

CREDIT SUISSE

# Bulletin

## SPECIAL ISSUE

Spring 2014



### THE SWISS FOOTBALLING MIRACLE

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# Great Achievements Are Always a Group Effort

It's the year 1993. Xherdan Shaqiri isn't even two years old and the Swiss national football team is in the valley of tears. It has failed to qualify for a major international event for 27 years. That's when the Swiss Credit Institution – as Credit Suisse was known at the time – decided to work closely with the football association. This was in homage to its deep Swiss roots.

This commitment to the domestic market is still of central importance for Credit Suisse today, as is our football sponsorship, which now dates back 20 years. The sporting achievements are impressive: With three European Championship qualifications and four World Cup qualifications, the national team is experiencing the most successful era in its history. Equally exciting are the European and world titles for the U17 juniors and the European runner-up title for the U21s. After all, since the start of our involvement in football, half of our sponsorship contribution has been channeled into promoting young talent.

The great football achievements of our little country are a perfect example of what can happen when the conditions are good and the right mentality is in place. When the top talents are brought together and professionally trained. When the willingness to go the distance and give it one's all is high. When we work continuously and ardently on a project. When the team spirit is right. The whole is more than the sum of its individual parts. Great achievements are always a group effort.

We hope you enjoy reading about the history of the Swiss footballing miracle, and we wish the national team the best of luck at the World Cup in Brazil. Hopp Schwiiz! Go Switzerland!

#### **Hans-Ulrich Meister**

*Head of Private Banking & Wealth  
Management and Chief Executive Officer  
Switzerland Region*



World Cup qualification 2014:  
Switzerland celebrates once again.

**4x World Cup participation**  
(1994, 2006, 2010, 2014)

**3x European Championship participation**  
(1996, 2004, 2008)

**1x U17 World champion**  
(2009)

**1x U17 European champion**  
(2002)

**1x U21 European runner-up**  
(2012)

**1x Olympics participant**  
(2012)

## The Swiss Footballing Miracle – Contents



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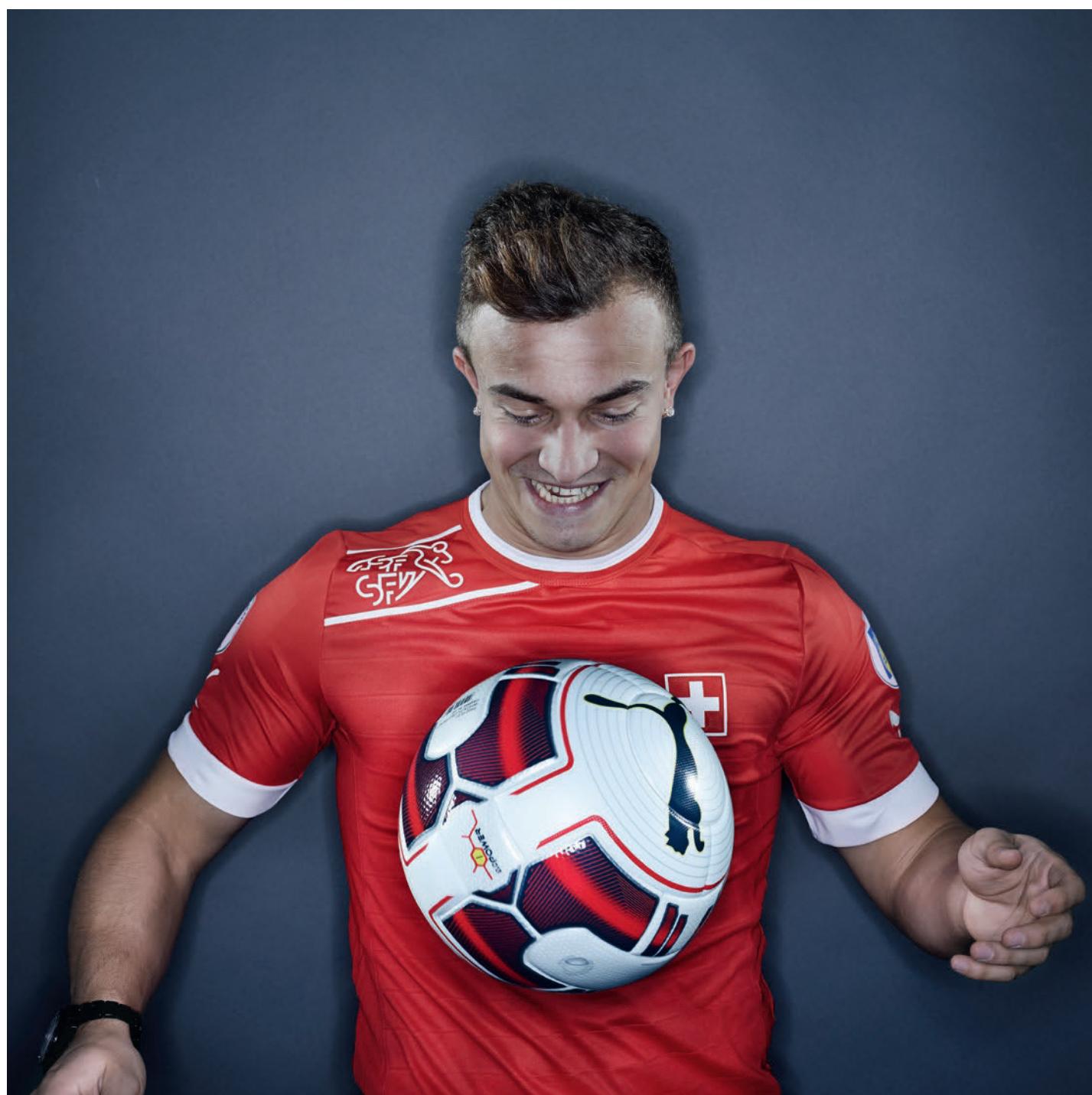


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# “Everybody’s Talking Football, Football, Football”

Xherdan Shaqiri, the face of the Swiss national team, speaks even faster than he can sprint. He sat down with us for a verbal speed drill about the World Cup.

Interview by Michael Krobath and Simon Brunner



“How long can I do kickups? For as long as you like.” (Xherdan Shaqiri)

**X**herdan Shaqiri, what are your first memories of the World Cup? The 2002 World Cup in South Korea and Japan. I was 11 years old at the time and a big fan of Brazil's top goal scorer, Ronaldo. I even copied his haircut.

*Not that silly one with the shaven-out triangle on his forehead?*  
Yes, that one. I thought it was incredibly cool.

*Who is your idol today?*  
My favorite defensive player is Brazil's David Luiz, and my favorite attacking player is Argentina's Lionel Messi. He defeated us single-handedly in that 3-1 loss back in 2012.

*What makes him so good?*  
He is everywhere and unpredictable. In all honesty, the only way to stop him is to foul him. But that doesn't even faze him. He just gets back up and keeps on playing.

*And that bothers you?*  
Yes. When a player knocks me down and it hurts, but the ref didn't see a thing, I find it pretty hard to keep my cool.

*This summer will be your second World Cup appearance. Is the team stronger than it was in 2010?*

As a team, we play better and more consistently. We proved that not only by winning against opponents like Brazil and Germany and qualifying comfortably for the World Cup finals. Our level of training is also higher. Almost everybody plays in a top foreign league, and the competition is tougher. That's what motivates us.

*Your World Cup opponents will be Ecuador, France and Honduras. Which one do you fear the most?*

None of them. But it will be very close. Not just because of France. South Americans traditionally play a very physical game and are not afraid of hurting the opposition.

*And how can you stop Franck Ribéry, France's top forward and your Bayern Munich teammate?*

Stephan Lichtsteiner and I will probably double-team him on the right side. It won't be easy for him. Franck has a lot of respect for Switzerland. So does every other Bayern Munich player, by the way.

*A trip to the World Cup means being cooped up in a dorm for weeks on end. How will you pass the time in Brazil?*

It does get monotonous after a while. Everybody's talking football, football, football. I'm part of the table tennis faction. I had some great matches against Inler in South Africa. Lichtsteiner is pretty good, too. But the name of the person favored to win the World Cup "indoor title" starts with "S" and ends with "haqiri."

*Who is going to be your roommate?*  
I generally share a room with Admir Mehmedi. We've been close friends since we played on the under-17 team. We also spend our vacations together.

## Ribéry has a lot of respect for Switzerland.

*Who is in charge of the remote control?*  
The TV is almost never on. We also very rarely play video games. Mostly we just talk and we joke around a lot. That is, when Admir isn't sleeping, which he does quite often.

*Who is the boss among the national team players?*  
We don't need a boss. We are a tightly-knit unit. But, yes, we young players do have mentors, like Inler, Behrami, and Džemaili, who get on our cases once in a while.

*How does such a multicultural team communicate?*  
Mostly in German. Sometimes you hear French, Italian, or even a few words in English. And if there is something Behrami doesn't understand, I interpret it into Albanian.

*Have the players on the national team with immigrant parents changed Switzerland?*  
I think we've helped create a favorable climate. And we give children of foreign parents hope that they can achieve great things. That applies to life in general, not just football.

*In what way do you have a positive influence on the playing field?*  
According to some people, legendary coach

Alex Ferguson once said, "A great player requires Balkan-style skills and Swiss discipline." Maybe that's your answer. It's simply a good combination.

*How long can you do kickups?*  
For as long as you like. Even with a tennis ball. It's all a matter of concentration.

*Ottmar Hitzfeld credits you with being an extraordinarily quick learner, saying: "Sometimes, he almost thinks too fast for his teammates." How do you do that?*

Even under pressure, I see the big picture and can usually sense where the unmarked man or open space is. It happens completely automatically; I just know.

*You watch a lot of football, precisely analyzing the other teams and players. Where are you still not satisfied with Xherdan Shaqiri as a player?*

He's not bad, but he needs to score more goals.

*At the age of 22, you already have 30 international matches under your belt. Which of those will you never forget?*

The highlights were that incredible goal against England and my hat-trick against Bulgaria. I recently saw Lothar Matthäus, Bulgaria's coach at the time, and he said, "You scored me out of a job back then."

*Your current coaches, Ottmar Hitzfeld and Pep Guardiola, are two world-class trainers. What differences are there between the two?*

Guardiola comes from a different generation and is closer to the younger players. Ottmar Hitzfeld is an authority figure, and I owe a great deal to him. He made me a member of the national team at 18, and recommended me to Bayern Munich's board.

*Have you ever thanked him for it?*  
I try to do that during every game by giving it my all and performing well. □

**Xherdan Shaqiri (22)** has scored eight goals in 30 international matches. He was born in Kosovo and won the Champions League in 2013 with Bayern Munich.

# Switzerland Is on Top of Its Game



Over the past twenty years, few journalists have watched the Swiss national team play as many times as Hansjörg Schifferli. Here, he recounts how three coaches in particular have contributed to the remarkable success of the team.

Attack is the best form of defense: Eren Derdiyok in qualifying for the World Cup, playing against Norway in Bern in 2012.



**T**he manner in which the players on the Swiss football team made their way through qualifying for the 2014 World Cup in Brazil was almost businesslike. With a match left to play, their place in the tournament was already confirmed.

When they returned home from Tirana in October 2013 after their 2-1 victory over Albania, the reception at Zurich Airport was certainly friendly. Yet it was nothing compared with the elation that reigned on November 17, 2005, when the airport was at risk of bursting at the seams. Back then, the dramatic playoff victory against Turkey and the extraordinary circumstances of the second leg in Istanbul had kept the entire nation on tenterhooks.

Naturally, fighting a spirited duel with France for first place in the group and then eliminating Turkey is rather different from coming top in a comparatively unspectacular group, as was the case this time around. But what this episode makes clear is that Switzerland has become accustomed to the success of its footballers. Qualification for major tournaments is now a matter of course. There is no greater compliment. What happened? And how did the situation end up like this?

Over the past twenty years, Switzerland has made it to major tournaments seven times, a feat achieved by only Denmark and Sweden among countries of a similar size. If we take the last ten years, with appearances in five out of six tournaments, Switzerland outperforms even Russia and is on a par with England, the home of football.

This level of development is made all the more astonishing by a look back at the period between 1966 and 1994, when Swiss football sank into oblivion and an entire generation grew up with the firm conviction that the World Cup and the European Championship always took place without Switzerland, as the nation failed to qualify for a single tournament. But then began the Hodgson era, and with it, a new age of Swiss football.

### The Hodgson Era – the Beginning

When Roy Hodgson became manager of the Swiss national team in January 1992, the news was not exactly greeted with euphoria. The dominant view was that the team had drawn the short straw in its coach swap with Neuchâtel Xamax. The club from the city also known as Neuenburg had received Uli Stielike, who had achieved success with the national team but wanted to return to day-to-day business, in exchange for Hodgson, who was no longer particularly popular. His first matches were not especially convincing. If Switzerland had not beaten European Championship favorites France 2-1 in May 1992 thanks to two goals from Christophe Bonvin, the Briton would have been in a tough situation.



**WORLD CUP  
QUALIFYING, 1993**

Marc Hottiger scores in Bern to win 1-0 against Italy – securing a place in the country's first World Cup in 28 years.

But then came the start of qualifying for the World Cup, with Switzerland clear outsiders in a group featuring Italy, Portugal, and Scotland. Little by little, Hodgson's methods began to show positive effects – including the hours of training sessions that he used to drill his team in covering the pitch using the 4-4-2 formation. Again and again, the players practiced – “and at some point, it just sticks,” as Alain Sutter once said. Sutter, from Bern, and Yvan Quentin, from Valais, together formed the left wing – one a gifted technician, the other an old-fashioned warhorse, and each dependent on the other.

They represented the pair that most typified Hodgson's team, which aimed to face higher-ranked opponents as a perfectly organized collective. The results improved ever more until on May 1, 1993, at the Wankdorf Stadium in Bern, Swiss football enjoyed its finest hour in decades. With a 1-0 victory over Italy, the national team secured its ticket to the World Cup. It was the greatest match of goalkeeper Marco Pascolo's career, including a brilliant save against world-class footballer Roberto Baggio. The winning goal was scored by Marc Hottiger after Dino Baggio had been sent off. In previous years, for an Italian to be shown an immediate red card for a foul against



**1994 WORLD CUP, US**

The Swiss footballing miracle begins. Georges Bregy's unforgettable free kick takes the team to a 1-0 lead against the US.

Switzerland would have been almost unthinkable. By now, however, the Swiss had begun to be taken more seriously. This was helped by players such as Stéphane Chapuisat, who was a household name among even international referees as a striker for Borussia Dortmund.

### The First World Cup Match in 28 Years

The time had come: In June 1994, Switzerland played its first World Cup fixture in 28 years at the Pontiac Silverdome in Detroit. With a skillful free kick, Georges Bregy scored the historic goal to take the lead, and the encounter ended at 1-1. A decent start. The high point followed a few days later with a 4-1

# Participation in major tournaments is now a matter of course.

victory over Romania. The Swiss fans in the stadium, numbering well over 10,000, celebrated for the first time when Alain Sutter made it 1-0 after a quarter of an hour. The fact that he had started the match with a broken little toe on his left foot and scored the goal with his weaker right foot fitted perfectly with the legend that was forming in those days. Romania's star player Gheorghe Hagi equalized shortly before half-time, but the Swiss came back with a vengeance after the break, scoring three goals – first Stéphane Chapuisat, then Adrian Knup scored twice. In the round of 16, the team bowed out against Spain without a chance, but this World Cup is enshrined in the collective memory of Swiss football fans as the comeback event for the national team.

One and a half years later came the final qualifying match for the 1996 European Championship. Although the tournament was to be held in his homeland, Roy Hodgson moved to Inter Milan in December 1995. Despite his abrupt departure, he achieved hero status in Switzerland as a man who had laid the foundations for two successful decades with his disciplined playing structure.

## The Interim Years – Futile Attempts

Hodgson was followed by five national coaches who shared two characteristics: a lack of success and a short tenure. It was under the Portuguese Artur Jorge, who had led FC Porto to victory in the European Cup, that Switzerland traveled to England for Euro 96. The reputation of the taciturn, shy man soon took a beating. His CV featured a period studying in Leipzig, but he never spoke a word of German. He engendered resentment when, shortly before departing for England, he bade a last-minute farewell to veterans Adrian Knup and Alain Sutter – they were not in the squad for the European Championship. The last friendly match against the Czech Republic in Basel was accompanied by tumultuous protests, and Jorge required police protection. After the failure at the European Championship, he immediately resigned and returned to Portugal.

He was succeeded by Rolf Fringer, whose debut went down in history as the "Disgrace of Baku." The journey to Azerbaijan by luxurious charter flight had taken forever, while Fringer had spent the night before the match enjoying a long evening by the hotel pool. Then Murat Yakin missed a penalty and Switzerland lost 0-1. This disgrace was followed by fur-



**1994 WORLD CUP, US**

An outstanding team performance and a hero: Alain Sutter scores with a broken little toe to make it 1-0 against Romania. The national team eventually wins 4-1.

ther disappointments, and fourth place in the group ended not only qualifying for the World Cup, but also Fringer's time as manager.

Then came Gilbert Gress. The day before his debut against England at Wankdorf, he amused members of the media for the first time when he sought out a local journalist from Neuchâtel to give him a story. According to Gress, his wife had called him and complained that she could not find the remote control for the TV. It transpired that Gress had taken the device with him instead of his mobile phone...

Failure to qualify for the European Championship was less amusing. The team had improved during that time, but what had been thought to be a secure playoff place was lost at the last minute when the Ital-



**EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP QUALIFYING, 1995**

National coach Roy Hodgson (center) celebrates in Zurich after an excellent qualifying campaign for Euro 96 in England.

ians, who had already qualified, lost their final home game against Denmark from a 2-0 lead. Gress did not stay long, and was temporarily replaced by his assistant, Hans-Peter Zaugg, until Argentine Enzo Trossero took the helm in August 2000. Having >



failed to qualify for the World Cup, he threw in the towel at the end of the season.

One of his last actions in the job was to replace Sforza as captain without comment. Sforza had returned for the match against the Faroe Islands after a long injury lay-off. Then, in Toftir, he arrived in the locker room to see that the captain's armband was missing from his kit. Four days later, he sat on the bench for the first time in 74 caps during the match against Slovenia. A second personnel decision also helped shape Trossero's brief time as coach, when he selected a young striker named Alexander Frei to make his debut – the same player who would one day become the national team's record scorer, with 42 goals to his name.

In terms of results, Switzerland found itself in something of a lull during the late 1990s. One reason for this was that many top players had retired after Euro 96 and there was a lack of new blood. Nonetheless, something decisive happened: with financial support from Credit Suisse, which in 1993 became the first major sponsor in the history of the Swiss Football Association, a new training structure was being implemented during those years. Under the aegis of technical director Hansruedi Hasler, professional structures for youth development using full-time coaches were created. This was an investment that was to pay off in the long term.

#### The Kuhn Era – a Difficult Transition

On the day when Köbi Kuhn was to move from his position as U21 national coach to be appointed as head coach of his original club, FC Zürich, he received the offer to take over the national team. He took the job without hesitation, to the delight of the Swiss public. Yet in May 2002, after a 1-3 defeat to a struggling Canadian team at the end of Kuhn's first year, he said "I'm glad that the sheen has worn off somewhat." He made this remark after his "family," as he liked to call the national team, had caused him a few problems. Following the defeat against Yugosla-

**EURO 96, ENGLAND**  
Kubilay Türkyilmaz scores the penalty that seals a 1-1 draw with England at Wembley Stadium on June 8. Despite this, Switzerland finished last in the group and leave the tournament early.



**WORLD CUP  
QUALIFYING, 2005**  
Switzerland qualified for the 2006 World Cup in the play-offs against Turkey. The away game ended in violence and went down in history as the "scandal of Istanbul."

## Despite a lull, decisive things happened at the end of the 90s.

via, in the match that represented the last chance to win a place in the 2002 World Cup, Stéphane Henchoz and Stéphane Chapuisat walked out on him, offended that they had not been selected. Further cracks became apparent after the 0-4 rout by Russia – this time, between Ciriaco Sforza and Johann Vogel. Kuhn had to be told that he had put too much faith in the good in people.

But then, against Austria, in the last friendly before the start of qualifying for the 2004 European Championship, he had an epiphany. Sforza was definitely no longer an option, while Henchoz and Chapuisat returned. Above all, however, Kuhn arranged his midfield in a diamond formation for the first time, with Johann Vogel playing defensive central midfield and Hakan Yakin his attacking counterpart. Switzerland cruised through qualifying with breathtaking ease, suffering only one slip-up against Russia. The team took its final step towards the European Championship on the night before Köbi Kuhn's 60th birthday. Hakan Yakin and Alex Frei scored the goals that won them a 2-0 victory over Ireland in Basel. Afterwards, the whole of St. Jakob-Park sang Kuhn a birthday serenade.

"We made a few correct decisions," said Kuhn before departing for Portugal (probably referring to the decision to drop Sforza). The finals were a learning experience for the Swiss. Although their performances were entirely passable, there was no chance of progressing against the cannier English and French teams. The team did write some sidenotes in the history books, namely 18-year-old Johan Vonlanthen's record as the youngest player ever to score at the European Championship, or the "spitting incident" involving Alex Frei.

All of this had been forgotten by the time Switzerland came to prepare for the World Cup in Germany two years later. The team had developed into a cohesive unit and was very difficult to beat. Having spent many years as a youth coach, Kuhn often selected younger players when in doubt. Of his former U21 team, which had marched to the semifinals of the 2002 European Championship, Alex Frei, Ricardo Cabanas, Ludovic Magnin and Daniel Gygax had already been in the senior squad for some time. They were now joined by Tranquillo Barnetta and Philippe Senderos from the European Champion-ship-winning U17 team.

The 2006 World Cup began with a respectable 0-0 draw with France. This was followed by victory

over Togo in Dortmund on June 19, 2006. "You will never experience this again – an international match in front of so many Swiss fans," Kuhn had told his players beforehand. And he was right. When referee Carlos Amarilla from Paraguay blew the starting whistle at 3:00 pm that hot Monday afternoon, every one of the 65,000 seats in the Westfalenstadion was occupied – roughly 50,000 of them by Swiss fans. They built a "red wall" on the terraces and created an atmosphere as never before. Thanks to goals from Alex Frei and Tranquillo Barnetta, the end result was right as well.

Four days later, 20,000 Swiss were just as enthusiastic in Hanover, celebrating long into the night



after a 2-0 victory over South Korea saw the team qualify for the round of 16. Yet there, an exhausted national team was defeated on penalties by a relatively harmless Ukraine in the blazing heat of Cologne. Not a single penalty (of three) went in. However, on the whole, the World Cup result was a positive one, and the experts predicted that the finest hour of this young team with great potential for development would not come for two years anyway – at the 2008 European Championship, at home in Switzerland.

Yet the Kuhn era ended with difficult times. Five days before the opening game of the European Championship, his wife was admitted to the hospital; in the match itself, his star striker Alex Frei was injured shortly before half-time, and after the surprise defeat against Turkey in the next fixture, his departure was sealed. After one last victory against Portugal, the fans bade a more emotional farewell to Kuhn than had ever been seen for a national coach.

#### The Hitzfeld Era – A New Attacking Approach

Ottmar Hitzfeld was preceded by a reputation as an international coach who brought success wherever he went during his 25-year career. The German saw the danger of too much being expected of him and there-

#### 2006 WORLD CUP, GERMANY

Switzerland wins 2-0 in the group match against Togo at the Westfalenstadion in Dortmund. 50,000 Swiss fans create a once-in-a-lifetime atmosphere.

#### EURO 2008, SWITZERLAND

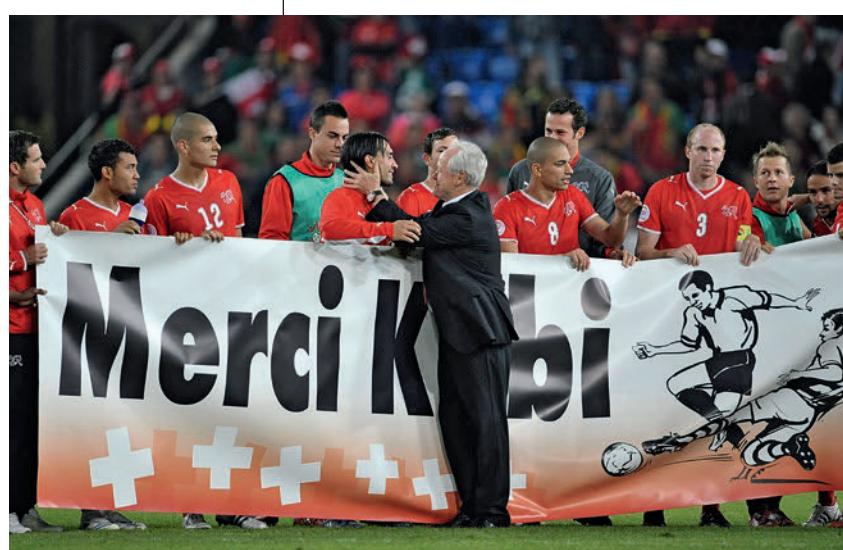
The team makes a premature exit from its home European Championship. Despite this, Köbi Kuhn is celebrated like no coach before at his farewell match.

fore took every opportunity to reiterate: "It is never a foregone conclusion that the small footballing nation of Switzerland will qualify for a major tournament."

He managed it in two out of three attempts – via indirect methods that would almost never have been thought possible. His era is characterized by an emotional rollercoaster. There was the embarrassing home defeat against Luxembourg and the World Cup victory over later trophy-winners Spain. First came resentment, then effusive jubilation, which quickly ebbed again when the team had to leave the World Cup camp in Johannesburg after a 0-0 draw with Honduras. "We were unlucky at the wrong moment," remarked Hitzfeld. Bad luck in a key game against Chile with the early red card for Valon Behrami, which he thinks was wrong to this day. Yet for all the misfortune, the fact that in three World Cup matches, Switzerland scored only a single goal against Spain made it clear that despite some progress, it was still a "nation of defenders."

Today, three and a half years later, some things are different. In Champions League winner Xherdan Shaqiri and former U17 World Cup winners Granit Xhaka and Haris Seferovic, as well as Valentin Stocker, Switzerland has young attacking players who can make a much more creative game. A 5-3 win over Germany, something not achieved for over half a century, and a 4-2 victory in Croatia were outstanding results, even if only in friendly games. Meanwhile, in qualifying for the 2014 World Cup in Brazil, the Swiss showed fresh qualities. They won their group in style and without a single defeat. They have a good goalkeeper in Diego Benaglio; they often defend well; but above all, they have the potential to score goals in every match.

Ottmar Hitzfeld has succeeded in making the breakthrough that was due when the two veteran strikers from Basel, Frei and Streller, retired in the middle of qualifying for the 2012 European Championship. Although it was too late to make up for the false start and the European Championship >



chance was missed, the qualifying games were of enormous value in developing the youngest Swiss national team of all time. It demonstrated its great potential for the first time in June 2011 in the 2-2 draw with England, featuring newcomers Granit Xhaka and Xherdan Shaqiri.

Over the past five years, Ottmar Hitzfeld's immense experience with difficult moments has stood him in good stead. His team has repeatedly won crucial matches. In qualifying for the 2010 World Cup, it was 2-1 in Greece after the disgrace suffered at the hands of Luxembourg; in qualifying for Brazil 2014, things did not look good after the 4-4 draw against Iceland – but four days later, Switzerland secured the points they needed with a 2-0 victory in Norway. "He is at his best under pressure," says Peter Stadelmann, delegate to the national team, of Ottmar Hitzfeld. The man himself explains matter-of-factly: "In this



2010 WORLD CUP,  
SOUTH AFRICA

Switzerland makes sporting history, beating later World Cup winners Spain 1-0 (picture shows goalscorer Fernandes with Barnetta).



WORLD CUP  
QUALIFYING, 2013

Valon Behrami during the 2-0 victory over Norway in Oslo. A highlight of a confident qualifying campaign by the Swiss.

sort of situation, you have to keep a cool head. I don't need to see heads roll in order to have success." This attitude is symbolized by the fact that for the match against Norway, with one exception, he put his faith in the same players that had "failed" against Iceland.

#### 1965 to Present – Epilogue

Elsener, Grobety, Tacchella, Schneiter, Stierli, Dürr, Hosp, Daina, Quentin, Schindelholz and Köbi Kuhn – these are the names of the players of the Swiss team that won the World Cup qualifying match in Tirana in 1965. When Köbi Kuhn returned there as national team manager 37 years later, his players were: Stiel, Haas, Murat and Hakan Yakin, Müller, Magnin, Cabanas, Vogel, Wicky, Frei and Chapuisat. And in Albania in October 2013, Ottmar Hitzfeld deployed the following lineup: Benaglio, Lang, Schär, von Bergen, Rodriguez, Behrami, Inler, Shaqiri, Xhaka, Stocker and Seferovic. Little illustrates demographic development in Swiss football better than the names of the players on these three teams.



WORLD CUP  
QUALIFYING, 2013

"International coach" Ottmar Hitzfeld shows the national team the way (during the 4-4 draw with Iceland).

## The World Cup will be the major test of maturity for this generation, so gifted in offensive play.

The last twenty years represent the most successful period in Swiss footballing history so far. In these two decades, the national team has been somewhat constant rather than throwing the dice and winning big – unlike Denmark or Greece, both of which outperformed themselves and became European champions. In contrast to countries such as Sweden (Zlatan Ibrahimović) or Portugal (Cristiano Ronaldo), Switzerland has never relied on star players, but always had a strong collective. Its rise to become a "minor major power" in football is thanks to the establishment of first-class promotion of young talent and three very different but highly capable national coaches.

Now, the World Cup in Brazil is just around the corner. It will be the first major test of maturity for this generation, so gifted in offensive play. They are being entrusted with writing a new chapter in the history of the Swiss footballing miracle. □

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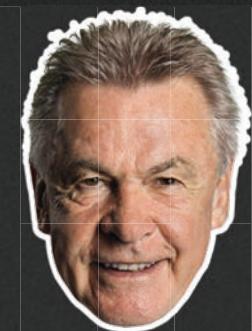
#### ► CELEBRATORY VIDEO

Credit Suisse asked current and former national players about the Swiss footballing miracle. You can watch them tell their best anecdotes at [www.credit-suisse.com/football](http://www.credit-suisse.com/football)

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 **Hansjörg Schifferli** is the editor of Winterthurer Landbote and works for the NZZ. He has missed barely a single match since 1980, attended six World Cup and eight European Championship final rounds, and reported live on at least 325 national games. His personal "greatest hits" include: Victory over Romania at the 1994 World Cup (best game); the solo goal by Kubilay Türkyilmaz against Bulgaria in 1991 (best moment); Stéphane Chapuisat (best player).

Team Line-Up



## MY TEAM

National coach Ottmar Hitzfeld gives us a rundown of the strengths and characteristics of the team members who easily clinched a place in the 2014 World Cup in Brazil.\*



### DIEGO BENAGLIO (31)

Goalkeeper, 54 Intl., 720 Min., 0 G.

A world-class goalie, as he proved once more during the World Cup qualifying match, when he blocked numerous "unblockable" shots.

A big team player and exemplary vice-captain. During Inler's suspension, he was an ideal replacement for the match against Iceland. Before the game, he gave a brief but very good pep talk.



### STEPHAN LICHTSTEINER (30)

Fullback,

60 Intl., 720 Min., 4 G.

He lives and breathes football and puts in extra time in the gym. Thanks to his iron will, he has won several championships as a defender in Italy, which is the epitome of defensive skill. An outstanding player, member of the players' council, simply a model professional.



### STEPHAN VON BERGEN (31)

Center back,

39 Intl., 810 Min., 0 G.

The core of the Swiss defense, he can sense potential threats before they manifest themselves. He has a strong character and can do what needs to be done at the right time. He's reserved but speaks up on specific issues when he thinks it's called for.



### JOHAN DJOUROU (27)

Center back,

42 Intl., 593 Min., 1 G.

Solid as a rock, unbelievably good in the air, and has an excellent forward pass. Pleasant to be around and always smiling, which is very important for team spirit. And very reliable, which is crucial for the coach.



### RICARDO RODRIGUEZ (21)

Fullback,

18 Intl., 810 Min., 0 G.

A modern defender with a lot of qualities on offense. The kind of player that's hard to find nowadays. Member of the "Wild Boys," who won the under-17 world championship in 2009. All of them are full of emotion, have a zest for life, thirst for action, and are full of confidence. That influence does the national team good.



### XHERDAN SHAQIRI (22)

Midfielder,

30 Intl., 745 Min., 8 G.

Clever, sly, and loves to play. Perfect technique, good in front of the goal, brilliant at preparing shots on goal, sometimes almost thinks too fast for his teammates. Makes us unpredictable. His actions can be the deciding factor in winning a match. I am confident he can become a regular player for Bayern Munich.



### VALON BEHRAMI (28)

Midfielder,

45 Intl., 756 Min., 2 G.

Extremely good in a duel and loves teamwork. He runs enough for two, makes up for his teammates' mistakes and senses where the danger is. He's our insurance policy at mid-field. Over the past two years, he has matured into a leader. Doesn't play as recklessly as he used to. He and Inler keep the younger immigrant players under control.



### GÖKHAN INLER (29)

Midfielder,

70 Intl., 810 Min., 6 G.

My ideal captain. Not a natural media spokesman, but he is very genuine and the perfect mid-field policeman. He creates a true esprit de corps and has the backs of the younger players. People underestimate his skill level. His competitive spirit is exemplary, and he's extremely important for our stability.



### VALENTIN STOCKER (24)

Midfielder,

21 Intl., 465 Min., 3 G.

It's easy to forget how young he still is. Has won several championships with Basel and is already well seasoned. A smart guy and passionate player. He's aware of the heavy competition on the national team and has his emotions better in check than with FC Basel. A straightforward player and constant scoring threat.



### GRANIT XHAKA (21)

Midfielder, 23 Intl., 746 Min., 4 G.

Opinion leader among the younger players with clear intentions. Appears unspectacular but has true class. A highly intelligent player, excellent technique, and excels at opening up play. Has room for improvement on final passes and scoring moves. Has a big career ahead of him if he keeps working on himself.



### HARIS SEFEROVIC (22)

Forward, 9 Intl., 446 Min., 1 G.

Just like all the under-17 world champions, he's very self-confident (see Rodriguez). An all-round "pretend" center forward. Blocks well, is good in the air, has a killer left-foot kick, sets up goal shots well. He's got a lot of talent, but he lacks maturity. Still needs to work hard on himself; can't let up.

\* These 11 players spent the most amount of time on the pitch during the 2014 World Cup qualifying campaign.

Intl.: International games

Min.: Playing time during

2014 World Cup qualification

G: Number of goals scored for the national team

# Players, Penalties and Payments

Which haircuts were unforgettable? Which canton had the most players in the 2014 World Cup qualifying campaign? Which players cost the most? Some key facts, plus a few more, about the Swiss national teams of the past 20 years.

Ole Häntzschel (infographic)

## CANTONS

Cantons where the current national players were born.  
If born outside Switzerland, then the first Swiss canton of residence.



## WORLD CUP QUALIFIERS

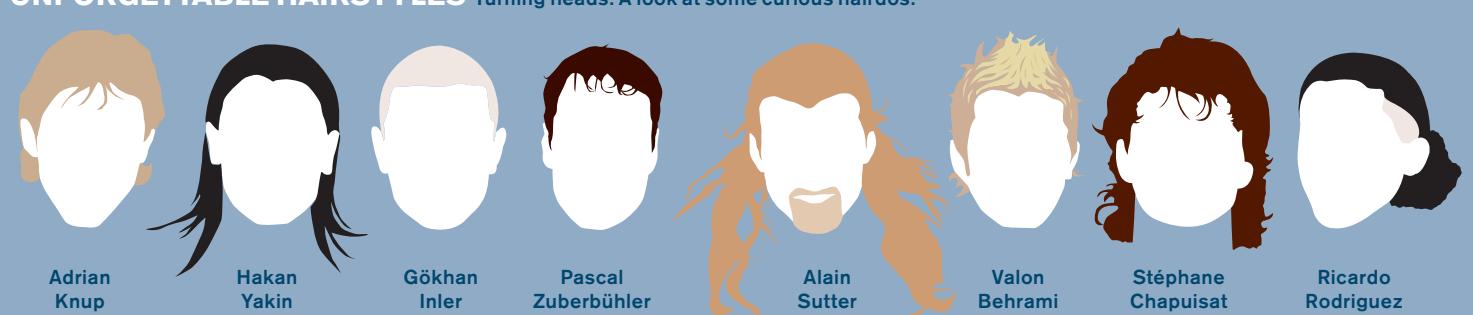
Stats from the 2014 World Cup qualifiers.



## FIFA WORLD RANKING



## UNFORGETTABLE HAIRSTYLES



## INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN RECORD

Players with the most international games of all time.

International matches      Goals

Heinz Hermann



Alain Geiger



Stéphane Chapuisat



Least time on the pitch  
Timm Klose  
2  
(in two matches!)



Second yellow card  
Tranquillo Barnetta  
1  
(in the 75th min.  
against Slovenia)



Player with the most goals  
Xherdan Shaqiri  
10



Croatia  
Bosnia and Herzegovina  
Turkey

Spain  
Cape Verde  
Tunisia  
Nigeria  
Dem. Rep. of the Congo

Italy  
Ivory Coast  
Macedonia

Kosovo

United Kingdom  
Colombia  
Uruguay

Dominican Republic

Albania  
Montenegro  
North Macedonia  
Serbia

Switzerland



Least time on the pitch  
Timm Klose  
2  
(in two matches!)

Second yellow card  
Tranquillo Barnetta  
1  
(in the 75th min.  
against Slovenia)

Player with the most goals  
Xherdan Shaqiri  
10

Offside most often  
Valentin Stocker  
and Haris Seferovic  
4

Current player who has  
been in the most  
World Cup matches  
Tranquillo Barnetta  
7

Least time on the pitch  
Timm Klose  
2  
(in two matches!)

Second yellow card  
Tranquillo Barnetta  
1  
(in the 75th min.  
against Slovenia)

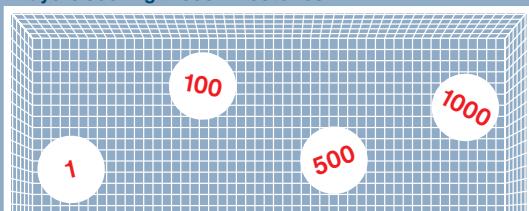
Player with the most goals  
Xherdan Shaqiri  
10

Offside most often  
Valentin Stocker  
and Haris Seferovic  
4

Current player who has  
been in the most  
World Cup matches  
Tranquillo Barnetta  
7

## RECORD GOALS

Players scoring these milestones



First goal      100th goal      500th goal      1000th goal  
May 8, 1908      June 5, 1924      May 2, 1965      October 10, 2009  
Adolf Frenken      Max Abegglen      Köbi Kuhn      Benjamin Huggel

## MOST EXPENSIVE SWISS PLAYERS

Transfer in millions of francs

**24**

Gökhan Inler  
2011  
Udinese Calcio ->  
SSC Neapel

**14,5**

Xherdan Shaqiri  
2012  
FC Basel ->  
FC Bayern Munich

**13,3**

Blerim Džemaili  
2011  
FC Parma ->  
SSC Napoli

**12,7**

Patrick Müller  
2000  
Grasshoppers ->  
Olympique Lyon

**12,5**

Stephan Lichtsteiner  
2011  
S.S. Lazio ->  
Juventus Turin

## LEGENDARY SHIRTS

The Swiss haven't always played in red and white. A selection of shirts since 1993.



1993



1996



1998



1999  
(1 match)



2006



2006  
(1 match)



2010



2013

# Why Swiss Football Is a Success

The ascent of a nation of skiers to become a country with a competitive football culture is astonishing, but no accident. What's still missing is a little ingenuity.

An analysis by award-winning British football writer Simon Kuper.

On December 4, 1898, Switzerland played its first international football match in Basel. As described in 50 Jahre Schweizerischer Fussball- und Athletikverband 1895–1945 (50 Years of the Swiss Football and Athletics Association, 1895–1945), an anniversary publication that takes pride of place in my library, it was a truly “international” encounter, as several English and German players numbered among the Swiss eleven. The Swiss won the match against a team of selected players from southern Germany 3-1.

One might wonder what is so interesting about that, but this early start explains why Switzerland is in such a good position in footballing terms nowadays. For our book Soccernomics, British sports economist Stefan Szymanski and I identified three factors that can be used to make a reasonable prediction of a national team’s chances of success:

- 1 — The country’s population: The greater the pool of potential players, the better.
- 2 — Wealth: Richer countries generally do better than poor nations because they have more money available for sports facilities, medical supplies and coaches.
- 3 — Experience: The more international games a country has played, the better its track record.

Of these three factors, experience is the most important. Using a database of thousands of international matches, we found

that having twice as much experience in international matches as the opponent equates to an advantage of more than half a goal. By contrast, double the population

the 1980s did the national team manage to win more than a third of its matches, and that was the 1940s, when most of its European opponents had certain other things to worry about.

Yet lately, Switzerland has been benefiting from another of its historical advantages – namely, its central geographical location. It is surrounded by three of the world’s leading footballing nations – Germany, France, and Italy – and the transfer of knowledge has come along apace in recent years. Since the 1980s, globalization has affected Switzerland as well. Immigrants from footballing nations came to the country, and their children – known as “secondos” in Switzerland – had more interest in football than in winter sports. More and more foreign television chan-



nels began to broadcast football matches to Switzerland. After 1995, when European footballers were allowed to play anywhere in Europe thanks to the Bosman ruling, increasing numbers of Swiss players gained experience playing abroad. In addition, the clubs professionalized their youth coaching and the Swiss Football Association followed the French model in opening the Credit Suisse Academies – “centers of excellence” for young talent.

## The Transformation in the 1980s

So Switzerland has been gathering international football experience since 1898, but for a long time, it had little success in the sport. For decades, it was a country focused primarily on skiing. In an international context, its footballers were something of a quantité négligeable. According to our statistics, only in one decade before

Although these innovations have yet to yield a true footballing legend, they have produced dozens of players who possess the cardinal virtues of European football – power, pace, tactical discipline and

team spirit. During preparations for the 2006 World Cup, Germany played against a youth team from Geneva. The young players, brimming with confidence, did not concede a single goal until the 25th minute. The Swiss have created a footballing culture.

The only problem comes when they attack – such as on home soil at Euro 2008, when they resembled sheep dancing to hip-hop and were knocked out of the tournament after just four days. Yet in their own way, they are masters. Their 1–0 victory over Spain at the last World Cup was the high point of Swiss football to date.

### Honing Their Skills Abroad

No wonder numerous foreign clubs are now recruiting Swiss footballers. Last season, 35 Swiss played in Europe's five top leagues (see right); this season, the figure is 41 – a record. Raffaele Poli, director of the Football Observatory at the University of Neuchâtel's International Centre for Sports Studies, points out that only Uruguay exports more footballers per capita. And as players at famous foreign clubs, the Swiss footballers are perfecting their European qualities.

The results speak for themselves. From 1990 to 2010, the national team won 43 percent of its matches. These days, Switzerland regularly qualifies for international tournaments. And at those tournaments, the Swiss are masters of the mixed zone, the area in which journalists direct their questions to the players. The Swiss can answer in almost every language, and as eloquently as if they were the football team from a first-class language school. Now all they need is to pick up a little Brazilian flair and collect a couple of international titles. When you think about how far they have come in twenty years, you certainly can't rule it out. □

**Simon Kuper (45)** is a columnist for the Financial Times and author of several award-winning books about football, including *Soccernomics*. The German version was published as *Warum England immer verliert* [Why England Always Loses], Edition Tiamat, Berlin 2012.

Study

## TOP EXPORT: FOOTBALLERS MADE IN SWITZERLAND

When Xherdan Shaqiri completed his transfer from FC Basel to Bayern Munich in summer 2012 for a sum believed to be in the region of 15 million Swiss francs, it was not just a momentous day for the midfielder from a modest background. The transfer also symbolized the growing demand for football players "made in Switzerland."

This is a trend backed up by the Swiss Football Study by the Football Observatory of the International Centre for Sports Studies (CIES). It reports that with 35 players, Switzerland was sixth in last season's list of countries providing footballers to the so-called "Big Five" – the top five European leagues\*. Even more astonishingly, this means that per million inhabitants, Switzerland exports more footballers than any other country except Uruguay (see chart)!

### At Europe's Most Successful Clubs

Another interesting result produced by the study is that Swiss players usually play for successful clubs. Of the ten countries with the most footballers playing abroad, only the Belgians (1.52 points) play for

clubs that pick up significantly more points on average per match than those of the Swiss (1.43). Switzerland's presence in Italy is particularly impressive, where four Swiss players are among the stars at two top clubs, Juventus Turin (Stephan Lichtsteiner) and Napoli (Gökhan Inler, Blerim Dzemaili, and Valon Behrami).

The Swiss Football Study also dispels a common misconception. It disproves the widespread notion that Swiss footballers abroad are "bench-warmers" or "squad players" who rarely see any action at their clubs. The Swiss are in fact also among the top performers in terms of time on the pitch. The 34 Swiss professionals played 40.6 minutes per match on average in the first half of the season, which is only slightly less than the Brazilians (41.2 minutes).

The study reveals that Switzerland has emerged as a leading nation for developing young talent over the past two decades. A select group of around 30 Swiss players (under-15 to under-21) are already at the youth academies of foreign clubs awaiting their opportunities to join the professionals.

## FOREIGN FOOTBALLERS IN EUROPEAN LEAGUES

### Origin of foreign players in the Big Five\*\*

Number of players  
(top 20, first half of the 2012/2013 season)

1. Brazil	120
2. Argentina	98
3. France	91
4. Spain	37
5. Netherlands	36
6. Switzerland	34
Portugal	34
8. Uruguay	31
9. Serbia	29
10. Belgium	24
11. Chile	22
12. Czech Rep.	22
13. Germany	21
14. Colombia	19
Denmark	19
Sweden	19
17. Senegal	18
18. Austria	17
19. Côte d'Ivoire	16

### Relative to population\*\*\*

(number per million inhabitants)

1. Uruguay	9.17
2. Switzerland	4.25
3. Serbia	4.08
4. Denmark	3.40
5. Portugal	3.22
6. Argentina	2.40
7. Belgium	2.16
8. Netherlands	2.15
9. Czech Rep.	2.10
10. Austria	2.00
Sweden	2.00
12. France	1.43
13. Senegal	1.37
14. Chile	1.26
15. Spain	0.80
16. Côte d'Ivoire	0.77
17. Cameroon	0.72
18. Brazil	0.62
19. Colombia	0.40
20. Germany	0.26

\* Only players who have appeared in league matches in these championships are included in the study.

The cut-off date for this study was December 3, 2012.

\*\* 1. Bundesliga, Serie A, Premier League, Ligue 1, Primera División (La Liga)

\*\*\* Source: PRB 2012

# Bend It Like Bachmann



Over the past decade, Swiss women's football has made tremendous progress. And Ramona Bachmann is now an international superstar.

By Michael Krobath

**S**weden's Damallsvenskan all-female football division is the epicenter of ladies' football. When it sent 49 players to the 2013 European Championship, it had more representatives there than any other European league. Last October, it was time to pick the season's most valuable player. The award went to neither Germany's legendary striker, Anja Mittag, nor Spain's precision player, Veronica Boquete. Five-time World Player of the Year, Marta, also got passed by. Instead, the officials chose Ramona Bachmann from Malters in the Canton of Lucerne. With her outstanding performances, the 22-year-old midfielder led LdB FC Malmö to a surprise championship title, beating out Tyresö FF, the overwhelming favorite.

"To me, she is the best female player in the world today," says Jonas Eidevall, Malmö's coach. The Swiss national team's coach, Martina Voss-Tecklenburg, declares: "Switzerland has an international superstar without even realizing it." Ramona Bachmann is undoubtedly an exceptional athlete, the likes of which Swiss men's football has never had. Not a female Shaqiri, but more like a female Messi – as they like to call her in Sweden because of the similarities in playing style between Bachmann and the Argentine super dribbler.

#### **Age 16: Sweden or Bust**

Bachmann's road to international stardom was only natural. At least from her point of view as a little girl. When her mother went to work, she accompanied her father, a former player in the Swiss Nationalliga B and coach for the local club, to practice each day. At the age of five, she started playing with FC Malters herself. She found herself on the boys' squad since there was not a girls' team in the region. "I always had my ball with me, even at home in the living room," she remembers. "I was never interested in anything else." At the start of one summer vacation, her father offered her a reward of 100 Swiss francs if she could do "kick-ups" with the ball 100 times before the vacation was over. Five weeks later, she did it. She was eight years old at the time.

When the Swiss Football Association opened the Credit Suisse Academy in Huttwil, a training center for talented female football players, Ramona Bachmann was part of the first class to attend. "Huttwil was a school of life. It wasn't easy to leave home at the age of 13," she says. The

center offered Bachmann the opportunity to train under professional conditions. After two years and following graduation from school, she spent six months playing for SC LUwin.ch in Lucerne. Then she went for broke. She abandoned her traineeship as a logistics clerk and moved to Umeå at the

ejected from the field in his international debut only a few seconds after kick-off.) Outspoken ambition and a volatile temperament characterized her career for a long time. She never kept her opinion to herself, declaring early on that she wanted to be the best in the world someday. People sometimes interpreted that as arrogance.

Since Martina Voss-Tecklenburg took over the reins in 2012, Ramona has matured into a leader. "Her willingness to run and her defensive skills have improved tremendously," says the national head coach. "Today, she bends over backwards for the team, and her level of acceptance has soared." Bachmann has now played in 50 matches for Switzerland, scoring 27 goals. Together with seasoned Champions League winner Lara Dickenmann, she has become the poster child for the youngest and probably most talented Swiss team of all time. They are the first generation to have benefited from the improvements made in the infrastructure of Swiss women's football while they were junior players. Most of them are now playing for strong leagues outside Switzerland.

The national team is well on its way to its first qualification for a major international tournament. With four victories in four matches, including two away wins against the strong teams from Iceland and Denmark, Switzerland has gotten off to a perfect start for 2015 World Cup qualification. The World Cup in Canada would be a great opportunity for the wunderkind from Lucerne to demonstrate her playing skills on football's world stage. It would also give her a chance to finally be considered for best player in the world. □

## **"She is completely unpredictable and can do things that no one else can."**

tender age of 16. The Swedish town, located 400 km south of the Arctic Circle, had one of the best teams in the world at the time. An average of 2,000 spectators made the pilgrimage to each match. The squad consisted of 20 professionals from six nations. One of them was the previously mentioned Marta, a.k.a. "Pelé in a skirt." The Brazilian was given the job of taking the teenager from Switzerland under her wing. "It didn't take a lot of explaining," recalls Bachmann. "I just wanted to be better than she was at every practice."

In the shadow of a superstar, she quickly matured into a top performer. Over the next four years, her 40 goals in 71 games contributed significantly to two championship titles. Her engagement was interrupted only by a brief stint playing for the US league's Atlanta Beat. She has been under contract with Malmö since 2012.

It is a true experience seeing Bachmann in action. The YouTube clip "Swiss Magician" shows why: speed dribbling, fancy tricks, solo runs across half the field, and spectacular goals from every position. Only 1.62 meters tall, this exceptionally skilled athlete celebrates the game of football with infinite ease. "With the ball at her feet, she is probably the fastest women's player in the world," states Malmö coach Eidevall with conviction. "She does things no other woman can do," says national team coach Martina Voss-Tecklenburg. "She can easily dribble past not just one, but even three opponents."

#### **Red Card in Her First International**

At 16, Ramona Bachmann played her first international match. Just 17 minutes into the game, the referee showed her the red card. (Side note: Lionel Messi was also

*Women's Football*

### **GIRLS' SOCCER IS BOOMING**

**Women's football is growing rapidly in Switzerland. In 1970, there were a total of just 270 licensed female players. At the turn of the millennium, that number had risen to 7,000. Today, there are over 22,000, making football one of the most popular sports among women in Switzerland. The surge is reflected in the first major successes for junior teams. The under-20 squad has already made it to a World Cup twice. Credit Suisse supports the senior national team, the junior teams and the Credit Suisse Academy in Biel.**



Initiation ritual for the Footuro program:  
U19 national player Samuele Campo  
undergoes a medical exam by physiotherapist  
Stephan Meyer in Magglingen.



# Generation Qatar

The national team owes its success to an innovative program for young talent. The future holds the same in store: Meet the new Swiss order.

By Michael Krobath



It's a crystal-clear winter morning at the Swiss Medical Center in Magglingen, and a big day for Samuele Campo. The 18-year-old midfielder from FC Basel with razor-sharp technique and unwavering focus has just learned of his acceptance to the "Footuro" project. As of now, he's one of about 25 "high potentials" between the ages of 17 and 21 that the Swiss Football Association (SFV) has chosen to promote as a potential member of the senior national team. While his fellow team members on the U19 national team are being tested on their vertical jumps in the gymnasium next door, Campo is undergoing the "Footuro" initiation ritual in the high-tech Swiss Olympic Medical Center. For some 90 minutes, his body will be tested and measured down to the last detail by head physiotherapist Stephan Meyer. "It means the world to me to be a Footuro player," says the shy Campo happily as he leaves the Medical Center two hours later. "It shows that they are counting on me."

While the national team prepares for the World Cup in Brazil, the young talent trainers of the SFV are carefully engineering its future success. They are in charge of training a competitive generation of players that will form the heart of the national team at the 2022 World Cup in Qatar.

The young talent coaches apply an internationally renowned training model established in the 1990s (see box) that has brought incredible success to Switzerland since then: the U17 European Championship title in 2002, the historic World Cup victory for the U17s in 2009 and the most recent triumph, second place in the U21 European Championship in 2011. More than any trophy, the coaches are proud of the fact that seven players from the U21 team have made it to the national team. That, after all, is hard currency in their business.

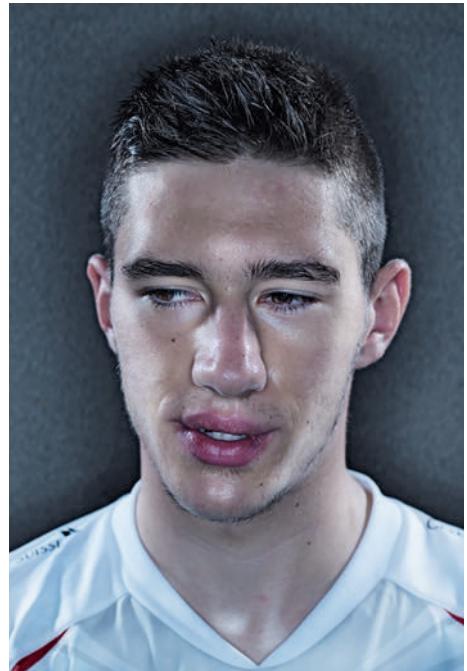
### Potential from 17 to 21

Of course, Swiss football has the same issue that other industries have: The competition never sleeps and is happy to copy a model for success. More importantly, due to Switzerland's small population, the pool of talent is very limited. "Until the age of 18 there are a maximum of 15 to 20 candidates in all of Switzerland that make it to the national team at best," says U18 coach Heinz Moser, "that's why



The U19s taking a vertical jump test.

**Marko Drakul, 17**  
Defender



we have to make the most of each talented player." To secure its spot at European Championship and World Cup competitions in future as well, the SFV has only one choice. It must innovate, innovate, innovate.

With this awareness, it has made improvements to all levels of its "training pyramid" in recent years. It started by creating a national youth football concept for the youngest players. The "Footeco" project was launched for the 11–14-year-olds to mark the transition to strategic talent promotion. It took the "relative age effect" into account for any "late-year babies" using a quota. This refers to the phenomenon of players born in the first few months of a year who are overrepresented in junior team picks due to their more advanced physical development.

The focus is now greater on the top of the pyramid, the 17–21-year-olds. This

is because for years, Switzerland has been among Europe's top ten for the U17s in the UEFA ranking. However, the U19s and U21s are between 10th and 25th, respectively. "An analysis showed that elite training must be more holistic," says Dany Ryser. The U17 World Cup coach works with the U16s now and is in charge of Footuro. "We used to focus only on athletic training, but today Footuro also includes medical and psychological support, along with career planning assistance."

In the medical field, greater attention is paid to stamina and speed, which are becoming more and more critical. "Many who made the national team ten years ago wouldn't stand a chance today," says Markus Tschopp. The head of sports physiology, strength and competitive sports in Magglingen and his team examine the key factors behind speed and

**Samuele Campo, 18**  
Midfielder



The U19s test the strength of their torso muscles.

**Deni Kadoic, 17**  
Defender



create a special training recommendation meant to give each player more speed and endurance.

### Football Is in the Mind

Shani Tarashaj, a center forward in the style of Wayne Rooney (brawny, aggressive, goal-hungry), has benefited as well. Until the age of 14 he played with the Zurich club FC Red Star, when his skills caught the eye of FC Basel and FC Zurich. Ultimately the Grasshoppers won out, where the U19 national player is already among the pros. Footuro tests revealed weaknesses in his torso and his stamina. Thanks to personalized coaching, he improved in every area. "My physical readiness is better on the field now," he says. "I can sprint even in the 80th minute."

It's difficult for young people to put in additional hours apart from their dai-

ly practice sessions. Not everyone is this devoted, which is why players are eliminated from the program on a regular basis. Football, after all, is also in the mind. "You need absolute conviction, I would even say arrogance, to keep up with the best," says Peter Knäbel, the technical director of the SFV. He states with confidence, "We have the potential to improve in terms of mental stamina." One step taken in this direction is the involvement of a sports psychologist in the Footuro program. Take, for instance, Omar Thali, who grew up in Zug with an Egyptian father and a Swiss mother. He looks like AC Milan striker El Sharawy and plays like him, too: lightning-fast, explosive and eager to score. U19 national coach Gérard Castella says Thali's physical condition is excellent, but sometimes his low tolerance for frustration is a problem. "Learning about emotional aspects helps you know

yourself better," says the 18-year old from FC Luzern. "If something doesn't work today, I send fewer negative signals and waste less energy."

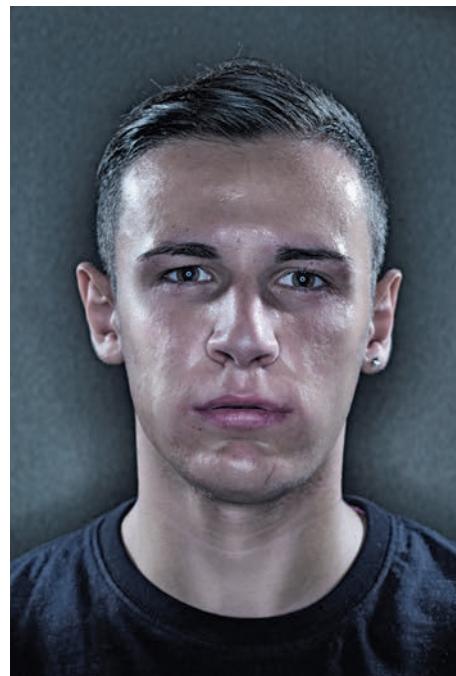
### Departure from Vocational Training

The Swiss coaches also have to rethink the aspect of vocational training, which they long considered to be compatible with football. Now, says Heinz Moser, they have realized: "When we go against the U18s in Spain or Germany, then we have 11 amateurs versus 11 pros. We can't help but miss out." This is why Swiss talent should also become young professionals, or at least attend special schools that allow enough time for sports. Take, for instance, the sports class at the business school in Reinach, which has a number of up-and-coming national players. One such player is Marko Drakul, who has enough time for five to six practice >

**Omar Thali, 19**  
Striker



**Shani Tarashaj, 19**  
Striker



Promoting Young Talent  
**INTERNATIONAL  
INDUSTRY LEADER**

The world renowned Swiss training concept was developed in the mid-1990s by the former technical director, Hansruedi Hasler. The model has three pillars: a close partnership among the SFV, the football league and the clubs; the use of professional coaches for the youth teams; and the efficient use of financial resources. Additionally, the SFV set up training centers for the top talents throughout the country – the Credit Suisse Academies – where some current national players, including Johan Djourou and Haris Seferovic, have learned the ropes. Swiss youth football has been known to the football world at least since the U17 titles in the European Championship and the World Cup. Several times a year, club delegations come to Switzerland from all over the world to learn more about the concept. Many clubs have already launched similar programs.

sessions per week along with the matches. The strong central defender of the U18 national team, who has Serbian roots, has been playing since the age of 12 with FC Basel. "I think about what will happen if I don't make the pros," says Drakul, the son of a doctor and a factory worker, "so I'm going to finish my schooling."

A real power struggle has emerged between Europe's top clubs in the hunt for the stars of the future. Peter Knäbel recalls how ten years ago, only one or two scouts at most would turn up for a national U21 match, whereas there are at least 15 today. The number is much greater at under-21 internationals: "As many as 40 to 50 scouts will be sitting in the stands."

### The "Swiss Way"

The critical question in career planning is this: When is it time to relocate to another country? Most players jump the gun, as

an internal SFV study shows. Of 47 national players analyzed since 2008, only three did not have super league experience: Valon Behrami, Diego Benaglio and Marco Padalino. Or to put it another way: The "Swiss way" is more successful, as the latest transfers of Xherdan Shaqiri and Granit Xhaka – worth millions – show. "Extensive discussions with the young players and their families help us avoid lots of transfers," Dany Ryser is pleased to report. In fact, of the current U18 national team, only Kilian Pagliuca (Olympique Lyon) is playing in another country. He was born in 1996, a generation that the SFV's professional coaches are banking on. If it's up to them, his comrades will provide the foundation of the Swiss guard for Qatar.

This generation has a great deal of talent with an equal dose of chutzpah. Deni Kadoic, defender for FC Basel, was

offered a contract with FC Barcelona at the age of 15, which he politely declined. There's no better sign of confidence in Switzerland's young talent training program. □



# GO SWITZERLAND! THE JUBILEE QUIZ

Ten questions for you, the twelfth man in the Swiss national team.

Or the twelfth woman. Test your football knowledge\*  
and win a trip for two people with the national team.

\*Status as of: December 31, 2013

1. Which place did the Swiss national team occupy in the FIFA world ranking list when it was first published on August 8, 1993?

- Y — 3rd place  
X — 37th place  
Z — 98th place

7. Which record did Johan Vonlanthen break, which an Englishman named Wayne Rooney had broken only four days earlier?

- L — The earliest goal of a European championship  
M — Youngest European championship goalie of all time  
N — The most own goals in one match

2. With which part of his body did Philippe Senderos score all of his goals for the Swiss national team?

- A — Head  
B — Left foot  
C — Right hand

3. Which Swiss football talent, signed to Udinese, was born the same year as the Credit Suisse partnership with the Swiss Football Association?

- O — Jonathan Rossini  
N — Silvan Widmer  
M — Ricardo Rodriguez

4. How long does an official international match last for women?

- L — 70 minutes  
M — 80 minutes  
N — 90 minutes

5. Which Swiss U17 world champion made it onto the national team, albeit that of Thailand?

- R — Haris Seferovic  
S — Charyl Chappuis  
T — Kofi Nimeley

6. Which country puts the most foreigners in the first division of Germany's federal league, the Bundesliga?

- N — Brazil  
O — Switzerland  
P — Poland

## To be won

Grand prize:

*A trip for  
two with the  
national team*

*to an away game for the European  
Championship qualification in the  
fall of 2014, including transport  
and overnight stay in the same  
hotel as the Swiss national team.*

*2nd & 3rd prize: A signed national  
team shirt each*

*4th to 11th prize: A fan cap each*

8. Which current Swiss national player launched his international career in the Credit Suisse Football Academy in Payerne?

- K — Stéphane Chapuisat  
L — Johann Vogel  
M — Johan Djourou

9. Which record in the 117-year history of the Swiss Football Association did the Swiss national team not achieve under Ottmar Hitzfeld?

- C — 14 successive matches without defeat  
D — First early qualification for a World Cup  
E — Highest win in World Cup qualifying

10. In which city will the Swiss national team be based during the 2014 World Cup?

- Q — Porto Alegre  
R — Porto Seguro  
S — Brasilia

## Solution

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Deadline for entries: July 15, 2014

Send the answers to:

CREDIT SUISSE Fussballwettbewerb, Postfach, CH-8070 Zürich

E-mail: fussball.spezial@credit-suisse.com

Terms and conditions of participation: Entry is free and not linked to the completion of a legal business transaction. Entrants must be aged 18 years or over. Employees of Credit Suisse AG ("CS") who are involved in the project, as well as third parties contracted by CS in connection with the competition, are not permitted to enter. Entrants agree that their address details and data may be passed on to other Credit Suisse companies and used for marketing purposes. The data is treated as confidential. Entrants may decline the use of their data for advertising and marketing purposes in writing at any time. If several entrants answer the questions correctly, the winners will be determined by drawing lots and will be personally notified. There will be no cash awards and no correspondence about the competition. There is no right of appeal. By entering the competition, you acknowledge the above terms and conditions.

# Our Biggest Fan

Roger Federer admires the Swiss national football team and envies the players.

By Daniel Huber

*Roger Federer, how much do you like to talk about football?*

Almost as much as tennis. I'm a card-carrying football fan – of the Swiss national team, which many people understand, and of FC Basel, which not so many people understand (laughs).

*You won't be watching much of the World Cup in Brazil; it takes place at the same time as Wimbledon. How will you solve that problem?*

British TV will definitely broadcast all the important highlights and goals a million times and make sure Wimbledon experiences some World Cup feeling. I'm looking forward to it already. Besides, the World Cup starts sooner than Wimbledon and lasts a week longer. That means I should be able to watch all the finals live.

*What do you think the Swiss are capable of in the World Cup final round?*

The problem with, or perhaps the good thing about, tournaments like this is that there are only three games in the first round. And in those three matches, really anything is possible. But I hope and believe the Swiss team will advance to the next round. And who knows what might happen after that?

*Do underdogs have better chances in football than in tennis?*

Of course, because there are more factors at play in football. There you have 22 players deciding the outcome, not just two. Then there is the coach, who can intervene in the game and affect the outcome. And even the calls made by referees carry a lot of weight in football. Tennis offers far less room for surprises simply because of how the game is designed.

*Have you ever met the Swiss national team in person?*

Yes, one time. It was after their surprising 2-1 defeat by Luxembourg in 2008 when the players were being severely beaten up by the press. Ottmar Hitzfeld called me and asked me to meet the team to help them pull themselves together for the next match. Since I was in Switzerland at the time, I was very happy to do it. First and foremost, the players wanted to know how I handle being criticized by the media. Today, I am more the one who could use some media coaching by the national team instead of the other way around (laughs).

*Are there plans for you to see them again?*

Meetings like that are difficult to schedule. Still, I hope the Swiss players know that I'm one of their biggest fans and stand behind them one hundred percent during every match. Every once in a while, I send Ottmar Hitzfeld a text message to congratulate him on a victory.

*What is Roger Federer like as a football fan?*

If people think I go to a sports bar to watch the game and end up getting drunk and rowdy, then I have to disappoint them. I rarely flip out. But whenever FC Basel or the national team is playing, I do of course get excited.

*There are some YouTube videos that show you playing football quite well. Were you in a football club as a kid?*

I played on a football team in addition to tennis until I was 12. Then the coach called me over and said, "Roger, you're allowed to play in matches only if you also come to practice during the week." It was then that I reluctantly ended my football career. Back then, I was already better at playing tennis and was taking part in national and even international tournaments. Of course, I never could have dreamed that I would be good enough to have a career like this.

*Juan Martin del Potro was also a good football player in his youth, just like many other top tennis players. Is there such a thing as a sports gene that makes people good at all types of ball games?*

Good tennis players do indeed often have a talent for other sorts of ball games. They are quite obviously aided by their excellent coordination and feel for the ball. Interestingly, that not only helps them with all racquet-based sports, but also whenever ball contact takes place through the hand or foot. I have always been fascinated by how balls react to external forces, catching them, passing them, watching how they bounce.

*Except for the ball, the sports of tennis and football couldn't be more different. Do you sometimes miss the team spirit that is so important in football?*

Absolutely. As an individual athlete, especially when you win something as huge as the Wimbledon finals, you have no one to hug or run after while cheering in order to vent your emotions. You're trapped inside yourself to a certain degree. I can't run over to the stands to celebrate with the fans, either, like you can in football.

*Why not? You of all people surely have fans all over the world?*

Tradition, etiquette and respect for one's opponent all forbid it. I never would have made it this far as a football player anyway. Tennis is my game. □



When the national team plays, I get excited.

Roger Federer (32), tennis legend and football fan

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## INVESTING IN THE FUTURE MAKES SENSE. IN FOOTBALL TOO.

Credit Suisse promotes football talent.

Credit Suisse has been supporting Swiss football since 1993. Half of the sponsorship funding is used to promote young talent in order to give promising young players a helping hand on their way to the top. Our commitment also helps to ensure that successes such as the U-21 national team coming second in the 2011 European Championship may happen again in the future.

[credit-suisse.com/soccer](http://credit-suisse.com/soccer)