



Alive and kicking

ALTHOUGH the UEFA European Championship, now popularly known just as EURO, has never become 'the rival' of the FIFA World Cup, it has turned into a huge success and is established as one of the world's major sporting events.

The championship's birth half-a-century ago, however, was more difficult than might be expected.

The idea of introducing a European competition for national teams surfaced late compared to other continents. There had been various reasons for it, one being the fear that such a competition might threaten the status of the FIFA World Cup itself.

ORIGIN

When the UEFA was born in 1954, the impetus for a European championship came from the distinguished French sports newspaper L'Equipe.

Adding to the French drive for such a tournament was Henry Delaunay, first UEFA general secretary and former French national association general secretary. Few men have left such a distinct mark, by the sheer force of their personality, on such a universal activity as football as Delaunay.

In 1927, he had already submitted a proposal to FIFA, in conjunction with the great Austrian official Hugo Meisl, for the creation of a European cup, to run concurrently with the World Cup, which would involve a qualifying competition every two years.

The Frenchman wrote after UEFA's inaugural Basle assembly in 1954 that the idea was for a competition open to all of the European associations. He insisted on limited number of matches so it should not harm the World Cup.

The new competition, when it came to life, was named the Henri Delaunay Cup in recognition of his outstanding services to European football.

The inaugural tournament was entered by around half of UEFA's member associations, 17 in total, and one more than the minimum required. The Republic of Ireland were eliminated by Czechoslovakia in a qualifying play-off. The first championship match proper was held on September 28, 1958 in Moscow's Central Stadium -- the USSR beating Hungary 3-1, with the home side's Anatoli Ilyin scoring the first goal after four minutes -- and the inaugural competition took place over 22 months between 1958 and 1960.

From small acorns do great

oaks rise...

EVOLUTION

Each EURO has had its tactical benchmarks and the 2008 edition will doubtless give us fresh and fascinating insights into the way the modern game is played, as it never stops evolving.

For the first EUROs in the 1960s, the old 2-3-5 formation -- featuring two fullbacks, two wing-halves, a centre-half, two wingers, two inside-forwards and a centre-forward -- was making way for increasingly sophisticated tactics. Rather than focus on scoring goals, there came a new emphasis on not conceding.

Individual positions also evolved. Italy's 1968 champions featured not only the customary solid defence and stealthy attackers, but also a fullback of considerable attacking potential in Giacinto Facchetti who helped redefine his position. Playmakers came into fashion like the brilliant Gunter Netzer, a member of

trend was towards strong, almost impenetrable defensive blocks, the "flooding" of midfield by teams perhaps playing a 3-5-2 system, and a dearth of wingers which was compensated for by hard-working wide players or overlapping fullbacks. Counterattacking, often by strikers with pace, and individual brilliance was needed to destabilise tough defensive blocks. A defensive midfielder also helped contain counterattacks. Goalkeepers needed to become footballers after changes to the backpass rule.

In the Netherlands and Belgium in 2000, the tactical talk was of the diamond-shaped midfield -- a defensive midfielder, two 'normal' midfielders and a central player supporting the strikers. Lone strikers made their mark. A two-man screen of defensive midfielders helped bolster other rearguards against danger and footballers increasingly needed to be complete players -- tactically mature, versatile, adaptable, flexible and quick-thinking as well as phenomenally fit.

By the 2004 finals, the marriage of skill and speed was essential as the game became even faster. The collective, massed defensive block held sway, which required opponents to break out and counterattack at speed to outwit their opponents. Slow build-up, combination play and ball circulation proved somewhat ineffective against such systems, but there was a welcome resurgence in wing play as teams tried to get around the massed rearguards.

Set-plays also provided the key for many of the goals in Portugal. Exceptional tactical discipline, organisation and team spirit gave Greece the chance to become unexpected champions.

TROPHY

Whichever captain climbs the stairs at the Ernst-Happel-Stadion to accept the winning trophy from UEFA President Michel Platini after the 2008 final, they will be achieving a notable first.

The new trophy is 18cm higher and 2kg heavier than the original designed by Arthus Bertrand in 1960 and named after Henri Delaunay. The upper part of the trophy is based on the original and is also made out of sterling silver. The new trophy, created by Asprey London, has however retained its historical name.

Compiled by: AL MUSABBIR SADI



Do you know?

• The USSR won the first-ever European Championships in 1960

• Germany have won the most European Championship titles (72,80,96)

• Germany have also played the most finals (5)

• The biggest crowd for a Euro match was the 76,864 that turned up to watch England - Scotland at Euro 96

• The most goals scored during a Euro match was the seven between the Netherlands and Yugoslavia in Euro 2000. The Dutch won 6-1

• The most goals scored by a team during a tournament is 14 by France during their title winning run in 1984

• Michel Platini holds the individual

record for the highest goals scored with 9, all coming in 1984

• Alan Shearer scored the opening goal of Euro 96

• David Trezeguet scored the 'golden goal' in the final of the Euro 2000 against Italy

• Oliver Bierhoff scored the 'golden goal' in the final of Euro 96. It was the first goal of its type to decide a major championship

• Of the sixteen teams in the Euro, only Sweden have qualified into the second round of all the major tournaments of this millennium (World Cup 02, 06 and Euro 04)

• Patrick Kluivert shared the Golden Boot in Euro 2000 with Savo Milosevic

• The Bundesliga will have the most number of players (56) at the Euro 2008

• Angelos Charisteas scored the winning goal for Greece against Portugal in the final of Euro 2004

• Zinedine Zidane was MVP of Euro 2000

• Only two teams have held the World Cup and the European Championships at the same time - Germany and France

• Frenchman Lilian Thuram is the most capped (14) player in European Championships

• Swiss striker Johan Vonlanthen was the youngest player to score at the Euros, when he netted against France in 2004 aged 18 years and 141 days



Euro 2008 calendar

EURO 2008 AUSTRIA - SWITZERLAND

From June 7 to June 29, 2008

Times in GMT

| Group A | Group B | Group C | Group D |
|--|---|--|---|
| June 7 1600 - Basle Switz. - Czech R. | June 8 1600 - Vienna Austria - Croatia | June 9 1600 - Zurich Romania - France | June 10 1600 - Innsbruck Spain - Russia |
| June 7 1845 - Geneva Portugal - Turkey | June 8 1845 - Klagenfurt Germany - Poland | June 9 1845 - Bern Neth. - Italy | June 10 1845 - Salzburg Greece - Sweden |
| June 11 1600 - Geneva Czech R. - Portugal | June 12 1600 - Klagenfurt Croatia - Germany | June 13 1600 - Zurich Italy - Romania | June 14 1600 - Innsbruck Sweden - Spain |
| June 11 1845 - Basle Switz. - Turkey | June 12 1845 - Vienna Austria - Poland | June 13 1845 - Bern Neth. - France | June 14 1845 - Salzburg Greece - Russia |
| June 15 1845 - Basle Switz. - Portugal | June 16 1845 - Vienna Austria - Germany | June 17 1845 - Bern Neth. - Romania | June 18 1845 - Salzburg Greece - Spain |
| June 15 1845 - Geneva Turkey - Czech R. | June 16 1845 - Klagenfurt Poland - Croatia | June 17 1845 - Zurich France - Italy | June 18 1845 - Innsbruck Russia - Sweden |
| Quarter-finals | | | |
| June 19 - 1845 Basel 1st GR. A - 2nd GR. B | June 20 - 1845 Vienna 1st GR. B - 2nd GR. A | June 21 - 1845 Basel 1st GR. C - 2nd GR. D | June 22 - 1845 Vienna 1st GR. D - 2nd GR. C |
| Semi-finals | | | |
| June 25 - 1845 Basel / | FINAL June 29 - 1845 Vienna / | | June 26 - 1845 Vienna / |


The times in the above schedule are GMT. For Bangladesh time, please add six hours. All matches will be shown live on ESPN and STAR Sports.

Euro 2008 stadiums

EURO 2008 AUSTRIA - SWITZERLAND


*Opening game

BASLE
St. Jakob Park stadium
40,000 seats




Matches
Switz. - Czech Rep.*
Switz. - Turkey
Switz. - Portugal
2 quarter finals
1 semi final

ZURICH
Letzigrund stadium
30,000 seats




Matches
Romania - France
Italy - Romania
France - Italy

SALZBURG
Wals-Siezenheim stadium
30,000 seats




Matches
Greece - Sweden
Greece - Russia
Greece - Spain

VIENNA
Ernst-Happel stadium
50,000 seats




Matches
Austria - Croatia
Austria - Poland
Austria - Germany
2 quarter finals
1 semi final
FINAL

GENEVA
Geneva stadium
30,000 seats




Matches
Portugal - Turkey
Czech Rep. - Portugal
Turkey - Czech Rep.

BERNE
Stade de Suisse Wankdorf
30,000 seats




Matches
Netherlands - Italy
Neth. - France
Neth. - Romania

INNSBRUCK
Tivoli Neu stadium
30,000 seats

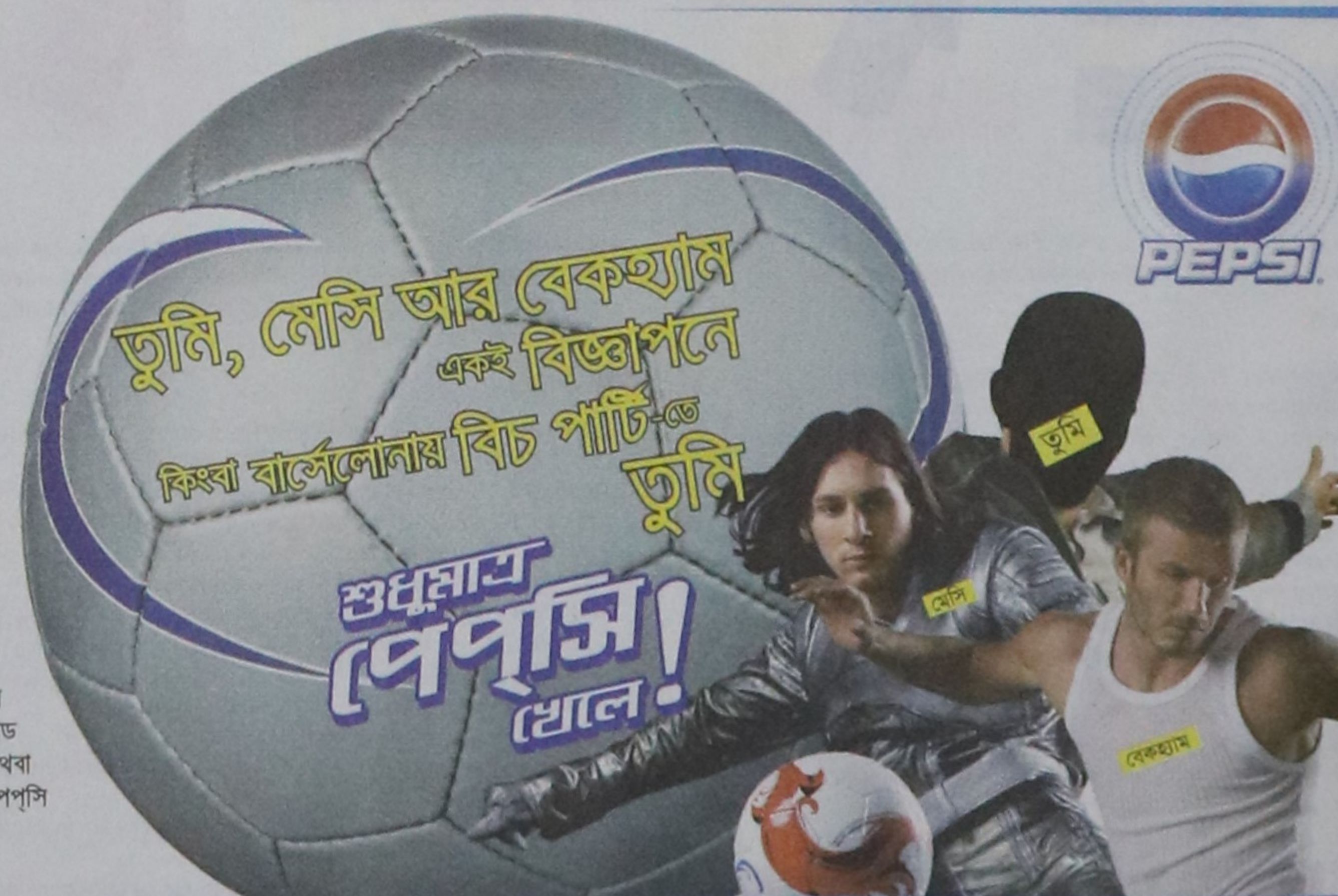


Matches
Spain - Russia
Sweden - Spain
Russia - Sweden

KLAGENFURT
Wörthersee stadium
30,000 seats



Matches
Germany - Poland
Croatia - Germany
Poland - Croatia



পেপসি খেলোয়াড় পাঁচ একটি স্ট্রাইক কার্ড আর স্ট্রাইক করে কোড নাম্বারটি জানালেই

• বেকহ্যাম, রোনালদিনহো, মেসির সাথে ইন্টারন্যাশনাল পেপসি বিজ্ঞাপনে দেখা যেতে পারে তোমাকে

• কিংবা চলে যেতে পারো বার্সেলোনা বিচ পাঁচ করার জন্য

• পেতে পারো মোবাইল ফোন, DVD প্রেমার, MP3 প্রেমার, FM রেডিওসহ আরো অনেক কিছু

• আর কিছু পাও না পাও প্রতিটি পেপসির সাথে পাও একটি ফুটবল স্টার পোস্টার।

কিভাবে তুমি এসব পাও: খুব সহজে। পেপসি খেলোয়াড় পাঁচ একটি স্ট্রাইক কার্ড, স্ট্রাইক করে আর কোড নাম্বারটি জানিয়ে নাও 6161 নাম্বারে SMS করে অথবা 01732868690-2 নাম্বারে ফোন করে। আর পেপসি তোমাকে জানিয়ে দেবে তুমি কি জিতেছো।

মনে রাখবে স্ট্রাইক কার্ডটি অবশ্যই সংরক্ষণ করতে হবে।

শর্তাবলী

• এ অফার ৩০ জুন, ২০০৮ পর্যন্ত চলবে, এরপর গ্রাউন্ড SMS বা ফোন কল গ্রহণযোগ্য হবে না

• এ অফারে ট্রান্সকম বেজারজেন লিমিটেড, এশিয়াটিক এমসিএল, এশিয়াটিক ইন্ডেস্ট্রিয়াল এবং এর কোনো সহযোগী প্রতিষ্ঠান অংশগ্রহণ করতে পারবে না

• এই কার্যক্রম শুধুমাত্র পেপসি পেমেন্ট (পেপসি ২০৭/২৫০ এম এল, ৫০০ এম এল, ১ লিটার এবং ২ লিটার) কেনে প্রযোজ্য

• ১ লিটার পেপসি কেনে বোনাস ও ডায়েরি পেপসি এই কার্যক্রমের অর্ন্তভূক্ত নয়

• একটি পেপসি পণ্য ক্রয়ের জন্য একজন ক্রেতা শুধুমাত্র একটি স্ট্রাইক কার্ড পাও

• একটি স্ট্রাইক কার্ড কোড নাম্বার শুধুমাত্র একবার ব্যবহারযোগ্য

• বিজয়ী ক্রেতাকে অবশ্যই স্ট্রাইক কার্ডটি নিজের কাছে সংরক্ষণ করতে হবে

• পুরস্কার গ্রহণের সময় বা বাছাই পরে প্রমাণস্বরূপ স্ট্রাইক কার্ডটি অবশ্যই দেখাতে হবে

• প্রতিযোগিতার যে কোনো পর্যায়ে পেপসির স্ট্রাইকই হুজুর বলে গণ্য হবে

• বার্সেলোনা যাত্রার ভিসা ও পাসপোর্টের দায়িত্ব বিজয়ীর নিজেকে বহন করতে হবে

• প্রতিযোগিতার যে কোনো পর্যায়ে যে কোনো অনাকাঙ্ক্ষিত ঘটনা/ঘটনার জন্য কর্তৃপক্ষ দায়ী থাকবে না

• SMS বা ফোন কলের জন্য চার্জ প্রযোজ্য

• সকাল ৮টা থেকে রাত ১২টা পর্যন্ত কল সেলার বোলা থাকবে

• পেপসি যে কোনো সময় কোনো কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে এ কার্যক্রম পরিবর্তন, পরিবর্তন বা সমাপ্তি ঘোষণা করার অধিকার রাখে

• শর্ত প্রযোজ্য

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