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Czech Republic: BDO European Football Tournament 2011

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On Saturday 18 June 2011 the ninth BDO European Football Tournament took place. This year we had a record number of 26 teams taking part from all over Europe. Teams came from Austria, Switzerland, Netherlands, Germany, Ireland, Hungary, England, Czech Republic, Luxembourg, Spain, Portugal, France, Serbia, Croatia and Norway. For the first time we had a ladies tournament with teams from England and Poland. This was only a small tournament but it's a start and hopefully it will continue to grow to reflect the popularity of ladies football. In total around 280 players travelled to Prague by plane, car and coach to try to win the prestigious trophy. There were also many supporters, especially from Croatia, who came to support their teams and create a great atmosphere.

The tournament was held at the Slavia Prague sports complex. The weather was not so kind to us this year with heavy rain early on Saturday morning but amazingly it stayed dry throughout the day itself. It wasn't very warm but it was good weather for playing football. The matches were played on natural grass again and this meant very few injuries to the players. The ambulance men had a very easy day. The whole tournament was played in a very friendly manner and all the teams were great representatives for their countries.

After the morning's group stage matches the top 16 teams went into the BDO Cup and the remaining 10 played in the Consolation Cup. The Consolation Cup was won by the home team the Czech Republic after an exciting final with Ireland. The match finished 1-1 and we won 4-3 after a penalty shoot-out. This was a great performance by our team and at last we won a trophy in the tournament after many close things over the years.

The Ladies trophy was won by the Southampton office who played very well and defeated Poland.

There were some exciting games in the last 16 stage and some shock results. Last year's winners Portugal and last year's runners up were both beaten by Hungary and Manchester respectively.

In the quarter finals the Netherlands who are always very skillful and well organised won a close game against Manchester 1-0. The London Audit team beat Spain 2-0. The very good Serbian team beat Norway 4-2 and Hungary beat France on penalties after a 3-3 draw. It was a great comeback by Hungary as they were losing 3-1 with not long to go.

The first semi-final was a fantastic game between Netherlands and London. It was 2-2 with only a couple of minutes to go and then Netherlands scored the winner. This was a great performance as the London team had just recently won a big national UK tournament and looked to have a good chance of winning this tournament also. In the second semi-final the Serbian team showed just how good they were by beating Hungary 6-0. Hungary had got through two really tough matches in the previous rounds and couldn't cope with the speed and energy of Serbia.

Hungary beat London on penalties in the third place play-off match and so continued their fantastic record of getting among the prizes.

The final was between the Netherlands and Serbia. The quality of both teams was excellent and the standard of the final was very high. Serbia started very well and dominated the first half with the Dutch mainly defending. Right at the end of the first half however the Dutch scored against the run of play. The Serbs were a bit shocked by this and it was the Dutch who started the second half better creating some good chances which they didn't manage to convert into goals. Serbia then began to dominate again and a few minutes before the end got the equaliser. The score finished 1-1 and so the final was decided by penalties. In a tense shoot-out it was Serbia who triumphed and so we had new champions. It was a deserved win and just reward for the very good Serbian team managed by the very popular Dragan Popovic. So at their third attempt Serbia won the BDO European Cup.

After the tournament a party was held for all the players and fans at the Obcanska Plovarna restaurant on the banks of the Vltava river with a beautiful view of Prague. Prizes were presented to the victorious sides by Vlastimil Hokr of the BDO Prague office. There was also again a special Fair Play award sponsored by BDO International Executive Office presented to the team who, in the opinion of the judges, played in the most sporting manner. This was won by the very popular Ireland team.

A CD with the full set of tournament photographs will be sent to all participants in due course.

Again the tournament was a great success and we are already looking forward to the 2012 tournament which will be held in Portugal.

All BDO teams - especially women's - interested in competing for the 2012 BDO European Football Cup can contact Norrie Goodbrand in Prague for more information Goodbrand@bdo.cz



The victorious Serbian team



Hokr Vlastimil with some of the winning Southampton ladies team



The Southampton team



The Irish team who won the 2011 BDO Fair Play Trophy