from ten in qualification and were the only team to achieve a 100% record. Indeed they earned their place in style, as two of those were play-off victories against 2006 and 2007 champions the Netherlands, capped by a thrilling 5-4 second-leg triumph. Portugal have never lifted the U21 crown, but came agonisingly close in 1994 when they lost the final to an Italian golden goal.



Czech Republic

Thirteen years after Petr Čech's heroics clinched their first UEFA European Under-21 Championship, the Czech Republic have their sights on the trophy again, this time as hosts. It is over two-and-a-half years since the Czechs played a competitive U21 match but they are not short of experience. Jakub Dovalil (above) has been at the helm since 2008, longer than any other coach at this tournament, and led his side to the semi-finals in 2011.



Denmark

With an average of 3.17 goals a game, Denmark were the highest scorers in the qualification group stage. In contrast, they managed just one in the play-offs yet they made it count, Nicolaj Thomsen's 90th-minute strike in the second leg away to Iceland taking Jess Thorup's squad through on the away goals rule. Semi-finalists in 1992, Denmark last qualified as hosts in 2011 when they were knocked out in the group stage.



England

England dropped just two points en route to the Czech Republic and won their last ten qualifiers – including a pair of 2-1 victories against Croatia in their play-off tie. The 1982 and 1984 champions boast the competition's most potent attacker in Saido Berahino (main picture) – top scorer in qualifying with ten goals – but it is at the back where they have really stood out, conceding a qualifying low of four goals in 12 games.



Germany

The fact that five of Germany's FIFA World Cup final-winning team last summer were in the side that claimed the 2009 U21 title shows how important this event is to the nation's aspiring youngsters. Coach Horst Hrubesch masterminded the 2009 success and he returned in 2013 to oversee an impressive qualifying campaign, built around the talents of goalkeeper Marc-André ter Stegen and forward Kevin Volland (above), both full internationals.



Serbia

Serbia caused the biggest stir in qualifying by felling holders Spain in the play-offs. After a goalless first leg, the 2011 and 2013 champions were beaten for the first time in 35 competitive matches, 2-1 in Cadiz. If that highlights Serbia's potential, they also have a history of success, winning as part of Yugoslavia in 1978 then getting to three finals: with Yugoslavia in 1990, as Serbia and Montenegro in 2004 and as Serbia in 2007.



Sweden

There were more play-off heroics from Sweden and Oscar Lewicki in particular. Having won the first leg 2-0, France had one foot in the final tournament when Layvin Kurzawa scored with three minutes left in the second to peg Sweden back to 3-1 and put Les Bleuets ahead on away goals. Just a minute later, though, Lewicki grabbed his second of the night for Sweden to turn the tables. "It feels almost unreal," coach Håkan Ericson said.



'The stuff of dreams'

Petr Čech reflects on the Czech Republic's unexpected triumph in 2002

For Petr Čech, winning the 2002 UEFA European Under-21 Championship with the Czech Republic was a career-defining moment. Chelsea FC's UEFA Champions League, UEFA Europa League and English Premier League winner still rates that title in Switzerland as "one of the best", putting him on the path to success. Čech, then 20, saved two penalties as the Czech Republic beat much-fancied France 3-1 in a shoot-out in the final. He hopes his compatriots can experience similar joy this summer.

How much excitement is there about the Czech Republic staging this tournament?

I'm really looking forward to it. It's an honour to hold a tournament in your own country. I experienced it playing in the European Under-16 championship in Moravia in 1999. Playing an international tournament at home is something else – special for every player. It's a question of prestige too. We want to show we're a footballing nation, that we are ready for this, and that it will be a great tournament for everybody.

What will it mean to the young Czech players to experience such a big event on home soil?

You only get one chance – one tournament – which makes it all the more difficult, but I believe the Czech Republic can handle it. The Under-21 finals are top-level football. For me, winning the competition in 2002 was a big success. Even 13 years later I can say I'm a European Under-21 champion.

You are a role model for Czech keepers. Who might follow in your footsteps?

I won't name names – there are lots of

promising ones. The boys in the Under-21s are just starting out. We'll have to see how they get on. Tomáš Vaclík, for instance, went from the Under-21s to Sparta and is now playing in the Champions League with Basel. Others can follow a similar path. The Under-21 championship opened the door to senior football for me. After that I moved from Sparta to [Stade Rennais FC in] France where my career really took off. It's a huge opportunity. It would be great if some of them can make the most of it.

What are your memories of the Czechs' 2002 triumph?

France were favourites to win the tournament and we lost 2-0 to them in our first match. We played badly and at that point things looked grim. In our second game we met Belgium knowing we had to win to have any chance of the semi-finals – and we succeeded [1-0]. [After then drawing with Greece] Italy were waiting for us in the semis and we got through with a golden goal. It was unique, I had never experienced such elation before. That got us to the final which we won on penalties against France. As a goalkeeper, to draw 0-0 and then save two penalties is the stuff of dreams.

What was the key to saving those penalties?

I didn't want to go for the ball too early. I tried to move at the very last moment to make it more difficult. The players had 120 minutes behind them. Tiredness, stress and pressure must have played havoc, so I didn't want to make it easy. I saved the second penalty, I even nearly saved the first. Then I saved another, which put me at ease. Our boys were scoring without any trouble. When Jean-Alain Boutsong hit

the ball over the bar, the match was over. When you are on the pitch you feel elated and everything seems surreal. It happens so quickly and you don't know how to react. You only realise the enormity of your success much later.

What can you remember about lifting the trophy?

It was a huge feeling of happiness, because we never thought we could win it. We had a good team and believed if we played to our limits we could reach the semis. To surpass that and actually win the trophy was a massive joy.

What impact did winning the Under-21s have on your career?

Our opponents in the semi-finals and final – including Andrea Pirlo – were already playing for their senior teams. There were a lot of great players. We knew that if we could match them at Under-21 level, we could match them at other levels too. The fact we won showed we could stand up to the best teams in the world, and that all of us were good enough to play for any team. For me personally, it was a big motivation to see that I could hold my own in top-level football. It remains one of my best career victories.

What advice would you give the players involved this summer?

Forget everything else and just concentrate on the football. The opportunities this tournament offers are huge, but if you start to think about what could happen if everything goes well, it will pass you by. Take each match at a time, focus on your performance, then everything will take care of itself.

"The Under-21 championship opened the door to senior football for me"

CLASS OF 2002

Illustrious careers followed for many of the Czech Republic's Under-21 winners

The stars of the Czech Republic's 2002 UEFA European Under-21 triumph soon progressed to the senior side: Petr Čech (1), Zdeněk Grygera (5), Milan Baroš (15), Štěpán Vachoušek (19), Tomáš Hübschmann (16), Martin Jiránek (10) and David Rozehnal (18) were all in the squad that Karel Brückner steered to the UEFA EURO 2004 semi-finals. Both Baroš, the five-goal final tournament top scorer in Portugal, and Čech featured in the team of that tournament. For them, even greater glories lay ahead, each winning the UEFA Champions League, with Liverpool FC in 2005 and Chelsea FC in 2012 respectively. Baroš also scored 41 international goals – second only to Jan Koller among his country's all-time leading marksmen. Čech, meanwhile, is in sight of

Karel Poborský's national record of 118 appearances. Defender Grygera amassed 65 caps and represented AFC Ajax and Juventus, while Hübschmann claimed eight Ukrainian titles at FC Shakhtar Donetsk as well as the 2008/09 UEFA Cup.

Many of the class of 2002 returned to the Czech Republic following their successful travels abroad. Grygera

retired from playing in 2013 after a season at Fulham FC, before rejoining his first club, FC Fastav Zlín, this February as director of international affairs and sporting development. Baroš, now 33, is also back where it all began for him, up front at his first club FC Baník Ostrava, while Hübschmann captains FK Jablonec. Another leader from 2002, Jiránek, is captain of Russian side FK Tom Tomsk, and Rozehnal, who went on to win 60 senior caps, has been playing for LOSC Lille since 2011. As for winning coach Miroslav Beránek (20), after a career that has taken him from Hungary to the United Arab Emirates and Kazakhstan, the 58-year-old returned to the nation's capital as coach of SK Slavia Praha, the club where he too began his playing career.

"Baroš and Čech were in the UEFA EURO 2004 team of the tournament"



2. Radoslav Kováč 3. Jan Polák 4. Petr Voříšek 6. Václav Drobný 7. Aleš Chvalovský 8. Martin Horák
9. David Kobylík 11. Tomáš Jun 12. Rudolf Skácel 13. Tomáš Hrdlička 14. Michal Pospíšil 17. Karel Piták



PLAYER WATCH

Václav Kadlec

Coping with expectations will be key to a successful campaign, says the Czech striker



It's good to play at home, but expectations will be really high. The pressure on us will be enormous. If we play

well it will help, but our supporters may be critical if the performances aren't so good. It will be important for us to inspire a positive response. It goes without saying that teamwork and commitment are key, but individual form will also play a role. My family and girlfriend will be in the stands supporting me as usual. I hope my grandmother and grandfather come as well. They do not come to league games, but the national team is a special occasion.

We're not favourites, but we're definitely capable of getting out of the group,

then anything can happen. We might beat Germany once, but I wouldn't say we're capable of winning against them regularly. We drew with Denmark in a recent friendly. They outplayed us in some phases of the game, but it was only a friendly so you can't read too much into it. As for Serbia, I talked with some of my former Frankfurt teammates about them and they spoke highly about the individual qualities of all their players. So that is a third strong opponent in the group.

The tournament will be the highlight of my career so far. We haven't qualified for really big games with Sparta, but I hope there will be more top games at senior level after this.

"It will be important for us to inspire a positive response"

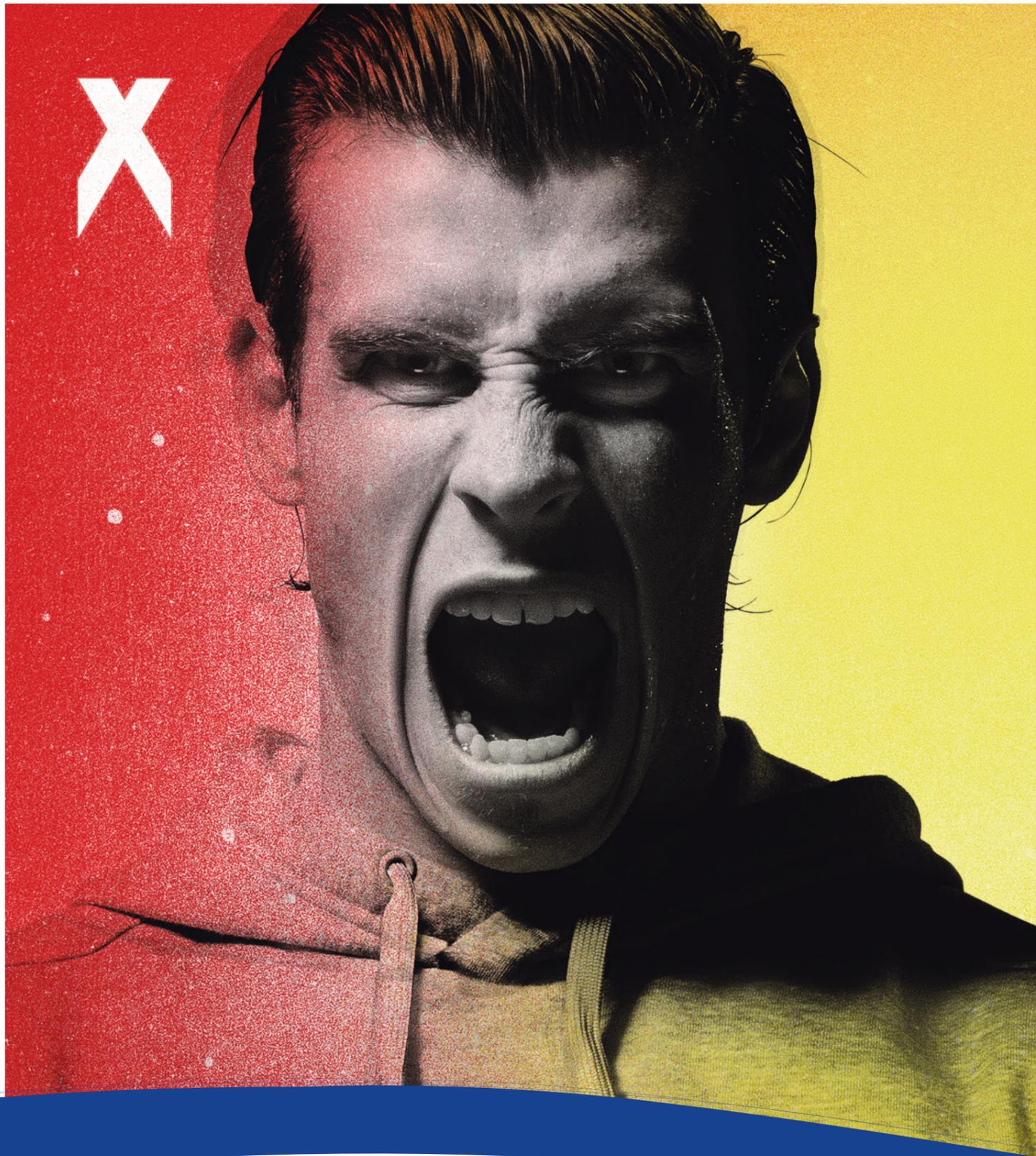
Playing for the Under-21s is special. It's a slightly different style of football from our normal league or European games. All of us play senior football at top teams, but when we're together we suddenly play faster and more spontaneously. When I returned to the team after a year, I needed to get used to the different style again, but we're experienced enough to cope with that.

The 2002 generation produced a lot of successful players. If we can emulate them it would be good. I mostly learned about [the 2002 U21 triumph] recently when we were shooting films with the players who won it. It gets a lot of attention in the media, but I don't remember watching the games as a boy. I have always liked [2002 Czech forward] Milan Baroš. I would even say that we have similar playing styles, but I didn't really have an idol growing up.

I have 11 senior caps. Most of the opponents were smaller teams like Malta and Liechtenstein, though I did play a bit of the game against Italy. More than the playing experience, for me it was great to train in the team camps with players such as Tomáš Rosický and Jan Polák.

Sometimes I watch my goal against Liechtenstein on YouTube [Kadlec became the youngest ever player to score for the senior Czech team in 2010]. It wasn't a tap-in, an easy goal; it was a shot from outside the penalty box and it flew through the goalkeeper's legs. It was a beautiful goal.

My first experience with this tournament in 2011 didn't end well for me or the team. We finished fourth and didn't qualify for the Olympics. I was recovering from an injury and didn't know for a long time if I'd be in the squad. I only played about 40 minutes, but I knew then I would participate in more tournaments like that. I just never thought I'd be doing it in the Czech Republic!



**SPORT
TO THE
PEOPLE**

 **INTERSPORT®**



Keep up to date with the action throughout the tournament on UEFA.com, or follow us on Twitter @UEFAUnder21. #U21EURO



Stadium tour

Prague takes centre stage with Olomouc and Uherske Hradiste also proud hosts



Stadion Eden Prague

Capacity 20,800
Matches CZE v DEN 17 June, GER v DEN 20 June, CZE v GER 23 June, final 30 June

The state-of-the-art base of SK Slavia Praha is also home to Bohemians Praha 1905, while FC Viktoria Plzeň held their 2011/12 UEFA Champions League group stage home fixtures here.

Lionel Messi enjoyed his visit, scoring a hat-trick in FC Barcelona's 4-0 win against Plzeň on 1 November 2011. Stadion Eden will stage the final of the Under-21 tournament, having already been the setting for one glamorous European showpiece – the 2013 UEFA Super Cup, in which FC Bayern München got the better of Chelsea FC on penalties after a 2-2 draw.



Stadion Letná Prague

Capacity 19,784
Matches GER v SRB 17 June, SRB v CZE 20 June, DEN v SRB 23 June

AC Sparta Praha's long-term residence, the modern Stadion Letná is very different from the predominantly wooden arena that was first opened in 1921 – and burned down 13 years later. The

stadium has since been rebuilt twice, with the current venue the first not to include an athletics track, meaning that Sparta players can really feel the crowd behind them at home matches. The Czech Republic play home games here, as did Czechoslovakia before them. Real Madrid, Juventus, Barcelona and – most recently – the Netherlands have all lost at the Letná.



Andrův Stadion Olomouc

Capacity 12,566
Matches ITA v SWE 18 June, SWE v ENG 21 June, ENG v ITA 24 June, semi-final 27 June

Named in honour of local philanthropist Josef Ander, Andrův Stadion is home to SK Sigma Olomouc and has provided a more intimate backdrop for a number of national team games. Sigma held

Real Madrid to a 1-1 draw here in a 1991/92 UEFA Cup quarter-final tie, while later the same year Fenerbahçe SK lost 7-1 to a Sigma side led by future national coach Karel Brückner. The arena also staged the final of the 1999 UEFA European Under-16 Championship, where a Spain team featuring Mikel Arteta and Pepe Reina beat Poland 4-1.



Městský Fotbalový Stadion Uherske Hradiste

Capacity 8,000
Matches ENG v POR 18 June, ITA v POR 21 June, POR v SWE 24 June

The construction of the home of 1. FC Slovácko was financed by benefactor Miroslav Valenta and the stadium opened in 2003. The German Bundesliga side VfL Borussia Mönchengladbach were

the first to use the away dressing room, losing 3-2 in a friendly. Absent from Europe since a 2003 UEFA Intertoto Cup campaign in which they played in nearby Stare Mesto, Slovácko have yet to grace a UEFA competition with their new ground, but the stylish, compact venue made its FIFA World Cup debut with a 7-0 Czech win against San Marino in 2009.

Match schedule

Group stage

All kick-off times are local time (CET)

17 JUNE Group A

18.00 Prague (Stadion Eden) Czech Republic ■ v ■ Denmark
20.45 Prague (Stadion Letná) Germany ■ v ■ Serbia

18 JUNE Group B

18.00 Olomouc Italy ■ v ■ Sweden
20.45 Uherske Hradiste England ■ v ■ Portugal

20 JUNE Group A

18.00 Prague (Stadion Letná) Serbia ■ v ■ Czech Republic
20.45 Prague (Stadion Eden) Germany ■ v ■ Denmark

21 JUNE Group B

18.00 Olomouc Sweden ■ v ■ England
20.45 Uherske Hradiste Italy ■ v ■ Portugal

23 JUNE Group A

20.45 Prague (Stadion Eden) Czech Republic ■ v ■ Germany
20.45 Prague (Stadion Letná) Denmark ■ v ■ Serbia

24 JUNE Group B

20.45 Olomouc England ■ v ■ Italy
20.45 Uherske Hradiste Portugal ■ v ■ Sweden

Semi-finals*

27 JUNE

18.00 Olomouc ■ v ■ ■
21.00 Prague (Stadion Letná) ■ v ■ ■

Final

30 JUNE

20.45 Prague (Stadion Eden) ■ v ■ ■

Group A

- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Germany
- Serbia

Group B

- England
- Italy
- Portugal
- Sweden

Match format

Players are eligible to play in the competition if they were born on or after 1 January 1992.



*The four semi-finalists will make up Europe's entrants for the 2016 Olympic Games football tournament; if England (who do not enter the Olympics) progress from the group stage, an Olympic play-off will take place in Uherske Hradiste at 18.00CET on 28 June between the two teams finishing third in their groups.

AN EYE ON THE FUTURE

Preparing players for the senior team is the aim for any Under-21 coach, but the ways to achieve that goal vary from nation to nation. Here the eight finalist coaches discuss their keys to player development

Styles and systems

Jess Thorup DENMARK

Ten years ago we created something called the common thread, which means everyone from the Under-15s to the first team has the same playing style, which is the best way to develop talent. It gives the players great stability when they move up, because they know what kind of style is needed. But we have to remember that when we get closer [to the top], from the Under-21s to the first team, it's also important to win. It's about developing talent, but it's also important that players are motivated to win something.

Horst Hrubesch GERMANY

They have to know the system, but I am happy as long as they are flexible and able to play different systems. It might be 4-4-3 or 4-4-2 or 4-1-4-1, if that's what the game

demands. Players must be flexible and educated accordingly. You don't have players who are bound to one special position any more.

Gareth Southgate ENGLAND

We have tried from the start to implement a certain style of play. We feel English teams, over the course of history, haven't necessarily dominated or controlled games or possession, and we feel that is important if they are going to be successful at senior level. We also have to instil a winning mentality – an understanding of how to manage games and tournaments and the different scenarios that they bring. We want players to express themselves a lot more. We don't necessarily think we've produced players that are less technically able than others in the past, but we're trying to encourage them to express that more. The understanding of what's needed to win in tournaments is also something we have to learn.



“The overall philosophy is much more important than a particular set-up or system”

Luigi Di Biagio
ITALY

Senior links

Håkan Ericson SWEDEN

Our main attacking and defensive play is very similar to what they do at senior level, but at the moment we play a bit differently. I felt we needed more freedom in our last qualifying and play-off games – we have two very strong attackers so we decided to play them both. In qualifying we had operated more as a 4-2-3-1. We possess that flexibility. But the way we attack and defend is very similar to the seniors.

Gareth Southgate ENGLAND

I have to have [those links], because Roy Hodgson keeps taking my players! But that's been great – that tie with the first team, so that our players can see a pathway. We're very young at senior level at the moment, but it means they all have an opportunity to progress, which is great for them.

Luigi Di Biagio ITALY

Right now we're not playing the same system as the seniors, but the concepts are the same. I have always thought that a particular set-up or system can be important, but the overall concept, philosophy or playing mentality is much more so.

Mladen Dodić SERBIA

We are not just colleagues but also friends and coaches with virtually the same ideas. We openly discuss everything and I believe that is very useful for our team. But, honestly, in modern football one single system does not exist – there are lots of changes during games, depending on the situation. We try to have the same model, yet each generation can improve on it. We have space to introduce new elements and we try to do that.

Jakub Dovalil CZECH REPUBLIC

Certain priorities have to be the same, but it doesn't matter if the lineup is a little different, for instance 4-3-3 or 4-2-3-1. But there should be certain principles, such as how many players are in the attacking phase, and how many are in the defensive phase. Principles like that need to be unified.



“Players must take responsibility, not just have me pushing them”

Horst Hrubesch GERMANY

Honing young talent

Horst Hrubesch GERMANY

We're not just talking about tactical or technical improvement; it is also about developing players further as personalities. They must take responsibility, not just have me always trying to push them. It's important that a team and players develop, and start talking and discussing things among themselves on the pitch. Then they come together and are united and strong; that's the goal. You are not dependent on one individual to be decisive – it's the team that wins trophies in the end. The priority is that players grow and develop further, especially in terms of their personality. These are decisive factors.

Luigi Di Biagio ITALY

The main focus is the ball because we have to improve our way of playing. We have to develop our possession and also our finishing – to try to play a different brand of football, to play a more attacking and not solely a reactive style. We want to show that Italy don't just defend and try to hit you on the break, but can also move the ball and focus on possession.

Rui Jorge PORTUGAL

Above all, we show them how important it is to play as a team – to be part of a

A jubilant Håkan Ericson is held aloft after Sweden's play-off victory against France



group and to represent the country. On a psychological level, I think that is very important and with players of this quality and with this desire, it ends up being relatively easy. We can pass on some important things to them, not just technically or tactically, but also on the mental side – the personal angle. That gives me a lot of satisfaction. I like this challenge a lot.

Håkan Ericson SWEDEN

About 90% of the job is about getting a united team – the way the team plays – and, of course, individual development.

Jakub Dovalil CZECH REPUBLIC

We like to teach players to have a good character and really love their football,

and also to produce our type of attacking play, so that our Czech creativity doesn't disappear. That is our goal.

Mladen Dodić SERBIA

This tournament is very, very useful – only teams who have had this experience know how big an influence these tournaments can be for player development. These finals are the best possible stage for them.

Job satisfaction

Jess Thorup DENMARK

I'm helping the players to take the next step. I'm not sad about giving a player to the first team, because that's success for me.

Gareth Southgate ENGLAND

To be able to have an influence on the next generation of players in your country is a great honour. Within youth development in England, we have the opportunity to make a significant difference. We're enjoying seeing players develop and seeing lots more coaches develop as well. We're prepared to admit we need to learn and improve. Maybe in the past we haven't always done that as a country. So that gives us a chance to progress with the structures we're starting to put in place.

Jakub Dovalil CZECH REPUBLIC

It's wonderful to see the players you coach make it in professional football. When they mention their time with the Under-21s, that's probably the biggest honour.



“Giving a player to the first team is success for me”

Jess Thorup DENMARK



PLAYER WATCH

Michael Keane

The England centre-back is proud to be part of the competition's most miserly defence



Michael Keane speaks with a sense of quiet confidence as he surveys the challenge facing his England side in the Czech

Republic this month. "They are all going to be tough games, but they'll be thinking we are going to be hard to beat as well," he says, with some justification, of England's Group B opponents.

After all, Gareth Southgate's England emerged from qualifying with the best defensive record of any side. Strikers Harry Kane and Saido Berahino might have grabbed the headlines by scoring 16 goals between them, but the fact that England conceded just four goals at the other end in 12 fixtures was a source of "massive pride" for Keane.

"As a defender, your first thought is to not concede and though you want to be good on the ball and to play good football, the first thing is you have to defend and help the team keep a clean sheet," says the 22-year-old Burnley FC centre-back, who played eight times on the road to the Czech Republic. "So to have a record like that is something that all the defenders are proud of, and not just the defenders – it's the whole team. The midfielders and strikers are the first line of defence for us. It's a team effort."

It was another team effort when England beat the Czech Republic in a pre-tournament friendly in March, hanging on to a 1-0 victory in the face of concerted pressure. Afterwards, Southgate praised their resilience, but for Keane it was no surprise given the "tight group" the manager has built. "We've been a relatively similar group for the last two years, so that's helped us all get on. Our team spirit's brilliant and the manager is brilliant as well.

"He's always giving little bits of advice, but the main thing is he gives you the freedom to play," he adds of former England defender Southgate. "I think being

a centre-half himself, he knows that if he was playing and there was some space in front of him, he'd like to take the ball out of defence and then play it into midfield or the strikers. And he gives you the freedom to do that."

Keane has the benefit of previous tournament experience, having made two appearances at the 2012 UEFA European Under-19 Championship final tournament in Estonia – including playing all 120 minutes of England's semi-final

"The midfielders and strikers are the first line of defence. It's a team effort"

defeat by Greece. He will also arrive in the Czech Republic fresh from an even more significant experience – his first season of Premier League football.

The Manchester United FC academy graduate made his top-flight debut as a United substitute against Sunderland AFC last August but subsequently moved to Burnley, initially on loan before agreeing a permanent move in January. A season engaged in an ultimately futile fight against relegation has provided a steep learning curve, he admits, but he is grateful for it. "I've learned a massive amount. It's playing in one of the most competitive leagues in the world against world-class players. You come up against different challenges, different types of players, but you learn every week. And sometimes you won't have the best game, but that's when you learn the most, so you've got to go back, watch your clips and make sure you don't make these mistakes again."



Keane on the ball against Wales in qualifying



Probably the best beer in the world.

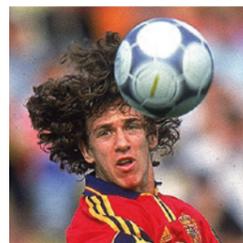
FIRST STEPS

Learning the ropes with Under-21s proved to be time well spent for some of these soon-to-be stars

A pre-beard **Andrea Pirlo** celebrates scoring in Italy's 2-1 victory against the Czech Republic in the 2000 final. Pirlo top scored in the tournament with three goals – including both in this match.



Glenn Hoddle watches over training with Terry Venables in 1978 at the start of qualifying for the UEFA European Under-21 Championship. Hoddle went on to win 53 caps for the senior England side, who he also managed.



Carles Puyol in action for Spain against Slovakia in the third-place play-off at the 2000 final tournament in Bratislava.

Zvonimir Boban, seen here playing for Yugoslavia's Under-21s in 1987, made his senior debut the following year and won seven caps, before starting his Croatia career in 1990. He scored 12 times in 51 appearances for Croatia and captained his nation to a third-place finish at the 1998 FIFA World Cup.



Just over a week after making his competitive Under-21 debut at the 2004 final tournament, 19-year-old **Lukas Podolski** made his first senior appearance for Germany before being drafted into Rudi Völler's UEFA EURO 2004 squad.



Roberto Mancini runs at the England defence during their 1986 semi-final. The Azzurrini won 3-1 over two legs before losing to Spain on penalties in the final.



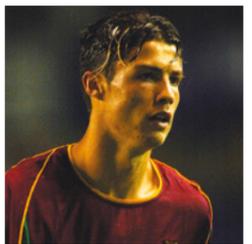
Roy Keane playing for the Republic of Ireland's Under-21s against England in November 1990. Keane played 67 times for the senior side and won major honours with Manchester United FC, including the UEFA Champions League.



Steve McManaman made his Under-21 debut in October 1990, with then England manager Lawrie McMenemy famously saying of the skinny winger that he had seen "more fat on a chip".



Zinedine Zidane, playing here for France's Under-21s in 1991, was also part of Raymond Domenech's side that lost to Italy in the 1994 semi-finals on home soil.



An 18-year-old **Cristiano Ronaldo** featured for the Under-21s during qualifying for the 2004 final tournament, but was drafted into the senior squad in time for UEFA EURO 2004.



PLAYER WATCH

Andreas Christensen

After making his Chelsea FC debut this season, the Danish's defender's stock is on the rise



His story

Born in the small town of Allerød, north of Copenhagen, Christensen was only seven when he caught the eye of Brøndby IF, one of Denmark's leading teams. He spent eight years with the club, who are renowned for developing young talent, and by the time he was 15 had a long queue of European giants coveting his signature. FC Barcelona, FC Bayern München and Manchester City FC were among his reported suitors, but in February 2012, two months short of his 16th birthday, he opted for Chelsea FC.

Style of play

As an elegant, ball-playing centre-back, Christensen is highly regarded for the composure he displays whenever he steps forward into midfield to launch attacks. Standing 1.88m tall, he also has the physical stature and strength necessary to impose himself on opposition forwards. Indeed, Chelsea captain John Terry was so impressed by his potential that two years ago he offered the young Dane some one-to-one sessions on the training ground. "He said that I could come and do some defensive work with him any time," Christensen said.

National service

Only midfielder Nicolaj Thomsen made as many appearances for Denmark during qualifying as Christensen, who featured in 11 matches and scored one goal – his first at this level – in the decisive 4-2 victory against closest group rivals Russia last September. A central figure at the heart of the Danes' defence, the 19-year-old has been part of the U21 set-up since the age of 17, when he made his debut in a 4-1 friendly win against Northern Ireland.

Breaking through

Christensen has made his mark for Chelsea this season, appearing at right-back in



Christensen in action against Iceland

the League Cup victory at Shrewsbury Town FC in October and then the FA Cup defeat at home against Bradford City FC in January. He made his Premier League debut as a substitute on the final day of the campaign in a 3-1 win against Sunderland AFC on 24 May. A member of Chelsea's 2014 and 2015 FA Youth Cup-winning sides, Christensen also helped the club's Under-19 team win the UEFA Youth League in Switzerland in April.

He says

"We have been drawn in a group with hosts the Czech Republic, and with Serbia and

Germany. They say the German team is stronger than the one they had in 2009. It will be hard, but we have surprised people so far. We haven't lost a game."
Andreas Christensen

They say

"Believe me, I am sure that he will be a top footballer and one for the future for Chelsea. I talk to him daily, train with him and try to give him as much advice as I can. I have always told him that he should be chasing me and trying to take my place in the team."
John Terry, Chelsea captain



PLAYER WATCH

Marko Petković

With his side having already disposed of holders Spain, Serbia's captain is eager for the next challenge



What are your hopes and expectations?

To represent our country as best we can and produce a great result we can be proud of. It's a simple idea, but we have a very hard job ahead of us.

Serbia have a history of success in this competition. What is your goal this time?

We want to continue that run. Our primary target is to qualify for the semi-finals. If we do that, we will be in contention for the title and have booked our place [at the Olympics] in Rio. That's our dream.

What do you know about your opponents in Group A: Denmark, the Czech Republic and Germany?

I have great respect for them all. Germany are world-class from the senior team to the youth levels. The hosts are the hosts and we have special respect for Denmark, because their senior team beat ours in UEFA EURO 2016 qualifying.

How tough will it be playing the hosts?

This [Czech] generation eliminated us in the semi-finals of the Under-19 EURO in 2011 in Romania and we want our sporting revenge. They will have strong support and we will be under pressure. That will motivate us and I expect us to be at our peak.

What are the main strengths of this Serbia team?

Team spirit, without doubt. We have a strong collective and the individual is secondary. We always comes before I.

Your coach has changed since qualifying. What impact will that have?

That change was unusual. Our former coach Radovan Ćurčić was promoted to

the seniors and I wish him all the best. His successor Mladen Dodić will continue on the same path and I expect a positive reaction.

Talk us through the second-leg play-off victory against Spain – their first defeat in 35 competitive games. What was Serbia's secret?

If I tell you honestly, it won't be a secret any more and we'll lose one of our main weapons. I'm joking, but I do think we need to keep some of the promises we made that amazing day.

"When I saw the ball go in the net, I was the happiest person in the world"

What it was like when Bora Kostić settled the tie in added time in Cadiz?

I was injured, near the pitch, alone, under pressure and with big expectations. When I saw the ball go in the net, I was the happiest person in the world. That was more than a victory; we had beaten one of the strongest teams on the planet at that time.

How much confidence does that result give you?

Tonnes and tonnes, but now we have to control our emotions. We must focus on new opponents and new challenges.

You also beat Italy in qualifying, so I imagine you have nothing to fear ...

And Belgium away ... No fear, just confidence. Football always asks 100% of you: new match, new start. But certainly there is no fear in our ranks.



Petković on the ball against Spain in the play-offs

Road to the Czech Republic



A total of 234 qualifying matches decided which seven sides would join the hosts in the final

It is often pointed out over the course of a season that a league campaign is a marathon, not a sprint, and that is also true of the 2013-15 UEFA European Under-21 Championship.

Fifty-two nations took part in qualifying, with matches held over a 20-month period. The action was already under way nearly three months before the 2013 final tournament in Israel had even kicked off, Tom Lawrence striking the first goal to earn Wales a 1-0 win against Moldova in Llanelli in the opening game on 23 March two years ago.

The 52 teams were drawn into two groups of six and eight groups of five. The ten group winners and four best runners-up then advanced to the play-offs – seven ties contested over two legs in October 2014. The eventual winners proceeded to the final tournament alongside the Czech Republic, who qualified automatically as hosts.

England, Denmark, Germany and Portugal all survived that test of endurance unbeaten. Who now has the stamina to prolong that run as the pace steps up over the next two weeks?

GROUP 1							
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
England	10	9	1	0	31	2	28
Finland	10	4	4	2	17	10	16
Moldova	10	5	1	4	12	6	16
Wales	10	3	3	4	12	13	12
Lithuania	10	2	2	6	6	19	8
San Marino	10	1	1	8	2	30	4

WAL 1-0 MDA SMR 0-1 LTU MDA 0-0 WAL ENG 5-0 LTU ENG 1-0 WAL LTU 0-1 ENG
 LTU 2-1 SMR LTU 0-1 FIN SMR 0-4 ENG ENG 3-0 FIN SMR 0-0 FIN FIN 2-2 WAL
 FIN 2-2 LTU ENG 1-0 MDA WAL 2-0 LTU MDA 2-0 SMR WAL 1-3 ENG LTU 1-1 WAL
 SMR 0-3 MDA SMR 1-0 WAL WAL 4-0 SMR MDA 3-0 LTU FIN 1-0 MDA MDA 0-3 ENG
 WAL 1-5 FIN FIN 1-1 ENG MDA 1-0 FIN ENG 9-0 SMR LTU 0-3 MDA FIN 5-0 SMR

GROUP 2							
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Denmark	10	8	2	0	37	9	26
Russia	10	7	1	2	22	12	22
Slovenia	10	5	2	3	29	11	17
Bulgaria	10	2	3	5	18	26	9
Estonia	10	2	3	5	9	23	9
Andorra	10	0	1	9	1	35	1

AND 0-3 RUS SVN 0-1 EST SVN 2-2 DEN SVN 0-1 RUS RUS 1-0 EST EST 2-2 BUL
 BUL 3-0 AND RUS 2-1 SVN BUL 3-3 RUS AND 0-2 EST DEN 8-0 EST DEN 4-2 RUS
 AND 0-3 BUL BUL 1-1 EST DEN 2-2 SVN BUL 2-3 DEN AND 0-5 SVN EST 1-7 SVN
 EST 0-1 DEN DEN 6-0 AND RUS 0-2 DEN BUL 1-5 SVN EST 1-2 RUS DEN 7-1 BUL
 EST 1-1 AND RUS 3-1 BUL SVN 2-1 BUL AND 0-2 DEN SVN 5-0 AND RUS 5-0 AND

GROUP 3							
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Slovakia	8	5	2	1	19	7	17
Netherlands	8	5	1	2	22	6	16
Scotland	8	3	2	3	12	15	11
Georgia	8	3	1	4	8	15	10
Luxembourg	8	1	0	7	5	23	3

SCO 3-0 LUX LUX 0-1 NED GEO 2-1 SCO GEO 1-3 SVK NED 0-1 ESP
 LUX 1-7 SVK SVK 1-0 GEO SVK 3-0 LUX GEO 0-3* LUX SVK 1-1 SCO
 LUX 0-3 GEO GEO 0-6 NED SVK 2-2 NED SCO 1-6 NED LUX 0-3 SCO
 NED 4-0 SCO SCO 2-1 SVK SCO 1-1 GEO NED 3-1 LUX NED 0-1 SVK

*Match forfeited

GROUP 4							
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Spain	8	7	1	0	24	6	22
Austria	8	5	1	2	15	12	16
Hungary	8	3	0	5	12	13	9
Bosnia and Herzegovina	8	2	0	6	10	22	6
Albania	8	2	0	6	7	15	6

ALB 1-2 HUN AUT 2-6 ESP ESP 3-2 BIH BIH 1-6 ESP HUN 0-1 ESP
 BIH 4-1 ALB BIH 0-2 AUT ESP 1-0 HUN ALB 0-2 ESP AUT 2-0 BIH
 ALB 0-1 AUT ESP 4-0 ALB ALB 0-1 BIH AUT 4-2 HUN BIH 1-4 HUN
 HUN 4-1 BIH HUN 0-2 AUT HUN 0-2 ALB AUT 1-3 ALB ESP 1-1 AUT

GROUP 5							
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Croatia	8	6	1	1	20	5	19
Ukraine	8	6	1	1	20	8	19
Switzerland	8	5	0	3	23	8	15
Latvia	8	2	0	6	11	22	6
Liechtenstein	8	0	0	8	3	34	0

LAT 4-0 LIE LIE 0-6 SUI CRO 0-2 SUI SUI 5-1 LIE LAT 1-3 CRO
 LIE 0-5 CRO CRO 4-0 LIE LIE 0-2 LAT CRO 1-1 UKR UKR 2-0 SUI
 LAT 0-2 SUI LAT 1-5 UKR SUI 1-2 UKR LIE 2-5 UKR UKR 3-0 LIE
 UKR 0-2 CRO SUI 0-2 CRO CRO 3-1 LAT UKR 2-1 LAT SUI 7-1 LAT

GROUP 6							
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Germany	8	6	2	0	25	5	20
Romania	8	3	3	2	14	19	12
Montenegro	8	3	2	3	12	11	11
Republic of Ireland	8	2	2	4	10	12	8
Faroe Islands	8	1	1	6	9	23	4

FRO 2-2 ROU IRL 0-4 GER IRL 0-1 ROU MNE 0-0 IRL ROU 4-3 MNE
 MNE 3-0 FRO MNE 3-2 ROU GER 3-2 FRO ROU 2-2 GER GER 2-0 IRL
 FRO 1-4 IRL GER 2-0 MNE IRL 5-2 FRO ROU 3-1 FRO GER 8-0 ROU
 FRO 0-3 GER ROU 0-0 IRL MNE 1-1 GER IRL 1-2 MNE FRO 1-0 MNE

GROUP 7							
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sweden	8	5	1	2	20	14	16
Greece	8	5	0	3	20	10	15
Poland	8	5	0	3	17	10	15
Turkey	8	4	1	3	16	11	13
Malta	8	0	0	8	2	30	0

POL 2-0 MLT GRE 5-0 MLT MLT 0-4 GRE POL 3-1 GRE MLT 0-3 TUR
 POL 3-1 TUR TUR 2-2 SWE TUR 1-0 POL SWE 5-0 MLT SWE 3-0 GRE
 TUR 4-0 MLT TUR 1-0 GRE GRE 5-1 SWE MLT 1-2 SWE SWE 4-3 TUR
 SWE 3-1 POL POL 2-0 SWE MLT 1-5 POL GRE 2-1 TUR GRE 3-1 POL

GROUP 8							
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Portugal	8	8	0	0	22	6	24
Israel	8	5	0	3	22	15	15
Norway	8	3	0	5	11	19	9
Azerbaijan	8	2	1	5	9	15	7
FYR Macedonia	8	1	1	6	4	13	4

AZE 0-0 MKD NOR 1-3 AZE ISR 4-1 NOR POR 2-0 MKD AZE 3-0 ISR
 POR 5-1 NOR POR 3-0 ISR MKD 1-0 AZE MKD 0-1 POR NOR 1-2 POR
 ISR 7-2 AZE AZE 0-2 POR ISR 3-4 POR AZE 0-1 NOR ISR 2-1 MKD
 NOR 2-1 MKD NOR 1-3 ISR MKD 1-3 NOR MKD 0-3 ISR POR 3-1 AZE

GROUP 9							
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Italy	8	6	0	2	19	7	18
Serbia	8	5	1	2	18	10	16
Belgium	8	5	1	2	15	7	16
Cyprus	8	2	0	6	7	21	6
Northern Ireland	8	1	0	7	3	17	3

BEL 2-0 CYP CYP 0-2 ITA BEL 0-1 ITA SRB 1-0 ITA CYP 0-6 BEL
 CYP 3-0 NIR BEL 1-0 NIR SRB 3-1 NIR NIR 1-0 CYP ITA 3-2 SRB
 SRB 2-1 CYP NIR 0-1 BEL ITA 3-0 NIR NIR 0-2 ITA NIR 1-4 SRB
 ITA 1-3 BEL CYP 2-1 SRB SRB 2-2 BEL BEL 0-3 SRB ITA 7-1 CYP

GROUP 10							
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
France	8	7	1	0	28	7	22
Iceland	8	5	1	2	20	11	16
Kazakhstan	8	3	0	5	8	18	9
Armenia	8	3	0	5	7	19	9
Belarus	8	1	0	7	6	14	3

BLR 1-2 ISL ISL 4-1 BLR KAZ 1-2 BLR FRA 6-0 ARM ISL 4-0 ARM
 ARM 1-2 ISL FRA 5-0 KAZ ARM 1-4 FRA BLR 0-1 ARM KAZ 1-5 FRA
 BLR 0-1 KAZ BLR 1-2 FRA ARM 1-2 KAZ FRA 1-0 BLR FRA 1-1 ISL
 KAZ 0-1 ARM ISL 2-0 KAZ ISL 3-4 FRA KAZ 3-2 ISL ARM 2-1 BLR

PLAY-OFFS

Netherlands **0-2** Portugal
 Portugal **5-4** Netherlands
Portugal win 7-4 on aggregate

England striker Harry Kane

Slovakia **1-1** Italy
 Italy **3-1** Slovakia
Italy win 4-2 on aggregate

Serbia **0-0** Spain
 Spain **1-2** Serbia
Serbia win 2-1 on aggregate

Ukraine **0-3** Germany
 Germany **2-0** Ukraine
Germany win 5-0 on aggregate

Denmark **0-0** Iceland
 Iceland **1-1** Denmark
1-1 on aggregate;
Denmark win on away goals

England **2-1** Croatia
 Croatia **1-2** England
England win 4-2 on aggregate

France **2-0** Sweden
 Sweden **4-1** France
Sweden win 4-3 on aggregate



QUALIFYING FACTS AND FIGURES

The names and faces that have made their mark so far

MOST ATTEMPTS ON TARGET



SEVEN

MOST ASSISTS

Florian Thauvin	7
Nicolaj Thomsen	5
Marcelo Brozović	4
Gerard Deulofeu	4
Tom Ince	4
Vladyslav Kalitvintsev	4
Paul-Georges Ntep	4
Haris Vučković	4
Marko Vukčević	4

9-0 **16**

England's victory against San Marino on 19 November 2013 was the biggest in qualifying

The Netherlands' Quincy Promes took just 16 minutes to hit the fastest hat-trick in a 6-1 goal-fest in Scotland.

790

THE TOTAL NUMBER OF GOALS SCORED IN QUALIFYING

4

Sweden have finished top in the past four qualifying groups they have contested – but on three of those occasions were eliminated in the play-offs by the losing finalists: Serbia in 2007, Switzerland in 2011 and Italy in 2013.

WWWWWWWWW
Portugal's perfect record in qualifying

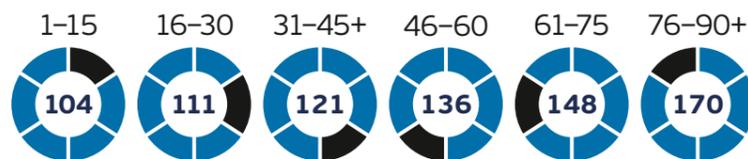
NO TIME FOR LOSERS

England, Denmark, Germany and Portugal qualified undefeated

977

MOST MINUTES PLAYED BY DENMARK'S ANDREAS CHRISTENSEN

TIME OF GOALS (MINUTES)



BACK FOR MORE

Only three of the eight teams that reached the final tournament in 2013 have made it back again this time **England, Germany and Italy**

MOST GOALS SCORED

Denmark	38
England	35
France	31
Germany	30
Portugal	29
Slovenia	29

FEWEST GOALS CONCEDED

England	4
Germany	5
Moldova	6
Belgium	7
Spain	8
Switzerland	8

TOP SCORERS



PLAYER WATCH

Domenico Berardi

A prolific scorer with US Sassuolo Calcio in Serie A, the talented 20-year-old is making the difference for Italy too



After early losses to Belgium and Serbia, did you ever fear that Italy would not qualify?

We didn't start well, but slowly we created a solid group of players, which allowed us to grow as a team, earn better results and finally win our section. The difficult start helped cement this squad. We talked to each other, did everything the coach wanted and resolved the small crisis together.

What do you like most about coach Luigi Di Biagio?

I like his character. He has plenty of experience, having played with top clubs during his career. He leaves us a lot of freedom in attack, he likes creativity, but he wants us to defend as a group and press high. With Sassuolo, I play as a forward but I'm used to helping the team defend so it's no problem for me to play in midfield with Italy.

How tough will this tournament be?

It will be very competitive. Teams like Serbia and Germany are the biggest candidates to go all the way, but we can also have a say, especially if we work well from the first training session and play to our strengths. We drew against Germany after taking the lead twice [in a friendly match in March] and played very well. We have a lot of work to do, but we can compete with the best. Very strong sides with top players did not qualify, which says a lot about how difficult it is.

How important is it for you to be involved in a tournament like this?

The European championship is a great stage to show your talent. It's an international tournament with a lot of visibility and I'm looking forward to being involved. It's the first time for me and I'm really determined to play well.

Do you consider yourself a star in this team?

We're all part of a group of important players

who help each other – there are no stars. The group makes the difference; we will only get good results if we play as a group. We will need a very humble approach in the Czech Republic.

Who were your idols growing up?

When I was a kid I used to love [Alessandro] Del Piero and [Francesco] Totti. I never played against Del Piero, but I faced Totti and I was very honoured to play against such a champion. It's important to learn as much as you can when you have the chance to be on the pitch with players of that level.

“When I was a kid I used to love Del Piero and Totti”

You have scored in double figures in each of the past three seasons. Could you have envisaged such success a few years ago?

No, never. The most important thing is to keep working hard. I'm doing that and the results are good again. The only secrets are hard work and focus. I'm very easy-going; I don't feel burdened when I take the pitch. I'm never nervous – that is my main strength.

Simone Zaza, your attacking partner at Sassuolo, is shining with Italy's senior team. How much would you like to play alongside him in the Azzurri shirt?

Playing with the national team is the dream of any player and I hope one day I will. I still haven't had direct contact with Antonio Conte, but our coach Di Biagio tells me he is following us and that I always have to give my very best. The European championship will be a great chance to show him what I can do.



Berardi was signed by Juventus in 2013 and loaned back to Sassuolo

TITLE DEEDS

With the 20th title up for grabs in the Czech Republic, we look back at the key names, dates and places that have left their mark on the competition so far



Tony Woodcock heads in England's winner against Italy in the 1978 quarter-finals

"The headlines were: 'Young hopefuls on the roof of Europe', 'Young Yugoslavs pull off a miracle'. It was indescribable, something big, the culmination of all our efforts. When I took the trophy from the hands of captain Zajec, I heard the stadium chanting my name. Only then did we realise what we had achieved."

Vahid Halilhodžić (below) reflects on winning the first title for Yugoslavia in 1978



YEAR	1978	1980	1982	1984	1986	1988	1990	1992	1994	1996
WINNERS	YUGOSLAVIA	USSR	ENGLAND	ENGLAND	SPAIN	FRANCE	USSR	ITALY	ITALY	ITALY

France draw 1-1 with Belgium in the first UEFA European Under-21 Championship match in Amiens on 3 September 1976. Twenty-four teams take part in the inaugural competition, which consists of a group stage followed by home-and-away knockout ties from the quarter-finals onwards. **Vahid Halilhodžić** scores a first-half hat-trick against East Germany in a thrilling 4-4 second-leg draw in Mostar as Yugoslavia win the first final 5-4 on aggregate.

"Winning in 1980 was unforgettable. We learned we were a match for anybody, and that belief led us to further international success." Defender **Anatoliy Demyanenko** remembers with great fondness the Soviet Union's 1-0 aggregate triumph against East Germany. Eight years later he helped the USSR reach the 1988 UEFA European Championship final.

England hold on to edge an enthralling final 5-4 on aggregate despite losing the second leg in Bremen 3-2. **Pierre Littbarski** hits a hat-trick three months after appearing for West Germany in the FIFA World Cup final.



Mark Hateley and **Howard Gayle** score at Bramall Lane, Sheffield as England build on their 1-0 first-leg lead to defeat Spain 3-0 on aggregate in the final and become the first side to reclaim the trophy.

Spain go one better than in 1984, pipping Italy in the first final decided by penalties to lift the first of their four titles. Only Italy, with five, have won more. Despite losing, this is perhaps the most fondly remembered Azzurrini team. **Paolo Maldini, Roberto Mancini, Gianluca Vialli, Roberto Donadoni** and **Walter Zenga** later formed the spine of the Italy squad – also coached by **Azeglio Vicini** – that got to the semi-finals of the 1990 World Cup.

"For every professional, the first trophy is unforgettable and I'm no different." **Laurent Blanc** reflects on France's 1988 triumph against Greece. Ten years later he won the 1998 World Cup, followed by the 2000 UEFA European Championship.



With **Andrei Kanchelskis** and **Aleksandr Mostovoi** rising stars, the USSR take their second U21 title and the Soviet Union's last trophy before the nation breaks up. Yugoslavia – ousted 7-3 on aggregate in the final – would suffer the same fate, but not before **Davor Šuker, Zvonimir Boban, Dejan Savićević, Predrag Mijatović, Robert Prosinečki** and **Robert Jarni** had announced themselves on the European stage.

Italy claim their first U21 crown – 2-1 on aggregate against Sweden. **Demetrio Albertini** (below) is the star of the Azzurrini side that starts the ball rolling for Italy's string of title victories.



Italy prevail again, this time against the rising power of Portugal who boast **Luís Figo** and **Rui Costa**. In a competition of firsts, the semi-finals and final are played as one-off matches in a mini-tournament with France as hosts, and the showpiece is decided by a golden goal from **Pierluigi Orlandini** – on as a substitute for **Filippo Inzaghi**. **Francesco Toldo, Fabio Cannavaro** and **Christian Panucci** also feature for Italy.

Italy avenge their 1986 shoot-out loss to Spain with a 4-2 victory on spot kicks in the final in Barcelona. **Raúl González** and **Francesco Totti** get the goals in a 1-1 draw that Italy end with nine men – **Nicola Amoroso** and **Raffaele Ametrano** dismissed.



2006 top scorer
Klaas-Jan Huntelaar



1998 2000 2002 2004 2006

SPAIN

ITALY

CZECH REPUBLIC

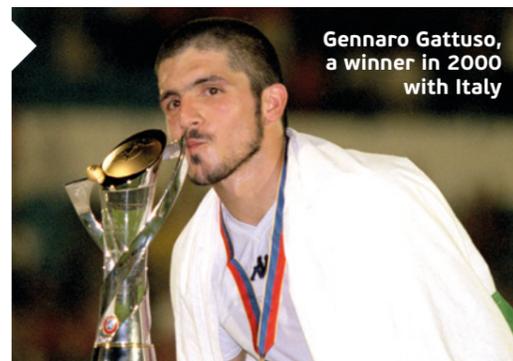
ITALY

NETHERLANDS

The first eight-team final tournament is held, with the quarter-finals onwards of the 1996-98 competition staged in Romania. Spain land their second title but Greece make a statement by going to the final. Six years on **Giorgos Karagounis, Traianos Dellas, Ioannis Goumas and Vassilios Lakis** would feature in Greece's UEFA EURO 2004 victory.

The group stage format is introduced for the final tournament in Slovakia, with the winners of the two four-team sections advancing to the final. **Andrea Pirlo** is sent off in Italy's second match, against Slovakia, but returns for the final and scores twice in a 2-1 success against the Czech Republic – the second a trademark free-kick. "Those tournaments are a great education for young players," he says.

Petr Čech is the hero, keeping France at bay in open play and then saving twice in the shoot-out as the Czech Republic make amends for their defeat in the 2000 final.



Gennaro Gattuso, a winner in 2000 with Italy

Daniele De Rossi is on the scoresheet as Italy secure a record fifth title, winning 3-0 against Serbia and Montenegro in the final.

The Netherlands win their first age-limit competition by seeing off Ukraine 3-0 in the final. Curiously, the winners lose their opening game to the team they will beat in the final – echoing the Czechs getting revenge on France in 2002.



2007 2009 2011 2013

NETHERLANDS

GERMANY

SPAIN

SPAIN

Roared on by average crowds of 22,000, the Jong Oranje become the first side to clinch the title on home soil, dispatching Serbia 4-1 in the final. Over 200,000 people attend matches during the tournament, vindicating the decision to move the event to odd years and out of the shadow of the World Cup and UEFA European Championship.

Germany win their first title, trouncing England 4-0 to set a record victory margin for the final. Five years on, the spine of **Horst Hrubesch's** team – **Manuel Neuer, Benedikt Höwedes, Mats Hummels, Sami Khedira, Mesut Özil and Jérôme Boateng** – would lift the World Cup in Brazil.

Less than a year after tasting World Cup glory, **Juan Mata** and **Javi Martínez** (below) rejoin the U21 fold to help Spain to the title, emphasising the value the Spanish place on the competition for player development.



Like **Vahid Halilhodžić** in the very first final, **Thiago Alcántara** notches a first-half hat-trick as Spain overcome Italy 4-2 in front of 29,320 at Teddy Stadium in Jerusalem. Thiago lays claim to the unique distinction of being named man of the match in two successive finals, having also taken the honour in Aalborg in 2011.

RECORD BREAKERS

5

Italy have won a record five titles, followed by Spain on four. The Azzurrini have also contested a record seven finals – again, one more than Spain.

35,500

Record final tournament crowd for the 1996 final at Estadi Olímpic de Montjuïc, Barcelona.

15

Lampros Choutos (Greece) and Tomáš Pekhart (Czech Republic) are the competition's joint-highest scorers.

42,000

Competition record crowd for Turkey's 1-1 draw with Germany in the play-offs at Şükrü Saraçoğlu Stadium, Istanbul on 18 November 2003.

32

James Milner played his competition record 32nd and last match for England in the 2009 final.

7

Sweden's Marcus Berg scored a final tournament record seven goals in 2009.

32

The UEFA competition record number of penalties it took to separate England and the Netherlands in a shoot-out in their 2007 semi-final.



SOCAR ENERGY OF AZERBAIJAN



PLAYER WATCH

Bernardo Silva

The playmaker is following in the footsteps of Monaco team-mate and compatriot João Moutinho



His rise

Born in the Lisbon district of Alvalade, Bernardo Silva developed in the SL Benfica youth ranks from the age of 13 and made his debut aged 18 in a Portuguese Cup match against CD Cinfães in October 2013. He excelled for Benfica's B team during that campaign, scoring seven goals in 38 league appearances, and earned comparisons with the great Rui Costa for his impact as a playmaker. His reward was a brief taste of senior league action as he came off the bench for the final eight minutes of a 2-1 defeat at FC Porto in May 2014.

Style of play

Bernardo Silva is a No10-style footballer with impressive passing skills and vision. His relative lack of height and power mean that, rather than Rui Costa, he might be better compared to his AS Monaco FC colleague João Moutinho. He plays with his head up, always looking for a pass, and is also able to protect the ball and start moves from deep. While he works well in the spaces between the midfield and forward lines, he is equipped to play as a second striker too given his ability to finish off moves – as his impressive goal tally in his debut Ligue 1 campaign proves.

National service

He scored on his first competitive appearance at international level, in a 7-0 win for Portugal's Under-19s against Bulgaria in June 2013. The next month, he was an ever-present in Portugal's run to the last four of the UEFA European Under-19 Championship, netting another goal in the semi-final loss to Serbia. Bernardo hit four goals in seven qualifying appearances on the road to this final tournament and his progress earned him his full international debut in Portugal's 2-0 friendly defeat by Cape Verde in Estoril in March.



Bernardo Silva has flourished at Monaco this season

Breaking through

Bernardo got rave reviews for his displays for Benfica B in 2013/14 – notably in the derbies against Sporting Clube de Portugal – but he has truly blossomed following his move to Monaco last summer. The transfer – initially on loan before a permanent deal was agreed in January – has given him an opportunity to shine in top-flight football, both in the UEFA Champions League, where he made seven appearances, and Ligue 1. His first Monaco goal was the winner in a 1-0 victory at Olympique de Marseille last December and, after his double at SM Caen in April, he ended the campaign on a fine run of scoring form.

He says

"It was a perfect qualifying campaign because we won all our matches, but that's in the past. We're not thinking about that any more. We always want more, and we're going to the European championship with the aim of winning all the matches there as well."
Bernardo Silva

They say

"Bernardo Silva is a great player and a great prospect for Portugal. He is intelligent, has quality and will gain great experience at Monaco."
João Moutinho, Portugal midfielder



SOCAR

PROUD PARTNER OF



UEFA
UNDER21
CHAMPIONSHIP
CZECH REPUBLIC 2015

**DON'T MISS****Holy Trinity Column, Olomouc**

Start your tour of Olomouc at this UNESCO World Heritage site (above). Make sure you get to the city's magnificent medieval cathedral too.

Prague Castle

Former seat of the kings of Bohemia, Prague Castle still dominates the city, with superb views from its walls and plenty to see inside.

Charles Bridge, Prague

The atmospheric 14th century footbridge that spans the Vltava (left) is over 500m long and dotted with statues.

Lookout tower, Uherske Hradiste

Enjoy a grand panorama of the city and its dramatic surroundings from this 49m-tall tower – or visit the Museum of Moravian Slovakia if you don't like heights.

Try the dumplings

Dumplings (*knedlíky*) are king in the Czech Republic, with the traditional combo of *vepřo-knedlo-zelo* (roast pork, dumplings and sauerkraut) a must-have.



Pavel Nedvěd: My Czech Republic

Tournament ambassador Pavel Nedvěd is urging visitors to make the most of their spare time in the Czech Republic to explore the host cities Prague, Olomouc and Uherske Hradiste. The former AC Sparta Praha, SS Lazio and Juventus midfielder and European Footballer of the Year, capped 91 times by his country, has developed a taste for distance running since his retirement and this passion has given him a fresh appreciation for the splendours of the Czech capital.

"I've only run in Prague so far – three half-marathons and one marathon – and I have enjoyed it, because I get to run through the historical parts of the city without any traffic. It's my way of having fun – it keeps you fit and then you can go for a nice meal and a beer in Prague. Czech food is quite heavy but delicious. Every fan

who comes to the Under-21 finals should certainly try the traditional combination of dumplings, pork and sauerkraut, combined with Czech pilsner.

"Prague is unique, Prague is beautiful, and it's not only us Czechs who say so but anyone who has a chance to see it. I live in Prague and I am happy here. And I think everybody who comes to see the city envies us. One of the great things about Prague is the fact you don't need a car to get around. You can tour the historical centre on foot.

"I know Olomouc and Uherske Hradiste well too, as I played internationals in both cities. They may be less familiar to the rest of Europe, but anyone who gets to know these cities will be happy to return to the Czech Republic. I played my last international in Uherske Hradiste – against

Serbia. I like the Moravian people very much and it was a lovely farewell. These finals will be just the beginning for a lot of the players involved. Under-21 football is an excellent preparation for the next step. I hope the Czech Republic will show their quality and get a medal, but I also hope we show that the country is grateful for the opportunity to stage a tournament like this. We'll do our best to fill the stadiums and show that the Czech Republic really lives for football."

**"Prague is unique,
Prague is beautiful,
and it's not only us
Czechs who say so"**

PERFECT HOSTS**PRAGUE**

Home to over 1.2 million people, the Czech capital's magnificent buildings are testimony to its grandeur through the ages. In football terms, Prague is home to the Czech Republic's traditional giants, AC Sparta Praha leading SK Slavia Praha 36-17 in national league titles. However, FK Dukla Praha and Bohemians Praha 1905 are also top-division sides, with FK Viktoria Žižkov making their presence felt in the suburbs.

OLOMOUC

Olomouc dates back to a Roman fort, with its 'younger' castle and cathedral highlighting the city's status as a major medieval hub in the Moravia area. Home to Palacký University – the second oldest in the Czech Republic – it is a major cultural centre as well. Former Czech Republic and Austria coach Karel Brückner is Olomouc's most famous footballing son, and he has had four spells managing local team SK Sigma.

UHERSKE HRADISTE

The heart of the region known as Moravian Slovakia, Uherske Hradiste lies in the shadow of the White Carpathians and on the banks of the Morava river. Local football club 1. FC Slovácko take their name from the area, having been formed after the merger of FC Synot and FC Slovácká Slavia Uherské Hradiště. Slovácko finished Czech Cup runners-up in 2005 and 2009, while the city's favourite footballing son is ex-international defender Miroslav Kadlec.



PLAYER WATCH

Marc-André ter Stegen

The Germany goalkeeper hopes to emulate Manuel Neuer, starting with a medal here in the Czech Republic

 For Marc-André ter Stegen, the 2015 UEFA European Under-21 Championship final tournament is the final act in a season he will not forget. The Germany goalkeeper has just completed his first campaign at FC Barcelona and also his first year living away from his home city of Monchengladbach – a memorable experience on and off the football pitch for the 23-year-old.

"It's my first time away from home, and, yes, it's been a big change with a different culture and a different feeling," he reflects. "It's something completely new and it's not only the football that is fantastic but also the conditions."

Horst Hrubesch's Germany will hope to be the beneficiaries of the rich experience gained by the young goalkeeper in Spain, where he showed impressive ability and self-confidence in a debut season that ended with the UEFA Champions League final. If the highlights included a penalty save from Manchester City FC's Sergio Agüero in the UEFA Champions League round of 16, the biggest challenge, he says, was adjusting to not playing every week, with Claudio Bravo getting the nod for Barcelona's Liga games while Ter Stegen featured on European and Copa del Rey nights.

"The most difficult thing for me is not playing and having that weekly rhythm," he admits. Nevertheless, he maintains that he found it easy adapting to Barcelona's style of play because "we played a similar style at Gladbach". Here he praises the grounding he received as a youngster coming through the ranks at his home-town club, where he made his Bundesliga debut as an 18-year-old in April 2011.

"In Germany, generally there is a very high standard for the development of youth players, and goalkeepers are made to play football and join in with the outfield players. That's applied at a very early age and every goalkeeper playing for a Bundesliga team

today is pretty skilled with the ball at his feet. Currently, we're spoilt for choice in Germany."

The sight of Ter Stegen coming up against Manuel Neuer in Barcelona's UEFA Champions League semi-final with FC Bayern München underlined that point. Ter Stegen may have four senior international caps, but the man in front of him "is one the best goalkeepers in the world". As a boy, Ter Stegen tried to model his game on Oliver

"We have to make it through the group stage. Anything can happen in the semi-finals"

Kahn's, yet today it is Neuer who sets the standard for German goalkeepers. "Manuel is for most a great benchmark to see what needs improving," he says.

For Ter Stegen, who made six appearances in qualifying, the next step towards emulating the Bayern man is to win the U21 title – a feat Neuer achieved in Sweden in 2009. "We have to make it through the group stage no matter how," he says of the task facing the class of 2015. "Anything can happen in the semi-finals and finals, and that is what we want to achieve."

As for the stepping stone this would provide to the seniors, he is aware that some but not all will take the next step – and for this reason is doubly determined to seize the moment in the Czech Republic. "For each individual it would be great to win this trophy. We are working towards that and I hope as many as possible from this group can transfer to the senior national team what they've learned in the Under-21s."



Ter Stegen enjoyed an incredible first season with Barcelona



Guidetti scored four times in qualifying

PLAYER WATCH

John Guidetti

After two near misses, Sweden's striker is savouring the prospect of taking on Europe's finest



I've been through three generations with the Under-21s. We've lost two play-offs, so this time when we actually made it, it was great. We have such a great team spirit; the boys and the coach definitely deserve it, and I think we have a good chance.

It's going to be tough, but we can do it. We beat France [in the play-offs] who were the Under-20 world champions, losing 2-0 away and then winning 4-1 at home, so everything is possible. Oscar Lewicki scored in the 88th minute to take us through. That's the beauty of football, that's the wonder. I know the Swedish fans truly enjoyed that game and the boys did too.

It was one of the greatest moments in my career. We said to each other at half-time: "We can do this. We don't want this to be the last time we're together. We don't want this to end here, we want to keep going." We gave it so much more, and we just pushed it through. It was a great feeling.

Playing Italy will be extra special. I am always going to feel something for Italy since my father is Italian and my grandfather was Italian. But I am proud to wear the Sweden jersey, and when I go out there there's only one thing on my mind, and that's winning with Sweden.

We'll go there to win the tournament, that's for sure. There are only eight teams,

"I have to keep pushing and never take anything for granted"

so we're going to do our very, very best. It's a big thing, because there are places at the Olympics in Rio at stake as well.

The team always beats the individual, and our team is very strong. We have shown that. We went through a tough group and a tough play-off and we made it. The bond we have in the team is really great. We're all very, very good friends and when we go away together it's almost like a small holiday. We really enjoy it.

When I do something, I do it to win. All of us are like that. We are not happy just being there. We are there to win football matches and we hope we can go all the way.

You never know what's going to happen in life. I never thought I was going to be out [injured] for two years so now, every time I go out there with a ball, I just truly enjoy it. I just want to keep going now because I'm doing what I love. One day I'm going to look back at my career and thank my injury for making me better. Because sometimes it's easy to ease off the gas and not keep pushing as hard as you have to. When it went so well, I was young: now I know I have to keep pushing and I know never to take anything for granted.

It's a great stage. Some of the best players in the world play in these tournaments, so of course anybody who loves football will want to watch.



**Má je vašeň,
Váš skvělý tah na branku.**

Jsem pneumatika
Continental –
oficiální sponzor UEFA
Under21 Championship™.



Když na brzdění záleží.

www.continental.cz



GROUP A

Czech Republic / Denmark / Germany / Serbia
17 June v Denmark, 20 June v Serbia, 23 June v Germany

Czech Republic



Aiming high

Runners-up in 2000, winners in 2002 and semi-finalists in 2011, the Czech Republic understandably have high hopes of going far with the home crowd behind them. Having qualified automatically as hosts, the Czechs were limited to friendlies in the build-up to the Under-21 tournament, so several of their key players – defender Pavel Kadeřábek, midfielder Ladislav Krejčí, and forward Václav Kadlec – featured for the seniors with differing degrees of regularity. This meant coach Jakub Dovalil had to juggle his resources to shape a team capable of realising his minimum aim of a last-four place. He is not short of options, though, with Tomáš Kalas, fellow defender Jakub Brabec and midfielder Tomáš Přikryl all influential. Those three were members of the side that came second at the 2011 UEFA European Under-19 Championship final tournament in Romania, where Přikryl was on target three times. Dovalil, at the helm since November 2008, followed up the Czechs' fourth spot in 2011 by guiding them to the play-offs for the 2013 finals, losing 4-2 on aggregate to Russia. The 2-0 first-leg defeat in that tie was the team's first reverse in 19 qualifying games. "We cannot have modest targets – our ambition is to advance from the group," said Dovalil. "Then we would have a medal and anything could happen."



	Date of birth	Apps.	Goals	Club	
GOALKEEPERS					
1	Tomáš Koubek	26/08/1992	13	0	FC Hradec Králové
16	Jiří Pavlenka	14/04/1992	6	0	FC Baník Ostrava
23	Michal Reichl	14/09/1992	1	0	SK Sigma Olomouc
DEFENDERS					
2	Pavel Kadeřábek	25/04/1992	4	0	AC Sparta Praha
5	Jakub Brabec	06/08/1992	11	0	AC Sparta Praha
14	Laco Takács	15/07/1996	5	1	FK Teplice
15	Jan Baránek	26/06/1993	7	0	FC Viktoria Plzeň
19	Matěj Hybš	03/01/1993	9	0	FC Vysočina Jihlava
20	Jakub Jugas	05/05/1992	9	0	FC Zbrojovka Brno
21	Matěj Hanousek	02/06/1993	12	1	FK Dukla Praha
22	Tomáš Kalas	15/05/1993	20	0	Chelsea FC
MIDFIELDERS					
4	Adam Jánoš	20/07/1992	9	0	FC Vysočina Jihlava
6	Ondřej Petrák	11/03/1992	10	1	1. FC Nürnberg
7	David Houska	29/06/1993	13	0	SK Sigma Olomouc
8	Jaromír Zmrhal	02/08/1993	16	1	SK Slavia Praha
10	Jiří Skalák	02/03/1992	14	11	FK Mladá Boleslav
11	Martin Frýdek	24/03/1992	8	0	FC Slovan Liberec
12	Michal Trávník	17/05/1994	7	2	1. FC Slovácko
13	Ladislav Krejčí	05/07/1992	6	0	AC Sparta Praha
17	Tomáš Přikryl	04/07/1992	10	2	FK Dukla Praha
18	Lukáš Masopust	12/02/1993	8	0	FK Jablonec
FORWARDS					
3	Václav Kadlec	20/05/1992	13	7	AC Sparta Praha
9	Jan Kliment	01/09/1993	1	1	FC Vysočina Jihlava

COACH



Jakub Dovalil
Born 08/02/1974

Dovalil was appointed in November 2008, four months after he led the Czech Under-19s to the last four of their European championship on home soil. In 2006 he had also steered the U17s to their respective continental final, where they succumbed on penalties to Russia.

FRIENDLY MATCH RESULTS

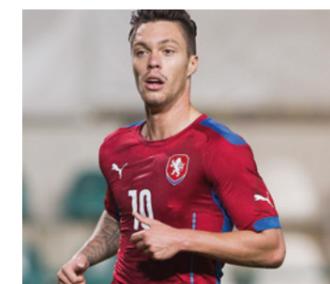
05/03/2014 Czech Republic 1-2 Norway U23
14/05/2014 Slovakia 3-1 Czech Republic
03/06/2014 Czech Republic 0-1 Austria
09/10/2014 Ukraine 0-1 Czech Republic
14/10/2014 Czech Republic 0-1 Italy
14/11/2014 Czech Republic 2-2 Denmark
18/11/2014 Czech Republic 1-1 Germany
27/03/2015 Czech Republic 0-1 England
31/03/2015 Czech Republic 1-0 Portugal

FACT FILE

Best performance
Winners 2002

Last final tournament appearance
2011 (semi-finals)

Leading scorer
Václav Kadlec 7 (right)



GROUP A

Czech Republic / Denmark / Germany / Serbia
17 June v Czech Republic, 20 June v Germany, 23 June v Serbia



'Winners' mentality'

Denmark are the only Group A side not to have won the Under-21 title, but for coach Jess Thorup that is no reason to consider his team underdogs. "This is a dressing room with a winners' mentality and it's amazing," he said. "We played 12 games without losing and we scored the most goals [37, in qualifying] so we have a lot of confidence. It's definitely going to be tough, but we're looking forward to playing and doing our best." The 21-year-old AFC Ajax forward Viktor Fischer, who has been capped six times at senior level, returns from a season-long injury in time to feature. There is also a place for the talented Pierre Højbjerg, who managed to score four times in five appearances in qualifying, despite juggling his time with the senior side. Also key figures on the road to the Czech Republic were captain Jannik Vestergaard, and midfielder Nicolaj Thomsen, the latter contributing five assists and netting against Iceland in the play-offs to send Denmark through on away goals. Fulham FC midfielder Lasse Christensen top scored with five goals while centre-back namesake Andreas, who at just 18 started 11 of Denmark's 12 matches, recently made his Chelsea FC debut. Watch out too for Pione Sisto, the pacy 20-year-old Ugandan-born FC Midtjylland midfielder. For Thorup, it all adds up to an exciting future – and present. "We're not here just to learn, we want to do more," he said.



	Date of birth	Qualifying Apps.	Goals	Club	
GOALKEEPERS					
1	Jakob Busk Jensen	12/09/1993	7	0	Sandefjord Fotball
16	Frederik Rønnow	04/08/1992	4	0	AC Horsens
22	David Jensen	25/03/1992	1	0	FC Nordsjælland
DEFENDERS					
2	Alexander Scholz	24/10/1992	4	0	R. Standard de Liège
3	Frederik Sørensen	14/04/1992	6	0	Hellas Verona FC
4	Jannik Vestergaard	03/08/1992	8	3	SV Werder Bremen
5	Jonas Knudsen	16/09/1992	9	0	Esbjerg fB
6	Andreas Christensen	10/04/1996	11	1	Chelsea FC
12	Patrick Banggaard	04/04/1994	0	0	FC Midtjylland
13	Riza Durmisi	08/01/1994	5	1	Brøndby IF
14	Christoffer Remmer	16/01/1993	7	2	FC København
MIDFIELDERS					
8	Lasse Vigen Christensen	15/08/1994	10	5	Fulham FC
10	Pierre Højbjerg	05/08/1995	5	4	FC Augsburg
15	Nicolaj Thomsen	08/05/1993	11	3	Aalborg BK
17	Christian Nørgaard	10/03/1994	2	0	Brøndby IF
19	Jens Jønsson	10/01/1993	5	1	AGF Aarhus
FORWARDS					
7	Viktor Fischer	09/06/1994	0	0	AFC Ajax
9	Yussuf Poulsen	15/06/1994	7	4	RB Leipzig
11	Uffe Bech	13/01/1993	2	1	FC Nordsjælland
18	Rasmus Falk	15/01/1992	1	0	Odense BK
20	Nicolai Brock-Madsen	09/01/1993	7	3	Randers FC
21	Emil Berggreen	10/05/1993	1	1	TSV Eintracht Braunschweig
23	Pione Sisto	04/02/1995	0	0	FC Midtjylland

COACH



Jess Thorup
Born 21/02/1970

The former striker – who played in Germany, Austria and Norway – took charge in June 2013, a month after overseeing Esbjerg fB's victory against Randers FC in the Danish Cup final, their first trophy since 1979. He was named Denmark's coach of the year as a result.

QUALIFYING RESULTS

GROUP 2	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Denmark	10	8	2	0	37	9	26
Russia	10	7	1	2	22	12	22
Slovenia	10	5	2	3	29	11	17
Bulgaria	10	2	3	5	18	26	9
Estonia	10	2	3	5	9	23	9
Andorra	10	0	1	9	1	35	1

EST 0-1 DEN, DEN 6-0 AND, SVN 2-2 DEN, DEN 2-2 SVN, RUS 0-2 DEN, BUL 2-3 DEN, AND 0-2 DEN, DEN 8-0 EST, DEN 4-2 RUS, DEN 7-1 BUL

Play-off: Denmark 0-0 Iceland, Iceland 1-1 Denmark (Denmark win on away goals rule)

FACT FILE

Best performance
Semi-finals 1992

Last final tournament appearance
2011 (group stage)

Qualifying top scorer
Lasse Christensen 5 (right)



Visit UEFA.com for the official final tournament squad.

GROUP A

Czech Republic / Denmark / Germany / Serbia
17 June v Serbia, 20 June v Denmark, 23 June v Czech Republic



Title ambitions

It would be hard for Germany coach Horst Hrubesch to improve on his class of 2009 that won the Under-21 title before providing the backbone of the side that landed the FIFA World Cup last summer. That, though, is the aim. "It is difficult to become world champions but even more difficult to repeat it," he said. "That is the art of football. My objective with my team is to constantly consolidate and improve on things." That policy is bearing fruit, with Marc-André ter Stegen – fresh from winning the UEFA Champions League with FC Barcelona – Kevin Volland, Max Meyer, Matthias Ginter, Maximilian Arnold and Christian Günter all already capped at senior level. Volland, the U21 captain, was named in Germany's preliminary World Cup squad and caught the eye during qualifying with six goals in as many games. Philipp Hofmann, Moritz Leitner and Leonardo Bittencourt were other mainstays, Hofmann top scoring with seven. Germany had no trouble securing their place, topping Group 6 with a match to spare, eight points clear of Romania – whom they beat 8-0 in their closing fixture – before seeing off Ukraine in the play-offs. Germany were eliminated at the group stage in Israel 2013; Hrubesch expects more in 2015. "Everyone who knows me knows I am not going to the finals just to be there. This team has the ability to win the title," he said.



	Date of birth	Qualifying Apps.	Goals	Club	
GOALKEEPERS					
1	Bernd Leno	04/03/1992	2	0	Bayer 04 Leverkusen
12	Marc-André ter Stegen	30/04/1992	6	0	FC Barcelona
23	Timo Horn	12/05/1993	2	0	1. FC Köln
DEFENDERS					
2	Julian Korb	21/03/1992	2	0	VfL Borussia Mönchengladbach
3	Christian Günter	28/02/1993	3	0	SC Freiburg
4	Matthias Ginter	19/01/1994	4	0	Borussia Dortmund
5	Nico Schulz	01/04/1993	6	1	Hertha BSC Berlin
16	Robin Knoche	22/05/1992	7	1	VfL Wolfsburg
22	Dominique Heintz	15/08/1993	3	0	1. FC Kaiserslautern
MIDFIELDERS					
6	Johannes Geis	17/08/1993	5	0	1. FSV Mainz 05
7	Leonardo Bittencourt	19/12/1993	9	2	Hannover 96
8	Yunus Malli	24/02/1992	6	1	1. FSV Mainz 05
10	Moritz Leitner	08/12/1992	7	2	VfB Stuttgart
11	Emre Can	12/01/1994	5	0	Liverpool FC
14	Kerem Demirbay	03/07/1993	0	0	1. FC Kaiserslautern
17	Joshua Kimmich	08/02/1995	2	0	RB Leipzig
18	Maximilian Arnold	27/05/1994	2	0	VfL Wolfsburg
19	Amin Younes	06/08/1993	8	2	1. FC Kaiserslautern
20	Max Meyer	18/09/1995	2	0	FC Schalke 04
21	Felix Klaus	13/09/1992	1	0	SC Freiburg
FORWARDS					
9	Kevin Volland	30/07/1992	6	6	TSG 1899 Hoffenheim
13	Philipp Hofmann	30/03/1993	10	7	1. FC Kaiserslautern
15	Serge Gnabry	14/07/1995	0	0	Arsenal FC

COACH



Horst Hrubesch
Born 17/04/51

Curiously, Hrubesch replaced his successor, Rainer Adrion, after the 2013 Under-21 final tournament. The former West Germany striker, who guided the U21s to victory in 2009, scored both goals during his nation's 2-1 win against Belgium in the 1980 UEFA European Championship final.

QUALIFYING RESULTS

GROUP 6	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Germany	8	6	2	0	25	5	20
Romania	8	3	3	2	14	19	12
Montenegro	8	3	2	3	12	11	11
Rep. of Ireland	8	2	2	4	10	12	8
Faroe Islands	8	1	1	6	9	23	4

FRO 0-3 GER, IRL 0-4 GER, GER 2-0 MNE, GER 3-2 FRO, MNE 1-1 GER, ROU 2-2 GER, GER 2-0 IRL, GER 8-0 ROU

Play-off: Ukraine 0-3 Germany, Germany 2-0 Ukraine (Germany win 5-0 on aggregate)

FACT FILE

Best performance
Winners 2009

Last final tournament appearance
2013 (group stage)

Qualifying top scorer Philipp Hofmann 7 (right)



Visit UEFA.com for the official final tournament squad.

GROUP A

Czech Republic / Denmark / Germany / Serbia

17 June v Germany, 20 June v Czech Republic, 23 June v Denmark



Strength in depth

So impressive was Serbia's qualifying campaign, coach Radovan Ćurčić was subsequently promoted to the seniors. Mladen Dodić is his successor and has declared a semi-final place the minimum target. By contrast, Ćurčić had dubbed it "mission impossible" when Serbia were drawn with Italy and Belgium in Group 9 – yet they took four points off Belgium, including a 3-0 away win, and three from Italy to come second behind the Azzurrini and advance as fourth-best runners-up. Things would have been better still had they not relinquished a 2-0 lead to lose to the Italians in their penultimate game. Finishing second meant they entered the play-off draw unseeded, and Serbia picked the short straw when paired with Spain. Undaunted, they held the 2011 and 2013 champions to a goalless draw at home before triumphing 2-1 in Cadiz courtesy of a Saúl Ñíguez own goal and Filip Kostić's added-time strike. Serbia's success was particularly notable given the challenges Ćurčić faced. Matija Nastasić, Aleksandar Mitrović and Lazar Marković belong to this generation but are already with the seniors, while captain Marko Petković was one of four key players restricted by injury. That perhaps underlines the strength of Serbian youth football, with members of their 2013 UEFA European Under-19 Championship-winning team, such as midfielder Aleksandar Filipović, able to stake a claim.

COACH



Mladen Dodić
Born 17/10/69

Dodić steered FK Jagodina to a third-place finish in 2013/14 and the final of the Serbian Cup. The former FK Napredak, FK Novi Pazar and FK Javor boss was hired in late December to replace Radovan Ćurčić, who succeeded Dick Advocaat at the helm of the senior national side.



		Date of birth	Qualifying Apps.	Goals	Club
GOALKEEPERS					
1	Marko Dmitrović	24/01/1992	7	0	Charlton Athletic FC
12	Nikola Perić	04/02/1992	3	0	FK Jagodina
23	Nemanja Stevanović	08/05/1992	0	0	FK Čukarički
DEFENDERS					
3	Marko Petković	03/09/1992	6	0	FK Crvena zvezda
5	Uroš Ćosić	24/10/1992	3	0	Pescara Calcio
6	Aleksandar Pantić	11/04/1992	5	0	Córdoba CF
13	Nemanja Petrović	17/04/1992	8	0	FK Partizan
15	Uroš Spajić	13/02/1993	6	0	Toulouse FC
17	Aleksandar Filipović	20/12/1994	1	0	FK Jagodina
20	Lazar Ćirković	22/08/1992	3	0	FK Partizan
22	Filip Stojković	22/01/1993	3	0	FK Čukarički
MIDFIELDERS					
2	Aleksandar Kovačević	09/01/1992	7	0	FK Crvena zvezda
4	Srdjan Mijailović	10/11/1993	7	0	Kayserispor
7	Goran Čaušić	05/05/1992	5	1	Eskişehirspor
8	Mirko Ivanić	13/09/1993	0	0	FK Vojvodina
11	Filip Kostić	01/11/1992	6	2	VfB Stuttgart
14	Darko Brašanac	12/02/1992	6	1	FK Partizan
18	Miloš Jojić	19/03/1992	5	2	Borussia Dortmund
FORWARDS					
9	Aleksandar Pešić	21/05/1992	6	3	Toulouse FC
10	Filip Djuričić	30/01/1992	4	0	Southampton FC
16	Luka Milunović	21/12/1992	4	3	Platanias FC
19	Nikola Stojilković	17/08/1992	0	0	FK Čukarički
21	Slavoljub Srnić	12/01/1992	3	2	FK Čukarički

QUALIFYING RESULTS

GROUP 9	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Italy	8	6	0	2	19	7	18
Serbia	8	5	1	2	18	10	16
Belgium	8	5	1	2	15	7	16
Cyprus	8	2	0	6	7	21	6
N. Ireland	8	1	0	7	3	17	3

SRB 2-1 CYP, CYP 2-1 SRB, SRB 3-1 NIR, SRB 2-2 BEL, SRB 1-0 ITA, BEL 0-3 SRB, ITA 3-2 SRB, NIR 1-4 SRB

Play-off: Serbia 0-0 Spain, Spain 1-2 Serbia (Serbia win 2-1 on aggregate)

FACT FILE

Best performance
Winners 1978
(as Yugoslavia)

Last final tournament appearance
2009 (group stage)

Qualifying top scorer
Aleksandar Pešić 3 (right)



Visit UEFA.com for the official final tournament squad.

GROUP B

England / Italy / Portugal / Sweden

18 June v Portugal, 21 June v Sweden, 24 June v Italy



Eyes on the prize

England have reached the final tournament for a fifth successive time, but lifting the trophy has proved elusive. They claimed the title in 1982 and 1984 yet have contested the final just once since, losing 4-0 to Germany in 2009. Coach Gareth Southgate is out to change that. "Historically we've had a really good experience of qualifying, but now we've got to take that a step further," he said. "As a country we have to do better in tournament situations. That has been a key focus for us throughout our age groups ... We want to start putting English football back on the map." Since Southgate replaced Stuart Pearce after the 2013 final tournament, England have hit the ground running. They won all but one of their 12 qualifying and play-off matches en route to the Czech Republic – an early 1-1 draw in Finland the sole slip. A run of eight consecutive victories meant they topped Group 1 by 12 points, before a pair of 2-1 play-off triumphs against Croatia earned qualification. Goalkeeper Jack Butland, midfielder James Ward-Prowse, winger Nathan Redmond and forward Saido Berahino were standout figures in a team that scored 35 goals and conceded a qualifying low of four. Berahino contributed a competition-leading ten in as many appearances and was ably supported by Harry Kane, who struck six.



		Date of birth	Qualifying Apps.	Goals	Club
GOALKEEPERS					
1	Jack Butland	10/03/1993	11	0	Stoke City FC
12	Jonathan Bond	19/05/1993	2	0	Watford FC
13	Marcus Bettinelli	24/05/1992	0	0	Fulham FC
DEFENDERS					
2	Carl Jenkinson	08/02/1992	6	0	Arsenal FC
3	Luke Garbutt	21/05/1993	3	0	Everton FC
5	John Stones	28/05/1994	7	0	Everton FC
6	Ben Gibson	15/01/1993	3	0	Middlesbrough FC
14	Nathaniel Chalobah	12/12/1994	7	0	Chelsea FC
15	Michael Keane	11/01/1993	8	1	Burnley FC
20	Liam Moore	31/01/1993	6	1	Leicester City FC
21	Calum Chambers	20/01/1995	0	0	Arsenal FC
22	Matt Targett	18/09/1995	0	0	Southampton FC
MIDFIELDERS					
4	Jake Forster-Caskey	25/04/1994	4	0	Brighton & Hove Albion FC
8	James Ward-Prowse	01/11/1994	9	2	Southampton FC
10	Tom Carroll	28/05/1992	9	0	Tottenham Hotspur FC
11	Nathan Redmond	06/03/1994	10	3	Norwich City FC
16	Jesse Lingard	15/12/1992	4	0	Manchester United FC
19	Will Hughes	17/04/1995	8	2	Derby County FC
23	Ruben Loftus-Cheek	23/01/1996	0	0	Chelsea FC
FORWARDS					
7	Alex Pritchard	03/05/1993	2	0	Tottenham Hotspur FC
9	Harry Kane	28/07/1993	8	6	Tottenham Hotspur FC
17	Danny Ings	23/07/1992	5	2	Burnley FC
18	Saido Berahino	04/08/1993	10	10	West Bromwich Albion FC

COACH



Gareth Southgate
Born 03/09/1970

Appointed before the start of this campaign, Southgate signed a contract extension in January until summer 2017. In 2006, aged 35, the former England defender was named Middlesbrough FC manager, a role he held until October 2009.

QUALIFYING RESULTS

GROUP 1	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
England	10	9	1	0	31	2	28
Finland	10	4	4	2	17	10	16
Moldova	10	5	1	4	12	6	16
Wales	10	3	3	4	12	13	12
Lithuania	10	2	2	6	6	19	8
San Marino	10	1	1	8	2	30	4

ENG 1-0 MDA, FIN 1-1 ENG, SMR 0-4 ENG, ENG 5-0 LTU, ENG 3-0 FIN, ENG 9-0 SMR, ENG 1-0 WAL, WAL 1-3 ENG, LTU 0-1 ENG, MDA 0-3 ENG

Play-off: England 2-1 Croatia, Croatia 1-2 England (England win 4-2 on aggregate)

FACT FILE

Best performance
Winners 1982, 1984

Last final tournament appearance
2013 (group stage)

Qualifying top scorer Saido Berahino 10 (right)



Visit UEFA.com for the official final tournament squad.

GROUP B

England / Italy / Portugal / Sweden

18 June v Sweden, 21 June v Portugal, 24 June v England



Great expectations

Italy emerged from perhaps the most difficult qualifying group and it is a measure of their strength that each time they were pushed into a corner, they came out fighting. They lost to both Belgium and Serbia in Group 9, yet recovered to win the return fixtures, impressing most in their penultimate match when they rallied from 2-0 down to beat Serbia 3-2. Andrea Belotti struck twice in that game to help Italy secure top spot and then scored in both legs of the play-off against Slovakia. During qualifying, he formed part of a dangerous three-pronged attack – *Il Tridente 3B* – alongside Domenico Berardi and Federico Bernardeschi, while Stefano Sturaro and Lorenzo Crisetig anchor the midfield. Goalkeeper Francesco Bardi and defenders Daniele Rugani, Alessio Romagnoli and Davide Zappacosta provide further Serie A experience at the back. Since their 2013 final defeat by Spain, Luigi Di Biagio has taken the reins and while the Azzurrini's goal remains the same, their style is being transformed. "The target has always been to be successful and win, so nothing has changed," Di Biagio said. "What has changed is trying to play a different style of football, more attacking and less reactive. We want to show that Italy don't just defend and hit teams on the counter, but can also move the ball around and focus on possession."

COACH



Luigi Di Biagio
Born 03/06/71

Di Biagio was promoted from his role as Italy U20 boss in June 2013, replacing Devis Mangia. The erstwhile AS Roma and FC Internazionale Milano midfielder was in the Azzurri team beaten by David Trezeguet's golden goal for France in the UEFA EURO 2000 final in Rotterdam.



		Date of birth	Qualifying Apps.	Goals	Club
GOALKEEPERS					
1	Francesco Bardi	18/01/1992	10	0	AC Chievo Verona
14	Marco Sportiello	10/05/1992	0	0	Atalanta BC
20	Nicola Leali	17/02/1993	0	0	AC Cesena
DEFENDERS					
2	Stefano Sabelli	13/01/1993	4	0	AS Bari
3	Cristiano Biraghi	01/09/1992	6	0	AC Chievo Verona
5	Daniele Rugani	29/07/1994	4	2	Empoli FC
6	Alessio Romagnoli	12/01/1995	1	0	UC Sampdoria
12	Federico Barba	01/09/1993	0	0	Empoli FC
13	Matteo Bianchetti	17/03/1993	9	0	Spezia Calcio
17	Armando Izzo	02/03/1992	0	0	Genoa CFC
22	Davide Zappacosta	11/06/1992	9	0	Atalanta BC
MIDFIELDERS					
4	Lorenzo Crisetig	20/01/1993	5	0	Cagliari Calcio
7	Federico Viviani	24/03/1992	7	1	US Latina Calcio
8	Stefano Sturaro	09/03/1993	2	1	Juventus
15	Marco Benassi	08/09/1994	2	0	Torino FC
16	Daniele Baselli	12/03/1992	7	0	Atalanta BC
18	Cristian Battocchio	10/02/1992	10	2	Vitus Entella
21	Danilo Cataldi	06/08/1994	1	0	SS Lazio
FORWARDS					
9	Andrea Belotti	20/12/1993	9	6	US Città di Palermo
10	Domenico Berardi	01/08/1994	4	1	US Sassuolo Calcio
11	Federico Bernardeschi	16/02/1994	5	2	ACF Fiorentina
19	Marcello Trotta	29/09/1992	1	1	AS Avellino 1912
23	Simone Verdi	12/07/1992	0	0	Empoli FC

QUALIFYING RESULTS

GROUP 9	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Italy	8	6	0	2	19	7	18
Serbia	8	5	1	2	18	10	16
Belgium	8	5	1	2	15	7	16
Cyprus	8	2	0	6	7	21	6
N. Ireland	8	1	0	7	3	17	3

ITA 1-3 BEL, CYP 0-2 ITA, BEL 0-1 ITA, ITA 3-0 NIR, SRB 1-0 ITA, NIR 0-2 ITA, ITA 3-2 SRB, ITA 7-1 CYP

Play-off: Slovakia 1-1 Italy, Italy 3-1 Slovakia (Italy win 4-2 on aggregate)

FACT FILE

Best performance
Winners 1992, 1994, 1996, 2000, 2004

Last final tournament appearance
2013 (runners-up)

Qualifying top scorer Andrea Belotti 6 (right)



Visit UEFA.com for the official final tournament squad.

GROUP B

England / Italy / Portugal / Sweden

18 June v England, 21 June v Italy, 24 June v Sweden



Passion play

Portugal are the first side to qualify with a 100% winning record from ten games, raising hopes of a first title at this level. "It was good, they're very interesting statistics, but it doesn't give us any extra responsibility at the finals," coach Rui Jorge said. "There are excellent teams here, great national sides, so let's see how it goes." Portugal have had few problems so far. They finished nine points clear of Israel in Group 8 and then had too much for 2006 and 2007 champions the Netherlands in the play-offs, winning 7-4 on aggregate after a thrilling 5-4 victory in Pacos de Ferreira. Portugal usually play without a recognised striker, with goals distributed throughout the team. Winger Ricardo scored twice in the play-off return leg, taking his squad-leading tally to five, and together with centre-back Paulo Oliveira was one of two players to figure in every match. Bernardo Silva's four-goal contribution from midfield was also significant, while William Carvalho and André Gomes among others impressed sufficiently to earn promotion to the seniors mid-qualification. "The passion the players bring onto the pitch, combined with their technical qualities, which are very high, have made us a very strong team," Jorge said. "We have an excellent team spirit; everyone is pulling in the same direction."

COACH



Rui Jorge
Born 27/03/73

Jorge succeeded Oceano Cruz in November 2010. The one-time FC Porto, Rio Ave FC, Sporting Clube de Portugal and CF Os Belenenses left-back made 45 appearances for his country, including one at UEFA EURO 2004 on home soil and three at the World Cup two years earlier.



		Date of birth	Qualifying Apps.	Goals	Club
GOALKEEPERS					
1	José Sá	17/01/1993	9	0	CS Marítimo
12	Daniel Fernandes	13/11/1992	0	0	VfL Osnabrück
22	Bruno Varela	04/11/1994	1	0	SL Benfica
DEFENDERS					
3	Tiago Ilori	26/02/1993	4	1	FC Girondins de Bordeaux
4	Paulo Oliveira	08/01/1992	10	0	Sporting Clube de Portugal
5	Raphael Guerreiro	22/12/1993	6	0	FC Lorient
13	João Cancelo	27/05/1994	0	0	Valencia CF
14	Tobias Figueiredo	02/02/1994	0	0	Sporting Clube de Portugal
15	Frederico Venâncio	04/02/1993	0	0	Vitória FC
MIDFIELDERS					
2	Ricardo Esgaio	16/05/1993	9	2	A. Académica de Coimbra
6	William Carvalho	07/04/1992	3	2	Sporting Clube de Portugal
7	Rafa Silva	17/05/1993	7	2	SC Braga
8	Sérgio Oliveira	02/06/1992	8	2	FC Paços de Ferreira
10	Bernardo Silva	10/08/1994	7	4	AS Monaco FC
16	Rúben Neves	13/03/1997	3	1	FC Porto
18	Ivan Cavaleiro	18/10/1993	7	3	RC Deportivo de la Coruña
20	Tozé	14/01/1993	5	0	Estoril Praia
23	João Mário	19/01/1993	6	0	Sporting Clube de Portugal
FORWARDS					
9	Gonçalo Pádua	01/08/1994	3	0	FC Porto
11	Iuri Medeiros	10/07/1994	3	0	FC Arouca
17	Carlos Mané	11/03/1994	6	2	Sporting Clube de Portugal
19	Ricardo Horta	15/09/1994	2	0	Málaga CF
21	Ricardo Pereira	06/10/1993	10	5	FC Porto

QUALIFYING RESULTS

GROUP 8	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Portugal	8	8	0	0	22	6	24
Israel	8	5	0	3	22	15	15
Norway	8	3	0	5	11	19	9
Azerbaijan	8	2	1	5	9	15	7
FYR Macedonia	8	1	1	6	4	13	4

POR 5-1 NOR, POR 3-0 ISR, AZE 0-2 POR, ISR 3-4 POR, POR 2-0 MKD, MKD 0-1 POR, NOR 1-2 POR, POR 3-1 AZE

Play-off: Netherlands 0-2 Portugal, Portugal 5-4 Netherlands (Portugal win 7-4 on aggregate)

FACT FILE

Best performance
Runners-up 1994

Last final tournament appearance
2007 (semi-finals)

Qualifying top scorer
Ricardo 5 (right)



Visit UEFA.com for the official final tournament squad.

GROUP B

England / Italy / Portugal / Sweden
18 June v Italy, 21 June v England, 24 June v Portugal

Sweden



'No limits'

After a hair-raising ride in qualifying, Sweden coach Håkan Ericson will be hoping his side give him a slightly easier time in the final tournament. Twice Sweden needed late goals to advance – first by Oscar Hiljemark in the thrilling 4-3 final-day win against Turkey that earned top spot in Group 7, then by Oscar Lewicki in the play-off second leg to take the Swedes past France 4-3 on aggregate. Sweden had lost the first leg 2-0 but bounced back with a 4-1 home victory. "These are things that people in Sweden remember, finishing two games like that," Ericson said. "It's not a lot of fun for a coach, but for the crowd it must be one of the best things to experience." That refusal to accept defeat is one of the Scandinavian side's great strengths. "This team is very united. You can feel the positive attitude, it's been a factor in our success. There are no limits. That is one of our goals in fact – not to put limits on ourselves." John Guidetti and Isaac Kiese Thelin were Sweden's four-goal leading marksmen in qualification, while defender Lewicki featured in nine matches, more than any other Swedish player. Goalkeeper Patrik Carlgren, defenders Filip Helander and Alexander Milošević – the Sweden captain – and midfielder Hiljemark are also cornerstones of Ericson's side.



		Date of birth	Qualifying Apps.	Goals	Club
GOALKEEPERS					
1	Patrik Carlgren	08/01/1992	8	0	AIK
12	Jacob Rinne	20/06/1993	0	0	Örebro SK
23	Andreas Linde	24/07/1993	0	0	Molde FK
DEFENDERS					
2	Emil Krafth	02/08/1994	7	0	Helsingborgs IF
3	Alexander Milošević	30/01/1992	7	1	Beşiktaş JK
4	Filip Helander	22/04/1993	8	0	Malmö FF
5	Ludwig Augustinsson	21/04/1994	3	0	FC København
6	Oscar Lewicki	14/07/1992	9	2	Malmö FF
17	Joseph Baffo	07/11/1992	2	0	Halmstads BK
18	Sebastian Holmén	29/04/1992	4	0	IF Elfsborg
21	Pa Konate	25/04/1994	3	0	Malmö FF
MIDFIELDERS					
7	Oscar Hiljemark	28/06/1992	5	1	PSV Eindhoven
8	Abdullah Khalili	07/06/1992	4	0	Mersin İdman Yurdu
13	Arber Zeneli	25/02/1995	0	0	IF Elfsborg
15	Kristoffer Olsson	30/06/1995	5	3	FC Midtjylland
16	Simon Tibbling	07/09/1994	4	0	FC Groningen
20	Robin Quaison	09/10/1993	4	0	US Città di Palermo
22	Simon Gustafsson	20/01/1995	1	0	BK Häcken
FORWARDS					
9	Branimir Hrgota	12/01/1993	5	2	VfL Borussia Mönchengladbach
10	John Guidetti	15/04/1992	6	4	Manchester City FC
11	Isaac Kiese Thelin	24/06/1992	4	4	FC Girondins de Bordeaux
14	Mikael Ishak	31/03/1993	7	2	Randers FC
19	Sam Larsson	10/04/1993	0	0	sc Heerenveen

COACH



Håkan Ericson
Born: 29/05/1960

The son of Georg Ericson, Sweden's national team coach from 1970 to 1979, Håkan Ericson took charge of the Under-21s in November 2010. Formerly at the helm of IFK Norrköping, he moved into the dugout in 1983 after a knee injury cut short his career at the age of 21.

QUALIFYING RESULTS

GROUP 7	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sweden	8	5	1	2	20	14	16
Greece	8	5	0	3	20	10	15
Poland	8	5	0	3	17	10	15
Turkey	8	4	1	3	16	11	13
Malta	8	0	0	8	2	30	0

SWE 3-1 POL, TUR 2-2 SWE, POL 2-0 SWE, GRE 5-1 SWE, SWE 5-0 MLT, MLT 1-2 SWE, SWE 3-0 GRE, SWE 4-3 TUR

Play-off: France 2-0 Sweden, Sweden 4-1 France (Sweden win 4-3 on aggregate)

FACT FILE

Best performance
Semi-finals 1990, 2004, 2009

Last final tournament appearance
2009 (semi-finals)

Qualifying top scorers
John Guidetti (right), Isaac Kiese Thelin 4



Visit UEFA.com for the official final tournament squad.

SPOJUJE NÁS TOUHA PO VÍTĚZSTVÍ

Hráče na utkání Mistrovství Evropy UEFA U21 doprovází vítězové krajských finále McDonald's Cupu kategorie A.



McDonald's CUP 2014/2015

Fotbalový turnaj pro kluky a holky z prvního stupně základních škol

Podpořte je i v příštím ročníku přes www.srdcemspolu.cz





UEFA
ROUTE DE GENÈVE 46
CH-1260 NYON 2
SWITZERLAND
TELEPHONE: +41 848 00 27 27
TELEFAX: +41 848 01 27 27
UEFA.com UEFA.org

WE CARE ABOUT FOOTBALL