

Introduction



The final round of the UEFA European Under-17 Championship traditionally has a high turnover in terms of participants – this was perpetuated in 2014, when only one of the previous year's finalists (Switzerland) was present. Former winners England, Germany, the Netherlands, Portugal and Turkey joined up with the Swiss in returning and their presence undoubtedly had an effect on the texture of an event marked by attacking ambition.

The 2014 final tournament was impeccably staged, for the first time, by the Malta Football Association (MFA). Three venues were used, including the stadium on the island of Gozo – a fact which introduced the novelty of teams travelling by boat to their games. The group matches were staged as double-headers at Gozo Stadium, Hibernians Stadium and Ta' Qali National Stadium, with all three knockout games played at the latter.

Kick-off times ranged from 11.00 to 18.00, with the second semi-final and the final starting at 20.45 and 19.00 respectively. Training facilities were on a mixture of artificial and natural grass surfaces, with all eight teams given equal shares of each type of surface.

All eight delegations were accommodated in a single hotel, which facilitated interchanges between the playing and coaching staffs. The crowd of 9,422 to watch the final between the Netherlands and England brought the accumulative attendance figure for the tournament to 42,388. Matches were screened on a pan-European basis by Eurosport.

Six referees and eight assistant referees from non-participating countries were selected to gain their first experience at the final tournament of a UEFA competition, along with two Maltese referees who acted as fourth officials.

As has become the custom in recent years, the tournament agenda featured educational briefings on doping controls and the dangers of match-fixing aimed at players who were, in the main, also enjoying their first taste of international competition. Grassroots events were pegged to the final tournament, including a successful 'Reach Out' project which allowed local youngsters to make contact with players from the participating countries.



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Dutch fans before the final

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Attacking mode prevails in Malta

Within two matchdays, the goal tally had already surpassed the total for the whole of the previous year's final tournament and, ultimately, practically doubled it.

Even the hosts, faced with the daunting challenge of competing with three former champions at this level, added their vote to the campaign for attacking philosophies. The results pages may record comprehensive defeats for Sergio Sedano's team, but analysis of their games uncovers evidence of fluid, forward-looking play undermined by lapses of concentration at the other end of the field. Malta's campaign could be symbolised by a clip from their second match when, after failing to convert the chance which would have brought the hosts back to 3-4, vulnerability to an immediate Dutch counter put 2-5 on the scoreboard.



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Hosts Malta had their moments

That result assured the Dutch of a semi-final place, following on from their opening 3-2 win against Turkey. Hakan Tecimer's team had taken a 1-0 lead through striker Enes Ünal before conceding three times and it was an identical story when they took on John Peacock's England three days later. This time, however, their plight was worsened by the dismissal of screening midfielder Hasan Özkan in the closing minute of the first half – and three second-half goals by a rampant England condemned them to an early exit.

After being held to a 0-0 half-time scoreline by Malta, Turkey hit four after the break to achieve a degree of consolation. At the same time, England and the Dutch were rotating their squads for an encounter between two already-qualified teams. Maarten Stekelenburg's side produced the more solid performance, with a 2-0 victory secured by a long-range strike by defender Calvin Verdonk and a short corner which culminated in Danny van der Moot heading one of the fastest goals ever to have been scored by a substitute.

Group B, on the other hand, went to the wire – but not for the Portuguese, it has to be said. Building on the foundations of the ready-made cohesion between the 11 SL Benfica players in the squad, Emilio Peixe's team defended resolutely and probed constantly amid the Scottish and Swiss defenders in their opening two fixtures. They probed deeply enough to provoke errors which gave them 2-0 and 1-0 victories – and assurance, with a game to spare, of a berth in the semi-finals.

But second place was wide open. Germany had dominated almost two-to-one in terms of goal attempts against the Swiss; had gone 1-0 ahead; had failed to convert a penalty (well saved by Gregor Kobel); and ultimately conceded a 1-1 draw to opponents who played the closing minutes with ten players. It was more of the same against Scotland. Christian Wück's side dominated 21-6 on goal attempts but only three were on target. They were felled by a sucker punch within seconds of the restart, with Scott Wright heading the only goal of the game.

That left Scot Gemmill's youngsters needing only to draw with the Swiss – but this seemed a tall order during a wretched opening spell in which Yves Débonnaire's team scored once and could have added more. Switching to 4-4-2 after the break, Scotland scored three to send the Swiss home and make the result of the Portugal v Germany match irrelevant. In the event, the Germans produced only two on-target attempts and lost 1-0 to a much-changed Portuguese lineup.

Undefeated and with their net unruffled, Portugal produced an impressive first half in their semi-final against an England side which frequently surrendered possession in inopportune moments – and areas. After hitting the woodwork three times, Peixe's pupils were frustrated by a blank half-time scoresheet, while Peacock's half-time talk galvanised his team into action. His decision to deploy Dominic Solanke as the most advanced striker paid off when he controlled a long pass by Taylor Moore with a deft left-footed touch and, with equal skill, flicked the ball right-footed into the net. When Patrick Roberts ended an individual slalom by firing a second in off the far post, England had reaped the reward for the greater control and impetus they had displayed after the break.



©Domenic Aquilina
Dominic Solanke celebrates a goal

The other semi-final was effectively decided when the Dutch scored twice in four minutes before the interval against a Scottish team which fought resolutely against a tide of orange-shirted advances. Three goals in the second half crowned a conclusive victory for a team which belied the age group by displaying uncommon maturity and acumen in all departments of the game. The scene was set for a second contest between England and the Netherlands in the space of six days.

The final



The presence of a classic VW Beetle and five Maltese knights mounted on magnificent steeds served as a pre-match omen for a final which blended the virtues of reliable, well-assembled components with the power, pace and panache of a horse brigade. After a battle which had ebbed and flowed and had produced territorial advantages for both contestants, individual duels from the penalty spot decreed who would take the spoils.

Having met in a group match six days earlier and shared a hotel for two weeks, the Netherlands and England were no strangers to each other. As Maarten Stekelenburg and John Peacock handed in their team sheets, the two coaches knew what to expect. When the Swedish referee signalled the start of play, minor positional adjustments came into view.

In the Dutch front line, Steven Bergwijn and Segun Owobowale swapped the central and left-flank positions. In the English attack, Patrick Roberts, the electric left-footer hitherto deployed Messi-style on the right, switched to his 'natural' left-wing berth. The injury to central attacker Adam Armstrong obliged Peacock to repeat the plan B which had paid off during the semi-final against Portugal. He promoted Dominic Solanke into the spearhead role with Joshua Onomah exploiting his slipstream with power and pace.



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The teams knew each other well

As the shadows lengthened at the Ta' Qali National Stadium, the crowd of almost 10,000 spectators was held in muted fascination as familiarity bred respect. In the Dutch camp, the front four tried high pressing, but England successfully played their way out of trouble and remained

loyal to their build-from-the-back philosophy.

On the right flank, Bilal Ould-Chikh used his pace and changes of direction to test the English left-back. But Tafari Moore, pigtail flapping in the cool evening breeze, was equal to the task – and when his charge attempted to cut inside, there was the industrious screening midfielder Lewis Cook to race into the interception. The Dutch pivotal midfielders, Donny van de Beek and Jari Schuurman, probed at the centre of the English defence – but Joseph Gomez and Taylor Moore manned the ramparts with efficiency and aplomb, with captain and leader Ryan Ledson ready to lower the portcullis in front of them.

Central defender Calvin Verdonk tried the long-range shooting which had broken the deadlock in the earlier confrontation; the Dutch tried the short corner which had produced the second goal. But there was no repeat performance. The English, focused and well prepared, were not going to be caught out twice. What is more, the full-backs – Jonjoe Kenny on the right, Tafari Moore on the left – were aware that they could spike Dutch guns by surging forward and obliging the wingers to chase back.

At the other end, a similar story was being drafted. Isaiah Brown, trying to capitalise on solo trickery, tested Yanick van Osch in the Dutch goal but, as the teams alternated spells of territorial dominance, struggled to find routes through the well-organised orange ranks. Until the 25th minute. England's first corner from the left – and their second of the match – was hit deep beyond the far post, where Gomez headed back across goal. A half-clearance was put back into the box by Taylor Moore, and Solanke exploited momentary defensive chaos by driving a low shot past Van Osch.

Understandably, the goal prompted a reduction in the Dutch team's risk-management levels – and increased their vulnerability to English counters. Van de Beek earned a yellow card for emergency measures against a power-run through midfield by the impressive Onomah.

Peacock had witnessed a performance which had barely prompted him to put pen to the notebook balanced on his knees. A minute before the break, however, he appeared on the touch line at a moment when the tide of the battle seemed to have turned against his team. Bergwijn had dropped deep to make central space available to the onrushing Schuurman. The attacker produced a delightful through ball which, for once, caught the central defenders napping and allowed Schuurman to home in on Freddie Woodman and beat him with a deflected finish just inside the post. There was barely time to restart – and the Dutch seemed to have delivered a telling psychological blow seconds before the break.



©Domenic Aquilina
Jari Schuurman celebrates his goal

Peacock's hurriedly-revised half-time talk therefore focused on shrugging off the blow and on persuading his players to continue to operate as they had done for the opening 39 minutes. As soon as play restarted, it became obvious that his voice had been heard. While the Dutch were prioritising antidotes to English raids on the flanks, combinations through the middle between Onomah and Solanke began to pose a serious alternative threat. The majority of incidents took place in the Dutch defensive third, including a goal-bound backpass

which Van Osch felt obliged to handle. However, the resultant free-kick simply illustrated the difficulty of scoring when the entire opposing team is lined up between the posts.

The Dutch cause was not helped when Bergwijn retired injured seven minutes into the second half and was replaced by Marton Slabbekoorn. But it was a further adjustment to the front line which created a flurry of half-chances in the closing minutes. With the clock ticking down on a stuttering clockwork orange, Stekelenburg sent on target striker Dani van der Moot. Moments after a flick-on had set Slabbekoorn free, only for his shot to be blocked by last-ditch defending, a deep cross from the right reached Van der Moot beyond the far post. But haste was the striker's enemy as he snatched at the chance and sliced his volley wide. Seconds later, the referee blew the final whistle and decreed a trial by penalties.

Previous trials of this nature had produced tribulations for English teams – enough to load them with psychological baggage. Peacock, however, had coaxed his players into practising the discipline throughout their stay in Malta as the pay-off to every training session. The search for perfection had been backed by video replays of the spot kicks which had failed to hit the net. The question-mark was over their ability to reproduce training-ground aplomb in a high-tension scenario in front of a big crowd.

With England initiating the shoot-out, captain Ledson led by example. Woodman, having fine-tuned his own performance during the training-ground rehearsals, then dived to his right to save from Van der Moot. Van Osch, however, was no match for the well-drilled English takers and, with 3-1 on the scorecard, a touch of irony handed Peacock's side a match-ball. Verdonk, the only player during the entire tournament to have successfully converted a spot kick, sent Woodman the wrong way – but placed his left-footed shot wide of the keeper's right post. Up stepped Kenny to confidently clinch a 4-1 shoot-out victory and the European title.



©Domenic Aquilina
Ryan Ledson scores his penalty

English jubilation contrasted with the disconsolate Dutch players' disbelief that they had played the entire competition without defeat, yet had failed to win it. But, as the young mascots formed a guard of honour waving, ironically, orange balloons, it was the England team which walked up to receive gold medals from UEFA president Michel Platini. As the climax to a tournament which could be hailed as an ode to attacking football, it was Ryan Ledson who lifted the trophy.

Technical topics

"It was a magnificent tournament for youngsters learning how to play the game," commented UEFA technical observer Ginés Meléndez. "All eight teams – and not just the ones rated as potential winners – tried to construct, tried to build via combinations in midfield. It was great entertainment and it was something special to see such attacking football and such creativity. All eight teams were very similar. Not in terms of playing systems but with regard to their concepts about attacking and defending. If we saw a lot of goals, it was about well-constructed attacks and not about poor defending."

The result of attacking vocations was a tournament which contrasted sharply with the 2013 finals, at which only 24 goals had been scored and the champion had found the net four times in five games.

A pair of wings

The recent trend towards a 4-2-3-1 structure was continued at the final tournament in Malta, where six of the eight contestants used this formation as a default setting. Turkey and Portugal opted for a more clearly-defined 4-3-3 system, though the former's frequently evolved into a 4-1-4-1. Other teams also introduced shades of meaning via flexibility from game to game or during the 80 minutes – Scotland providing a prime example of the latter with strategic switches to 4-4-2 and Switzerland permuting 4-2-3-1 with 4-3-3.

Tactical flexibility made an impact on the tournament. Trailing 1-0 at half-time in the crucial group match against Switzerland, the Scots made a double half-time substitution, sending on Craig Wighton and Ryan Hardie to operate as the striking partnership in their switch to 4-4-2. On taking the advantage, this evolved into a 4-4-1-1 structure with Wighton as the more advanced striker and Hardie dropping deep to receive the ball and launch hard-running counter-strikes. A three-goal dividend from the tactical change allowed Scotland to reach the semi-finals at the expense of the Swiss and Germans, who might have been considered the pre-tournament favourites to qualify.

However, although team shapes ebbed and flowed, the common denominator in Malta was the use of the wide areas by fast, skilful wingers who were key components in the 4-2-3-1 and 4-3-3 structures. Even the teams eliminated in the group phase were equipped to run at opponents on the flanks. Malta, with Aidan Friggieri and Joseph Mbong, provided a prime example of ambitious, attack-minded play based on rapid incursions on the wings.

The approach work of semi-finalists Portugal relied heavily on the contributions by Diogo Gonçalves and Buta or João Carvalho in the wide areas. The finalists also exemplified the effectiveness of wing play. The high-speed dribbling skills and directional changes of Steven Bergwijn and Bilal Ould-Chikh were fundamental weapons in the Dutch attacking armoury, while England created a similar sense of danger via Patrick Roberts and Isaiah Brown.

Most teams effected positional interchanging of their wingers during the 80 minutes, but the presence of 'inverted wingers' was a notable element among their starting positions. The trend towards fielding left-footers as right-wingers and vice-versa opened the door for the wide players to cut inside and either search for shooting opportunities (both Bergwijn and Roberts occupied places among the leading scorers) or to open space on the wings for the overlapping full-backs. These players also made significant contributions to their teams' attacking play – to the extent that there were many candidates to join England's Jonjoe Kenny and Tafari Moore in the UEFA technical team's selection of the most notable players of the tournament, particularly Portugal right-back Hugo Santos or Scotland left-back Kyle Cameron.



©Domenic Aquilina
England full-back Jonjoe Kenny

A constructive approach

All eight teams gave preference to building from the back, with Turkey sometimes providing the exception to prove the rule by opting for direct lofted supplies to their target striker and captain Enes Ünal. The general *modus operandi* was based on possession play with, when the goalkeeper had the ball, the two full-backs advancing; the two centre-backs splitting wide; and the screening midfielder (or one of them) dropping deep to form a core triangle.

To compete at this level, centre-backs therefore needed to be technically equipped to detect and deliver the forward pass in addition to their basic requisites in terms of defensive skills. They tended to be positionally conservative, though the German pair of Lukas Boeder and Benedikt Gimber were prepared to push forward in search of numerical superiority in midfield. Furthermore, England centre-back Joseph Gomez was willing to indulge in powerful upfield runs, notably the high-speed incursion as far as the Turkish byline, when he produced the cutback that allowed Dominic Solanke to tap in the equaliser.

With almost all teams focusing on playing their way through midfield, screening midfielders had crucial roles to play in construction work and, more especially, in opening play to the flanks. Portugal operated with a single midfield screen, Rúben Neves making an outstanding contribution at the base of a triangle in which Gonçalo Rodrigues performed a box-to-box role and the gifted Renato Sanches produced the creative touches which linked midfield with attack. Among the teams who deployed twin screens, the balance between the two pivotal players was a relevant factor. In the English line-up, captain Ryan Ledson was the constant provider of leadership qualities and defensive cover, while other tasks were shared among his colleagues in midfield. The Dutch pair of Donny van der Beek and Jari Schuurman also achieved a nice balance in terms of shielding the back four and pushing forward to support attacks.

The strike force

With the exceptions of Scotland's switches to 4-4-2 and Fatih Aktay's support to Enes in the Turkish attack, the teams operated with a solitary striker. Enes could be cited among the few forwards with a 'target man' profile (a topic which can be linked to the lack of headed goals referred to as a 'talking point' elsewhere in this report). Among the teams in Malta, the trend was clearly towards a mobile central attacker prepared to drift wide to receive or to open



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Turkey captain Enes Ünal

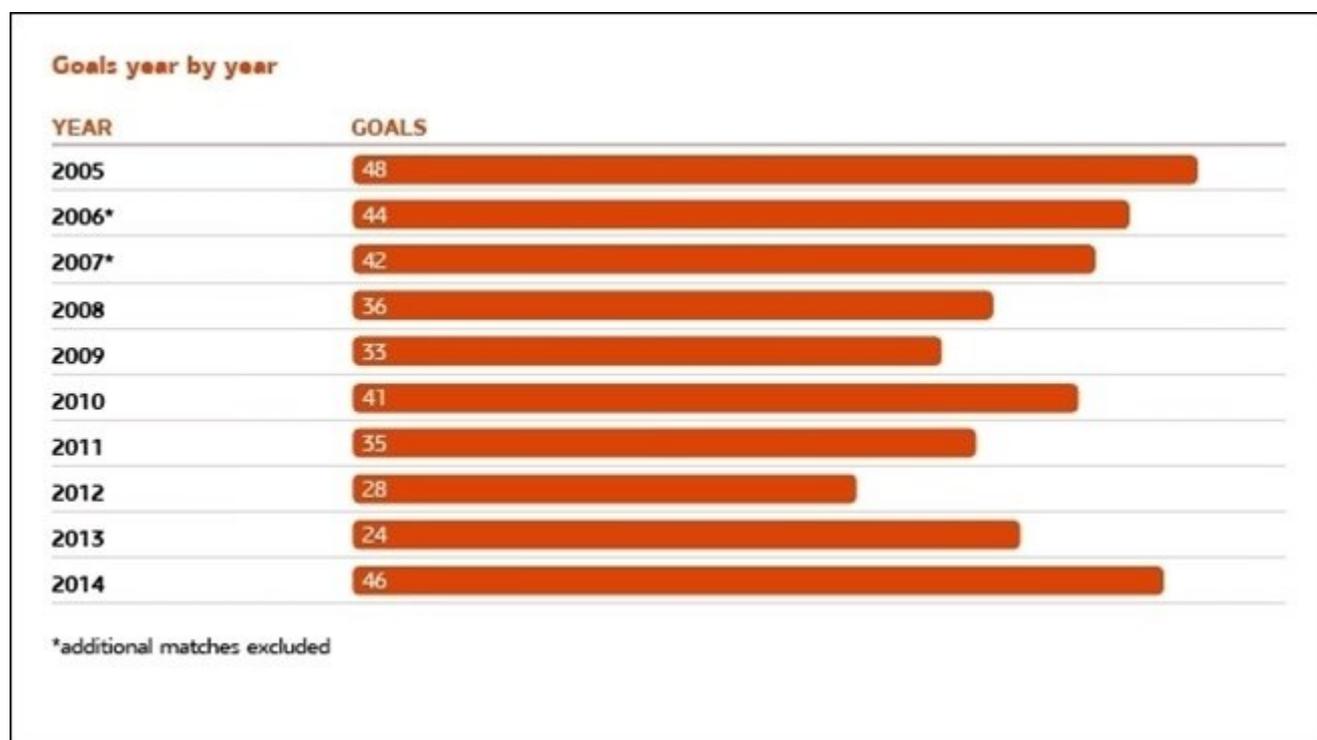
central spaces. England's Adam Armstrong, the Dutch team's Segun Owobowale or Portugal's Alexandre Silva were prime examples. On the other hand, the Dutch squad contained target striker Dani van der Moot as an attacking option but, although he supplied two goals, strikers were not the predominant force among the tournament's leading scorers.

Name	Team	Goals
Dominic Solanke	England	4
Jari Schuurman	Netherlands	4
Fatih Aktay	Turkey	3
Steven Bergwijn	Netherlands	3
Patrick Roberts	England	3
Calvin Verdonk	Netherlands	3
Dani van der Moot	Netherlands	2
Hayrullah Alici	Turkey	2
Luís Mata	Portugal	2
Enes Ünal	Turkey	2
Adam Armstrong	England	2
Abdelhak Nouri	Netherlands	2

Goals talk

The tournament total of 46 goals at an average of fractionally over three per match represented a sharp contrast to the previous season's final tournament in Slovakia, which had registered an all-time low of 1.6 goals per game. Comparisons can be unreliable in the sense that only the Swiss were making a second successive appearance, and the 2014 lineup featured six former champions of Europe at this level who travelled to Malta with ambitions of adding to their collection of silverware. As Meléndez remarked "I've been at so many tournaments with the Spanish side,

but this has to be among the most impressive. The concepts displayed by the teams were extraordinary in terms of speed and dynamism, creativity and movement. It was all about the sort of possession play I identify with – progressive, vertical possession using the width of the pitch and pushing players up to the box to support attacks. The number of goals reflected the philosophies of the teams and the quality of their attacking play."



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The contrast between the two tournaments can be highlighted by comparisons between the two champions. In 2013, Russia won the title with an average of 6.60 goal attempts per match, of which 3.2 were on target. The table below includes the figures for the 2014 champions.

2014 Attempts table

TEAM	ON TARGET	OFF TARGET	BLOCKED	WOODWORK	TOTAL	AVERAGE	GOALS
England	33	32	27	1	92	18.40	10
Germany	9	22	15	0	46	15.33	1
Malta	12	13	7	1	32	10.67	2
Netherlands	34	40	11	4	85	17.00	16
Portugal	21	29	14	4	64	16.00	4
Scotland	14	14	6	0	34	8.50	4
Switzerland	11	12	5	0	28	9.33	2
Turkey	13	13	9	1	35	11.67	7

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How the goals were scored

A salient feature of the tournament was that only five goals (11%) were derived from set plays; two of these were penalties converted by Dutch defender Calvin Verdonk. Three other spot kicks (in normal play) were saved by the goalkeeper. Only two goals stemmed from corners – both in confrontations between the Netherlands and England. During the group match, substitute Van der Moot headed in from close range after a short corner had resulted in the ball being played into the box. Then, in the final, England opened the scoring after a deep corner had been headed back across the box from beyond the far post. They represented the only rewards from 121 corners.

Only one goal was the result of a direct free-kick, with Portugal's Pedro Rodrigues hitting a shot which evaded attackers and defenders alike to find its way into the German net.

Debating the key elements behind set-play successes, the coaches pinpointed the quality of delivery as a determining factor.

Despite the quality of the combination moves and solo runs, the main source of open-play goals was long-range shooting, often attributable to situations where defences had been dragged deep, leaving unprotected areas in the proximity of the box. Although defence-to-attack transitions were generally fast, only three goals could be genuinely attributed to counterattacks, one of them being the Gomez upfield surge which led to England's equaliser against Turkey.

How the goals were scored in 2014			
CATEGORY	ACTION	GUIDELINES	GOALS
Set plays	Corners	Direct from / following a corner	2
	Free-kicks (direct)	Direct from a free-kick	1
	Free-kicks (indirect)	Following a free-kick	
	Penalties	Spot kick (or a follow-up from a penalty)	2
	Throw-ins	Following a throw-in	
Open play	Combinations	Wall pass / 3-player (or more) combination	4
	Crosses	Cross from the wing	6
	Cutbacks	Pass back from the byline	3
	Diagonals	Diagonal pass into the penalty box	3
	Running with the ball	Dribble and shot / dribble and pass	6
	Long-range shots	Direct shot / shot and rebound	12
	Forward passes	Through pass or pass over the defence	5
	Defensive errors	Bad passback / mistake by the goalkeeper	2
	Own goals	Goal by the opponent	
	Total		46

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The goals were unevenly distributed over the 80 minutes, with only 14 (30%) scored during the first half compared with 32 after the interval. However, it would be risky to venture the fatigue factor as an explanation for the preponderance of second-half goals, as only seven hit the net during the closing ten minutes and none during additional time.

Minutes	Goals		Goals		Goals	
	2014	%	2013	%	2012	%
1-10	1	2	1	4	3	11
11-20	5	11	3	12	3	11
21-30	4	9	2	8	2	7
31-40	4	9	4	17	2	7
41-50	8	17	4	17	1	4
51-60	10	22	1	4	5	18
61-70	7	15	4	17	5	18
71-80	7	15	3	12	5	18
80+	0	0	2	9	2	6

The card game

The tournament in Malta produced 307 fouls, compared with 413 in the previous year – a downturn of 25%. What is more, the 15 matches yielded 30 yellow cards in comparison with 68 in 2012 and 54 in 2013. Two players were red-carded at a final tournament where the two finalists also emerged as the top two in the UEFA fair play ranking.

Fatigue and fitness

The intensive match schedule made heavy demands on the players, obliging coaches to focus on rest and recovery during the two days between fixtures. Three of the semi-finalists (England, Netherlands and Portugal) were able to share workloads as a result of securing their place in the last four with a group game to spare. However, some coaches had to contend with fatigue accumulated prior to the trip to Malta. The Germany squad, for instance, contained players who had contested their final domestic championship matches days before the final tournament.

"Some are already in the Under-19 and youth leagues," commented coach Christian Wück, "and had already played 50 or so games before travelling to Malta. At this stage of player development, we need to be careful to differentiate between 'athletic conditioning' and 'football conditioning' and accept that, in terms of working the players, a 'less-is-more' policy is the most appropriate." Malta's Sergio Soldano also stressed "we need to keep a balance in physical preparation. It's essential to remember that football is not a science – but that science can help."



©Sportsfile
Germany coach Christian Wück

Aptitudes and attitudes

"These tournaments are about developing players. The work dynamic is different and, when you

have so many days together, you focus on man-management aspects related to group spirit and a sense of responsibility. So, apart from individual qualities, I look at a player's ability to integrate into the group, his behaviour, his ambition to improve. We have to help to form the player's attitudes." The words by Portugal's Emilio Peixe reflected the majority view among the coaches in Malta in terms of selection criteria.

Netherlands coach Maarten Stekelenburg concurred: "I look to make a nice mix of personalities and also ask basic questions like: 'Is he a talent?' or 'Is he just physically strong?' In Holland we can pretty well take technical ability for granted, so we need to look at other things, like what they actually contribute on the field; whether 'will to win' is among their capacities and whether we feel that they genuinely have a chance of reaching the 'A' team."

"It's important to know youth players as persons, to see what they do off the pitch," Swiss coach Yves Débonnaire added. "And it's fascinating to track each player's development, to keep an eye on the players who rise or fall year by year. Some of our U16s, for example, didn't make it into this team and others have developed enough to come in."

Débonnaire is a staunch supporter of the Swiss association's policy of entrusting the youth development teams to educators rather than big-name former players – a view endorsed by Scotland's performance director Mark Wotte. "I'm a former physical education teacher," he commented, "and I believe it's important that educational background should be present in coaching." Stekelenburg, a youth development specialist, prefers a mixed approach: "I wanted to work with a recently-retired player and recruited Mark van Bommel – who unfortunately wasn't able to go to the final tournament."



©Domenic Aquilina
Scotland performance director Mark Wotte

Peixe, a former international player, said that "as a national team coach at these levels you're not so much working on technique as on improving tactical knowledge, reading of the game and interpreting concepts." Débonnaire echoed this view: "You transmit concepts rather than work on details and you use guided-discovery methods to encourage players to solve problems."

The future

The tournament in Malta was the last to feature eight teams, with the 2015 finals in Bulgaria switching to 16 participants. The coaches unanimously hailed the change as an important advance in youth football. "It's a positive move," said Turkey's Hakan Tecimer, "because it will offer exposure to a greater variety of systems and tactics. This means better educational opportunities and a greater chance to measure yourself against other countries and to progress. For the coaches working at youth development levels, it also means more contacts with the colleagues in charge of other teams."

Talking points



Vanishing spray in use ©Domenic Aquilina

A head start?

The issue of headers became headline news at UEFA EURO 2012, where headed goals accounted for 29% of the tournament total. The striking statistic has provided a benchmark for comparisons with subsequent tournaments and, at the 2013 UEFA European Under-17 Championship in Slovakia, one of the notable features was that only two goals (of 24) were headers.

This trend was perpetuated in Malta where, even though the goal tally for the final tournament was practically doubled, headed goals were limited to a grand total of three. Scott Wright headed Scotland's winner against Germany; Fatih Aktay's header pulled Turkey back to 2-3 against the Dutch; and a short corner led to Dani van der Moot clinching a 2-0 win for the Netherlands against England in their final group game. Curiously, the last two were scored by substitutes within seconds of entering the field of play.

There is no need to put a negative spin on that statistic, however. The dominant characteristic of the final tournament was ball-to-feet possession play, exemplified by the two teams who disputed the final. Both the Netherlands and England were more susceptible to create danger via wingers who generally preferred to cut inside rather than act as traditional purveyors of high crosses from the flanks. Much the same could be applied to the Portuguese modus operandi, with wingers aiming to strike low crosses or dribble their way into positions along the byline from where they could cut the ball back.

The extremely low ratio of headed goals in the last two final tournaments therefore gives rise to an interesting debating point. While heading ability remains a prerequisite for central defenders, is it becoming a neglected art among attackers? Even though the game may be drifting away from the cross-plus-header recipe for goals, how much work at youth development levels should be dedicated to aerial ability?

Break points

One of the novel features of the final tournament in Malta was the experimental use by referees of aerosol spray to mark the positions of the ball and the defensive wall at set plays. The spray produced white marks which vanished within a few minutes. The coaches in Malta unanimously endorsed the experiment. "It was positive," said Turkey's Hakan Tecimer, "because it made it easier for the refs to concentrate on other things." Portugal's Emilio Peixe added: "I think it helped to earn greater respect for the referee." Ginés Meléndez, a member of UEFA's technical team at the tournament, said: "It translated into fewer yellow cards and greater respect for the referee and the rules of the game. But it could have been a bit quicker."

The latter point was echoed by many of the coaches. The referee carried the can in a holster but was not always quick on the draw. Procedure was, first of all, to mark the position where the taker needed to place the ball – and there was one comment about referees needing to make sure that the procedure did not prevent the taker from exploiting the advantage of a quickly-taken free-kick.

The referee then paced out the distance and sprayed a line to mark the position of the defensive wall. It has to be said that one of the positive features of the tournament in Malta was that it did not provide a plethora of free-kicks in areas where a defensive wall was required. But, in one of the group games, timings of two such cases revealed that the procedure, from whistle to whistle, took 53 and 51 seconds respectively. Subsequent readings brought the average down to something in excess of 40 seconds.

The debating point here is whether this figure is genuinely excessive. As a stand-alone statistic, it might seem slow. But is it necessarily a lengthier procedure than the time-honoured scenario of the referee having to dedicate time to re-positioning or even cautioning encroaching defenders?



©Domenic Aquilina
Scotland's Scott Wright scored a header

The topic will, evidently, be pursued at administrative and sporting levels. But it is legitimate to record that the on-site feedback from coaches and referees at the tournament in Malta was highly positive. So was the reaction to the decision by referees to make use of a natural stoppage in play (a throw-in, a free-kick, an injury or a substitution) to give the players a 'water break' midway through each half.

In point of fact, temperatures in Malta were not excessive – indeed, there was no need for water breaks on the chilly, sometimes rainy evenings when the knockout games were played. But this is often an issue when youth tournaments are played in southern climes and where concerns about the players' well-being are paramount. During the group stage, many matches kicked off at 11.00, 11.15 or 15.15 local time, meaning that the players were exposed to the sun pretty much at its zenith.



©Sportsfile
There were water breaks in Malta

A talking point here is to what extent the water breaks should be exploited as coaching opportunities. The coaches in Malta were well aware that, around the 20-minute mark, the referee would gesture towards the touch line and provide them with the equivalent of a 'time-out'. In other words, it afforded them two coaching opportunities in addition to the traditional half-time team talk.

The spray and the water add up to another talking point. During the match where the aerosol procedure for two free-kicks added up to 1m 44secs, the water breaks were of two minutes in the first half and 94 seconds in the other. At the end of the second half, the referee signalled four minutes of added time – of which all but 42 seconds were consumed by the water break and the two free-kicks. The debating point here is whether the 'spray procedure' should be regarded as a natural part of the game or as a 'stoppage' which needs to be reflected in the total amount of time added to the duration of each half?

Birthday present; birthday future?

For readers who refer back to the technical reports on previous final tournaments, the following lines might be as familiar an experience as it is to blow out candles on birthday cakes. It is an annual occurrence. The ineluctable fact is that the opportunities to acquire international experience at this age level – or the lack of them – have become a perennial talking point.

Debate focuses on the birth dates of the 144 players who started the tournament in Malta. In Slovakia a year earlier, 29% of the 'workforce' had been born in either January or February. In 2014, this increased to 32%. In other words, almost one-third of the players had birthdays in one-sixth of the year.

In Malta, 61 of the players (42%) had been born between January and March of 1997, with a further 17 celebrating birthdays in April. No fewer than 11 of the German squad and ten of the Portuguese were born during the first quarter of 1997, followed closely by England (nine), Netherlands and Turkey (both eight). For the record, 11 players had post-1997 dates of birth – three of them goalkeepers and five of them members of the Maltese squad. The English, German and Turkish squads were comprised exclusively of players born in 1997.



©Daniel Balzan
Malta's Aidan Friggieri was born in 1998

But the point for discussion is that the final tournament featured only 11 players born during the last three months of the year – a frugal 7.6% of the total. The German and Portuguese squads did not include any players born between October and December. Bearing in mind the ongoing nature of this scenario, the perennial questions can be asked once again. What more can be done to offer equal opportunities to gain international experience at this level? Is talent being lost to the game purely on the basis of birth dates?

Winning coach



England manager John Peacock watches on ©Domenic Aquilina

Peacock's pursuit of perfection

"It's never nice for a team to lose on penalties, but England have been there before, so it's nice that it was our turn to be successful." John Peacock's balanced attitude to victory translated into an immediate move towards his counterpart Maarten Stekelenburg after the winning penalty had been converted. The Dutch coach, however, had already entered the field of play to console his players – meaning that the fraternal handshake between colleagues had to be momentarily postponed.

After he had put an end to England's 17-year drought in UEFA youth competitions by leading the Under-17 side to victory against Spain in the 2010 final in Liechtenstein, Peacock had remarked: "What was missing was a trophy to put our name on. Hopefully, we won't have to wait another 17 years for another one." After his hope was fulfilled in Malta, he repeated the sentiment he had expressed four years earlier: "I'm absolutely delighted for all the players."

His delight had been hard-earned. Convincing performances against Malta and Turkey had generated optimism. "I had to stress to the players," he admitted, "that we were a team with potential but that there were other excellent teams in the tournament and that we would have to work hard to beat them." His attempt to keep feet on the ground was reinforced by the defeat against the Netherlands and a first half in the semi-final against Portugal which could have engendered a serious deficit for his side. As it did in the final, his half-time team talk provoked positive responses.

Television images of the England manager gesticulating on the touch line are a rarity. Peacock has no qualms about leaving his assistant, Kenny Swain, to deliver instructions from the technical area. He places importance on trust and cohesion among his backroom team – and considers

them relevant factors when selecting his squad.

"The dynamics of the group are fundamental," he maintains. "For psychological and social reasons you need a united group. If you can, you need to mix flamboyant characters with quieter ones and then hand a bit of 'ownership' to the players when it comes to organising the life of the group. These tournaments give the boys an understanding of what it is to be a top player and, if they don't have the right attitude to a two-week tournament, they may not be equipped for top-level football."

The viewpoint is expressed by a voice of experience. After a playing career truncated by injury at 24, Peacock began coaching three years later with an eight-year spell at the English Football Association (FA) in a variety of roles which included responsibility for the U16 team. In 1998, he acquired a new slant on youth development by taking charge of a club academy, producing nine first-teamers and 14 age-group internationals while at Derby County FC. He also added an Academy Directors' Licence to his UEFA Pro Licence.

Peacock was back at the FA in 2002, primarily as the U17 coach, but often lending a helping hand to colleagues responsible for England's other age-group teams. Since 2007, he has been the association's head of coaching.

"I have seen an evolution at this level," he comments. "The general standard has improved. Levels of technique obviously vary, but teams tend to be better organised, well-drilled and difficult to beat. I think that a sign of this is the fact that nowadays there are more U17 players who are already involved with the first-team squads at their clubs."



©FA
England training base St George's Park

Team of the Tournament

Goalkeepers



1 Yanick van Osch
 Netherlands



1 Gregor Kobel
 Switzerland

Defenders



2 Jonjoe Kenny
 England



3 Tafari Moore
 England



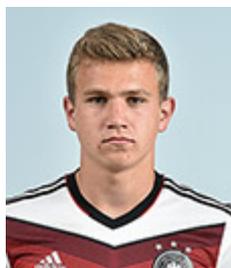
4 Calvin Verdonk
 Netherlands



5 Joe Gomez
 England



13 Francisco Ferreira
 Portugal



13 Lukas Boeder
 Germany

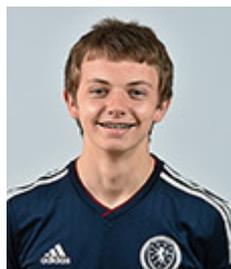
Midfielders



4 Ryan Ledson
 England



6 Rúben Neves
 Portugal



7 Aidan Nesbitt
 Scotland



8 Jari Schuurman
 Netherlands



10 Renato Sanches
 Portugal



10 Dimitri Oberlin
 Switzerland

Forwards



7 Steven Bergwijn
 Netherlands



9 Enes Ünal
 Turkey



9 Alexandre Silva
 Portugal



18 Patrick Roberts
 England

UEFA technical observers



©Domenic Aquilina

Technical observers Ginés Meléndez and Romeo Jozak

UEFA fielded a two-man technical team at the final tournament in Malta:

Romeo Jozak is a former winger who, having earned his PhD in kinesiology at Zagreb university, is now technical director and board member at the Croatian Football Federation (HNS). He is also head of technical development with responsibility for overseeing the country's age-limit teams and women's football. He is a UEFA and FIFA coach instructor and a regular speaker at UEFA coaching events but, at the final tournament in Malta, was making his debut as technical observer.

Ginés Meléndez is current technical director of the Royal Spanish Football Federation (RFEF), switching to the role after a distinguished record as coach of the Spanish squads which have been dominant forces in age-group football in recent times. Regarded by his colleagues as a youth development 'guru', he has led Spain to European and world finals. At the Spanish national association since 2002, he combines his deep involvement in youth development with the role of director of the national coaching school, while also acting as a UEFA and FIFA coaching instructor.

Team analysis



England



No.	Player	Born	Pos.	NED	TUR	MLT	NED	POR	GS	Club
1	Freddie Woodman	04/03/1997	Goalkeeper	80	80	80	80			Newcastle United FC (ENG)
2	Jonjoe Kenny	15/03/1997	Defender	80	80	80	80	80	1	Everton FC (ENG)
3	Tafari Moore	05/07/1997	Defender	66*	80	80	80	72*		Arsenal FC (ENG)
4	Ryan Ledson	19/08/1997	Midfield	80	80	80	80	80		Everton FC (ENG)
5	Joe Gomez	23/05/1997	Defender	80	80	80	80	80		Charlton Athletic FC (ENG)
6	Dael Fry	30/08/1997	Defender	80		80				Middlesbrough FC (ENG)
7	Demetri Mitchell	11/01/1997	Midfield	68*	10+	30+				Manchester United FC (ENG)
8	Joshua Onomah	27/04/1997	Midfield	80		69*	80	44+		Tottenham Hotspur FC (ENG)
9	Adam Armstrong	10/02/1997	Forward	33+	70*	80		36*	2	Newcastle United FC (ENG)
10	Dominic Solanke	14/09/1997	Forward		65*	59*	80	80	4	Chelsea FC (ENG)
11	Izzy Brown	07/01/1997	Forward	80	80		80	80		Chelsea FC (ENG)
12	Mandela Egbo	17/08/1997	Defender	80	14+			8+		Crystal Palace FC (ENG)
13	Sam Howes	10/11/1997	Goalkeeper	80						West Ham United FC (ENG)
14	Lewis Cook	03/02/1997	Midfield		80	11+	74*	80		Leeds United (ENG)
15	Taylor Moore	12/05/1997	Defender	12+	80		80	80		RC Lens (FRA)
16	Callum Cooke	21/02/1997	Midfield	59*	15+	21+	6+	3+		Middlesbrough FC (ENG)
17	Josh Sims	28/03/1997	Midfield	47*		80				Southampton FC (ENG)
18	Patrick Roberts	05/02/1997	Forward	21+	80	50*	80	77*	3	Fulham FC (ENG)

Pos. = Position; GS = Goals scored; * = Started; + = Substitute

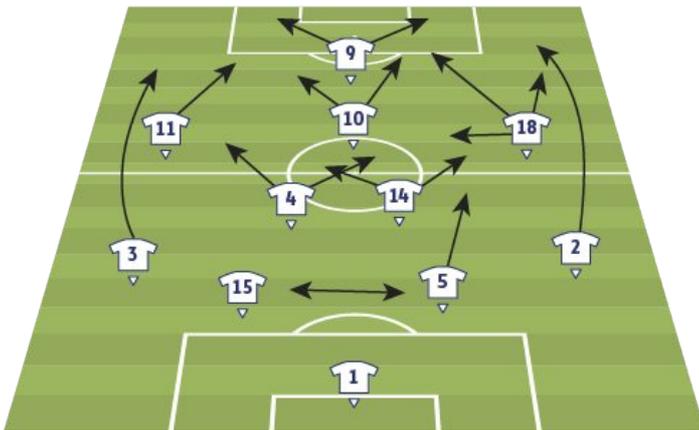
Coach: John Peacock

27/03/56

"I'm delighted for the players. Not just because they won the tournament but because they showed character. There were moments when they had to dig deep and had to regroup collectively. We played the final very well. We had a really good game plan; we controlled things well and deserved to go in front. The equaliser just before half-time could have been a knockout blow, but the lads really showed character in the second half. If you're going to win anything, you've got to have characters in your side who can come back from a bit of adversity."



England team analysis



- Variations on 4-3-3 with single or twin screen in midfield
- High levels of technique; physical strength; quick to ball
- Progressive, high-tempo possession game based on building from back
- Power runs by centre-back Joe Gomez and midfielder Joshua Onomah = dangerous counters
- Fast, explosive wingers ready to run at defences; adventurous full-backs
- Ryan Ledson the controlling midfielder dictating tempo of passing game
- Confident, composed in possession; strong team ethic, mental strength



Germany



No.	Player	Born	Pos.	SCO	SUI	POR	GS	Club
1	Timo Königsmann	05/04/1997	Goalkeeper	80	80	80		Hannover 96 (GER)
2	Robin Tim Becker	18/01/1997	Defender	80	80			Bayer 04 Leverkusen (GER)
3	Nicolas Clasen	25/02/1997	Defender	80	80*	80		VfL Borussia Mönchengladbach (GER)
4	Matthias Bader	17/06/1997	Defender		1+	67*		Karlsruher SC (GER)
5	Benedikt Gimber	19/02/1997	Defender	80	80	80		TSG 1899 Hoffenheim (GER)
6	Damir Bektic	30/01/1997	Midfield	66*	80	62*		Hertha BSC Berlin (GER)
7	Arianit Ferati	07/09/1997	Forward	80	80	74*		VfB Stuttgart (GER)
8	Benjamin Henrichs	23/02/1997	Forward	80	80	80	1	Bayer 04 Leverkusen (GER)
9	Phillipp Ochs	17/04/1997	Forward	80	79*	80		TSG 1899 Hoffenheim (GER)
10	Max Besuschkow	31/05/1997	Midfield	49*	80	6+		VfB Stuttgart (GER)
11	Oguzhan Aydogan	04/02/1997	Forward	14+	53*			FC Schalke 04 (GER)
12	Patrick Bade	10/01/1997	Goalkeeper					Bayer 04 Leverkusen (GER)
13	Lukas Boeder	18/04/1997	Defender	80	80	80		Bayer 04 Leverkusen (GER)
14	Patrick Kammerbauer	11/02/1997	Defender			13+		1. FC Nürnberg (GER)
15	Ole Käuper	09/01/1997	Midfield	31+				SV Werder Bremen (GER)
16	Finn Porath	23/02/1997	Forward	40*	27+	18+		Hamburger SV (GER)
17	David Sauerland	28/06/1997	Midfield			80		Borussia Dortmund (GER)
18	Allessandro Fiore-Tapia	04/03/1997	Forward	40+	1+	80		SC Freiburg (GER)

Pos. = Position; GS = Goals scored; * = Started; + = Substitute

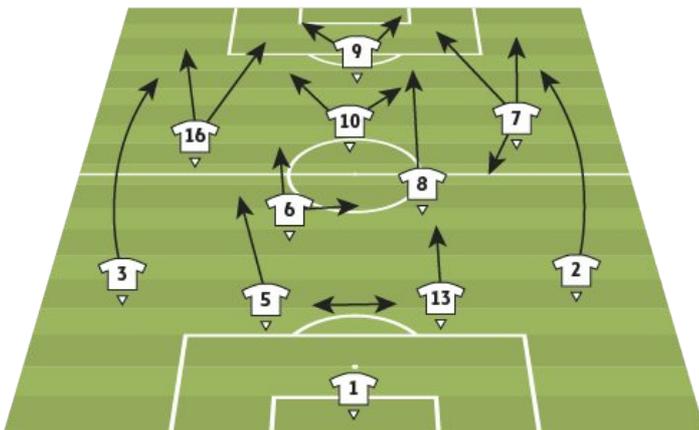
Coach: Christian Wück

09/06/73

"We had so many scoring opportunities that we didn't take in all three games. We had bad luck, hitting the woodwork, missing a penalty ... we should really have got a better reward. The disappointment was very big among the players and the coaching staff. It's very difficult for young people of 16 or 17 to take this on board, and it's not easy to lift spirits. We have to analyse the games and hope that the players learn from the tournament. You don't only learn from success – you also learn from defeat."



Germany team analysis



- 4-2-3-1 with quick, compact narrow defensive block
- Centre-backs ready to advance and create numerical superiority in midfield
- Emphasis on building combination moves from back
- Good diagonal passing from centre-backs to open play to wings
- Fast, skilful, interchanging wingers supported by overlapping full-backs
- Fast transitions in both directions; dangerous counterattacking
- Quality of approach play not matched by accuracy of finishing



Malta



No.	Player	Born	Pos.	ENG	NED	TUR	GS	Club
1	Jamie Azzopardi	01/09/1997	Goalkeeper	80	80	80		Mosta FC (MLT)
2	Daniel Buckle	29/07/1997	Defender	80	80	61*		Hibernians FC (MLT)
3	Jean Borg	08/01/1998	Defender	80	80	80		Valletta FC (MLT)
4	Nick Ghio	18/06/1998	Defender	73*	80			Hibernians FC (MLT)
5	Matthew Guillaumier	09/04/1998	Midfield	80	80	80		Saint Andrew's FC (MLT)
6	Christian Degabriele	07/03/1997	Defender	80	46*			Pietà Hotspurs FC (MLT)
7	Aidan Friggieri	28/04/1998	Forward	80	80	80	1	Sliema Wanderers FC (MLT)
8	Jake Grech	18/11/1997	Midfield	73*	80	80		Hamrun Spartans FC (MLT)
9	Kyrian Nwoko	04/07/1997	Forward	80	55*			Saint Andrew's FC (MLT)
10	Conor Borg	13/05/1997	Midfield	80	65*	79*		AC Chievo Verona (ITA)
11	Joseph Mbong	15/07/1997	Forward	40*	80	80	1	Hibernians FC (MLT)
12	Mikhail Sciberras	17/05/1997	Goalkeeper					Balzan Youths FC (MLT)
13	Myles Beerman	13/03/1999	Midfield	40+	25+	80		Floriana FC (MLT)
14	Iousef Meli	07/11/1997	Defender	7+	34+	80		Sliema Wanderers FC (MLT)
15	Mark Scicluna	24/02/1997	Midfield			80*		Sliema Wanderers FC (MLT)
16	Neil Spiteri	03/06/1997	Defender			19+		Floriana FC (MLT)
17	Juan Corbolan	03/01/1997	Midfield	7+	15+	1+		Balzan Youths FC (MLT)
18	Neil Tabone	01/10/1997	Midfield					Floriana FC (MLT)
19	Luke Galea	21/01/1997	Defender			1+		Hamrun Spartans FC (MLT)

Pos. = Position; GS = Goals scored; * = Started; + = Substitute

Coach: Sergio Soldano

29/11/60

"In the squad we had five players born in 1998 and one in 1999, and we demonstrated that there is great potential. I was very pleased that the lads never let their heads drop, even when they were two or three goals down. We still kept trying to score. It was hugely beneficial to take on teams and experience situations totally different to what we usually encounter. The pace and the tactical quality was much higher. The more tournaments like this we can play, the more our football will grow."



Malta team analysis



- 4-3-3 with Matthew Guillaumier, Conor Borg, Jake Grech alternating as twin screen
- Adventurous attacking approach; high level of motivation
- Effective use of wide areas by Aidan Friggieri (right) and Joseph Mbong (left)
- Well-organised team; good level of physical condition
- Deep defending with screening midfielders and wingers back
- Fast counterattacks based on direct supply to target striker Kyrian Nwoko
- Dangerous set plays with good quality delivery



Netherlands



No.	Player	Born	Pos.	ENG	MLT	TUR	ENG	SCO	GS	Club
1	Yanick van Osch	24/03/1997	Goalkeeper	80	80	80	80	80		PSV Eindhoven (NED)
2	Hidde ter Avest	20/05/1997	Defender	74*	80		80	80		FC Twente (NED)
3	Keziah Veendorp	17/02/1997	Defender	80	60*	80	80	80		FC Groningen (NED)
4	Calvin Verdonk	26/04/1997	Defender	80	80	80	80	80	3	Feyenoord (NED)
5	Wellington Verloo	27/02/1997	Defender		80	80	80	80		Vitesse (NED)
6	Donny van de Beek	18/04/1997	Midfield	80	80	80	80	73*		AFC Ajax (NED)
7	Steven Bergwijn	08/10/1997	Forward		80	80	47*	69*	3	PSV Eindhoven (NED)
8	Jari Schuurman	22/02/1997	Midfield	80	80	80	80	80	4	Feyenoord (NED)
9	Dani van der Moot	07/03/1997	Forward	13+	21+	55*	4+	11+	2	PSV Eindhoven (NED)
10	Kenneth Paal	24/06/1997	Midfield	67*	58+	1+	22+	7+		PSV Eindhoven (NED)
11	Anthony Berenstein	02/03/1997	Forward		22*	80*				FC Utrecht (NED)
12	Rick van der Meer	14/06/1997	Defender	6+		80				Feyenoord (NED)
13	Segun Owobowale	22/03/1997	Forward	67*	20+		80	80	1	ADO Den Haag (NED)
14	Abdelhak Nouri	02/04/1997	Midfield	80	80	25+	58*	80	2	AFC Ajax (NED)
15	Mauro Savastano	16/04/1997	Defender	80						AFC Ajax (NED)
16	Justin Bijlow	22/01/1998	Goalkeeper							Feyenoord (NED)
17	Marlon Slabbekoorn	01/02/1997	Midfield	13+		55*	33+	20+		Feyenoord (NED)
18	Bilal Ould-Chikh	28/07/1997	Forward	80	59*	25+	76*	60*	1	FC Twente (NED)
19	Guido Janssen	09/01/1997	Defender							FC Utrecht (NED)

Pos. = Position; GS = Goals scored; * = Started; + = Substitute

Coach: Maarten Stekelenburg

13/12/72

"We won all our official games during the season and the last one was a draw, so it was hard to lose on penalties. It was tough, disappointing and sad, but I felt proud of my boys. England sat back a bit in the final and tried to catch us on the counter. That was their strategy and they were good at it. We had ten minutes in the second half when we lost a bit of control but we came back strongly and could have won. We had a team of very smart players, technically and tactically of a high standard, and we can feel proud of a great season."



Netherlands team analysis



- 4-3-3 with twin screen in midfield; fast transition to 4-5-1 defending
- Strong emphasis on ball-to-foot possession play, neat combinations
- Goalkeeper reacting fast to control space behind back four
- Good diagonal passing (notably Calvin Verdonk) from centre to flanks
- Jari Schuurman, Donny van de Beek dictating pace of game as midfield pivots
- Exceptional one-on-one abilities among front four; ready to run at opponents
- Compact, disciplined, focused unit in attacking and defensive modes



Portugal



No.	Player	Born	Pos.	GER	SCO	SUI	ENG	GS	Club
1	Pedro Silva	13/02/1997	Goalkeeper		80	80			Sporting Clube de Portugal (POR)
2	Hugo Santos	08/06/1997	Defender		80	80	80		SL Benfica (POR)
3	Rúben Dias	14/05/1997	Defender	80	80	80	80		SL Benfica (POR)
4	Pedro Rodrigues	20/05/1997	Defender	80		9+		1	SL Benfica (POR)
5	Yuri Ribeiro	24/01/1997	Defender	7+	80	80	75*		SL Benfica (POR)
6	Rúben Neves	13/03/1997	Midfield	28+	80	80	80		FC Porto (POR)
7	Diogo Gonçalves	06/02/1997	Forward		76*	58*	80		SL Benfica (POR)
8	Gonçalo Rodrigues	18/07/1997	Midfield	52*	64*	71*	54*		SL Benfica (POR)
9	Alexandre Silva	16/03/1997	Forward	40+	80	80	80		Sporting Clube de Portugal (POR)
10	Renato Sanches	18/08/1997	Forward		80	80	80	1	SL Benfica (POR)
11	Luís Mata	06/07/1997	Forward	80	24+	27+		2	FC Porto (POR)
12	Fábio Duarte	11/05/1998	Goalkeeper	80			80		SL Benfica (POR)
13	Francisco Ferreira	26/03/1997	Defender	80	80	80	80		SL Benfica (POR)
14	Pedro Empis	01/02/1997	Midfield	80			5+		Sporting Clube de Portugal (POR)
15	João Carvalho	09/03/1997	Midfield	73*	4+	22+	78*		SL Benfica (POR)
16	Diogo Izata	06/01/1997	Defender	80					FC Porto (POR)
17	Pedro Delgado	07/04/1997	Midfield	80	16+		2+		FC Internazionale Milano (ITA)
18	Buta	10/02/1997	Forward	40*	56*	53*	26+		SL Benfica (POR)

Pos. = Position; GS = Goals scored; * = Started; + = Substitute

Coach: Emilio Peixe

16/01/73

"It's a development process and it was an important moment for the young players. They made a very positive impression, though we wanted a different ending to the story. I think we showed quality and that, because of the way we were organised and our individual ability, we deserved to reach the final. I think we played the best-quality football at the tournament and, even though we went home sad, the players had good reason to feel proud of their performances."



Portugal team analysis



- 4-3-3 with single screening midfielder and two wingers
- Good teamwork by strong, compact defensive line from same club
- Rúben Neves the midfield pivot; excellent passing, switches of play
- Renato Sanches the skilful, creative link between midfield and attack
- Direct runs by interchanging wingers; attack well led by striker Alexandre Silva
- Fluent, progressive possession play based on neat short passing
- Well-structured team; high levels of individual and collective qualities



Scotland



No.	Player	Born	Pos.	GER	POR	SUI	NED	GS	Club
1	Robby McCrorie	18/03/1998	Goalkeeper	80	80	80	80		Rangers FC (SCO)
2	Sam Wardrop	20/10/1997	Defender	80	80	80	6+		Celtic FC (SCO)
3	Thomas Lang	12/06/1997	Defender	7+	67*		1+		Birmingham City FC (ENG)
4	Jack Breslin	06/04/1997	Defender	80	80	80	80		Celtic FC (SCO)
5	Kyle Cameron	15/01/1997	Defender	73*	80	80	80		Newcastle United FC (ENG)
6	Joseph Thomson	14/01/1997	Midfield	80	80	80	80		Celtic FC (SCO)
7	Aidan Nesbitt	05/02/1997	Midfield	80	80	80	80		Celtic FC (SCO)
8	Michael Kelly	03/11/1997	Midfield			1+			Aberdeen FC (SCO)
9	Craig Wighton	27/07/1997	Forward	15+	80	40+	80*	1	Dundee FC (SCO)
10	Steven Boyd	12/04/1997	Forward		40+		26+		Celtic FC (SCO)
11	Scott Wright	08/08/1997	Forward	65*	40*	79*	74*	1	Aberdeen FC (SCO)
12	Mackay Devlin	23/01/1997	Goalkeeper						Kilmarnock FC (SCO)
13	Calvin Miller	09/01/1998	Forward	73*	13+	40*			Celtic FC (SCO)
14	Ryan Hardie	17/03/1997	Forward		40+	40+	80	1	Rangers FC (SCO)
15	Aidan Mcilduff	20/04/1997	Defender	7+	40*				Celtic FC (SCO)
16	Zak Jules	07/02/1997	Defender	80		80	80		Reading FC (ENG)
17	Cameron Ballantye	13/04/1997	Defender	80	80	40*	80		Dundee United FC (SCO)
18	Jake Sheppard	30/05/1997	Defender	80		80	54*	1	Reading FC (ENG)

Pos. = Position; GS = Goals scored; * = Started; + = Substitute

Coach: Scot Gemmill

02/01/71

"The manner of defeat in the semi-final was hurtful for the players. There's often a thin line between winning and losing and we went toe-to-toe with an excellent Dutch team for 30 minutes. But once the game swung, it was difficult against technical players who were always capable of scoring goals. The lads were very upset but they're young players and they're still learning. They need to see the bigger picture – and that might take some time. But they went home as better players and with every reason to hold their heads up high."



Scotland team analysis



- 4-2-3-1 with switches to 4-4-2, always with twin midfield screen
- Physically strong back four holding high line; good aerial strength
- Good shot-stopping and defensive covering by goalkeeper Robby McCrorie
- Emphasis on building through midfield, opening play to wings
- Aidan Nesbitt the skilful, industrious catalyst linking defence with attack
- Attacks supported by full-backs, especially Kyle Cameron on left
- Excellent team and work ethics; mental strength; never-say-die attitude



Switzerland



No.	Player	Born	Pos.	GER	POR	SCO	GS	Club
1	Gregor Kobel	06/12/1997	Goalkeeper	80	80	80		Grasshopper Club (SUI)
2	Samir Bajrami	03/07/1997	Defender		80	80		Grasshopper Club (SUI)
3	Tobias Schättin	05/06/1997	Defender	80	71*	80		FC Winterthur (SUI)
4	Alban Selmanaj	19/04/1997	Defender	80	9+	77*		FC Basel 1893 (SUI)
5	Mirlind Kryeziu	26/01/1997	Defender	80	80	80		FC Zürich (SUI)
6	Remo Arnold	17/01/1997	Midfield	75		80		FC Luzern (SUI)
7	Arxhend Cani	02/08/1997	Midfield	63*	71*	58*		FC Basel 1893 (SUI)
8	Djibril Sow	06/02/1997	Midfield	80	80	80		FC Zürich (SUI)
9	Albian Ajeti	26/02/1997	Forward	78*	80	80		FC Basel 1893 (SUI)
10	Dimitri Oberlin	27/09/1997	Midfield	80	80	80	1	FC Zürich (SUI)
11	Roberto Alves	08/06/1997	Midfield		15+			Grasshopper Club (SUI)
12	Senad Mujovic	26/05/1997	Goalkeeper					Grasshopper Club (SUI)
13	Noah Loosli	23/01/1997	Defender		80			Grasshopper Club (SUI)
14	Robin Huser	24/01/1998	Midfield	70*		3+		FC Basel 1893 (SUI)
15	Harun Alpsoy	03/03/1997	Defender	2+	80	58*		Grasshopper Club (SUI)
16	Kevin Rüegg	05/08/1998	Defender	80				FC Zürich (SUI)
17	Derek Kutesa	06/12/1997	Midfield	10+	65*	22+		Servette FC (SUI)
18	Boris Babic	10/11/1997	Forward	17+	9+	22+	1	FC St Gallen (SUI)

Pos. = Position; GS = Goals scored; * = Started; + = Substitute

Coach: Yves Débonnaire

12/12/56

"It's down to consistency in your performance and discipline in your game plan. The players are going to learn from this, then we will see if they do anything about it. Some will learn and act on it, whereas others learn and then don't do anything about it. That's what makes the difference. Some of these will be around at Under-21 level and some won't because they haven't learnt correctly. That's the reality, but that's why this tournament is magnificent."



Switzerland team analysis



- Variations on 4-3-3 with single or twin screen in midfield
- Quick transitions to compact 4-4-1-1 when defending
- Emphasis on combination play from back and through midfield
- Effective use of direct long passing, notably against Scotland
- Full-backs ready to push forward, especially Tobias Schättin on left
- Good one-on-one abilities among front four; striker Albian Ajeti a permanent threat
- Excellent goalkeeping, initiating build-ups with good distribution



Turkey



No.	Player	Born	Pos.	ENG	NED	MLT	GS	Club
1	Tarık Çetin	08/01/1997	Goalkeeper	80	80	80		Fenerbahçe SK (TUR)
2	Savaş Polat	14/04/1997	Defender	57*	80			Fenerbahçe SK (TUR)
3	Bahadır Çiloğlu	05/01/1997	Defender	80	80	80		Fenerbahçe SK (TUR)
4	Burak Bekaroğlu	16/04/1997	Defender		80	80		Sakaryaspor (TUR)
5	Ertuğrul Ersoy	13/02/1997	Defender	80	80	80		Yeşil Bursa A.Ş. (TUR)
6	Hasan Özkan	14/11/1997	Midfield	40	80			KV Mechelen (BEL)
7	Sabit Yılmaz	27/07/1997	Forward	45+	80	40*		Turgutluspor (TUR)
8	Birhan Vatanserver	25/04/1997	Midfield		76*	80		Galatasaray AŞ (TUR)
9	Enes Ünal	10/05/1997	Forward	80	78*	40*	2	Bursaspor (TUR)
10	Emirhan Aydoğan	26/06/1997	Midfield	80	80	80		Bursaspor (TUR)
11	Doğuş Can Incedere	15/01/1997	Midfield	41*	55*	21*+		Galatasaray AŞ (TUR)
12	Übeyd Adiyaman	02/10/1997	Goalkeeper					Gençlerbirliği SK (TUR)
13	Alican Özfesli	01/01/1997	Midfield	35*		19+		Altınordu A.Ş. (TUR)
14	Furkan Ünver	30/01/1997	Defender	80				Bursaspor (TUR)
15	Okan Çelik	01/01/1997	Midfield	23+				Gençlerbirliği SK (TUR)
16	Tuncay Kılıç	02/05/1997	Midfield	39+	4+			Göztepe (TUR)
17	Hayrullah Alici	07/01/1997	Forward		25+	80	2	Borussia Dortmund (GER)
18	Fatih Aktay	29/08/1997	Forward	80	2+	40+	3	Altınordu A.Ş. (TUR)
19	Mehmet Çelik	17/02/1997	Defender			80		Bursaspor (TUR)
21	Uğur Tezel	27/02/1997	Midfield			80		Hertha BSC Berlin (GER)

Pos. = Position; GS = Goals scored; * = Started; + = Substitute

Coach: Hakan Tecimer

06/01/67

"We had a player sent off in a match we had to win, and that obliged us to take risks. But, overall, we didn't play the way we wanted to. We only played well at certain moments when we put our ideas into practice on the pitch. However, in our first two games we were not calm enough, made rash decisions, made simple mistakes – and you don't really have a chance if you make those kinds of errors. But taking part in such a well-organised and competitive final tournament was a good experience for us."



Turkey team analysis



- Flexible structure using 4-4-2, 4-2-3-1 and 4-1-4-1 formations
- Good levels of individual technique and physical condition
- High, flat defensive line; aggressive high pressure on ball carrier
- Enes Ünal a physical presence and threat as target striker
- Extensive use of lofted passes to striker; pursuit of second ball
- Fast skilful wingers aiming to supply crosses to central striker(s)
- Attacking philosophy; commitment to cause; high-adrenaline approach

Results

Final

Final - Wednesday 21 May 2014

Ta' Qali National Stadium - Ta' Qali 21/05/2014 - 19:00CET (19:00 local time)



Netherlands

Schuurman 40

1-1

**England win 4-1
on penalties**

England

Solanke 25



Netherlands: Yanick van Osch; Hidde ter Avest, Keziah Veendorp (C), Calvin Verdonk, Wellington Verloo; Donny van de Beek, Jari Schuurman, Abdelhak Nouri (Kenneth Paal 58); Steven Bergwijn (Marlon Slabbekoorn 47), Segun Owobowale, Bilal Ould-Chikh (Dani van der Moot 76).

England: Freddie Woodman; Jonjoe Kenny, Tafari Moore, Joe Gomez, Taylor Moore; Ryan Ledson (C), Joshua Onomah, Lewis Cook (Callum Cooke 74); Dominic Solanke, Izzy Brown, Patrick Roberts.

Attendance: 9422

Yellow cards: Netherlands - Donny van de Beek (37), Jari Schuurman (53); England - Lewis Cook (68)

Referee: Andreas Ekberg (SWE)

Assistant referees: Dag-Roger Nebben (NOR), Istvan Albert (HUN)

Fourth official: Aleksandrs Anufrijevs (LVA)

Semi-finals

Semi-finals - Sunday 18 May 2014

Ta' Qali National Stadium - Ta' Qali 18/05/2014 - 20:45CET (20:45 local time)



Netherlands

5-0

Scotland



Verdonk 35 (P)
Nouri 38
Bergwijn 57
Owobowale 59
van der Moot 73

Netherlands: Yanick van Osch; Hidde ter Avest, Keziah Veendorp (C), Calvin Verdonk, Wellington Verloo; Donny van de Beek (Kenneth Paal 73), Jari Schuurman, Abdelhak Nouri; Steven Bergwijn (Dani van der Moot 69), Segun Owobowale, Bilal Ould-Chikh (Marlon Slabbekoorn 60).

Scotland: Robby McCrorie; Jack Breslin (C), Kyle Cameron, Zak Jules; Joseph Thomson, Aidan Nesbitt, Cameron Ballantye, Jake Sheppard (Steven Boyd 54); Craig Wighton (Thomas Lang 80), Scott Wright (Sam Wardrop 74), Ryan Hardie.

Attendance: 508

Yellow cards: Scotland - Cameron Ballantye (78)

Referee: Jonathan Lardot (BEL)

Assistant referees: Jure Praprotnik (SVN), Istvan Albert (HUN)

Fourth official: Aleksandrs Anufrijevs (LVA)

Semi-finals - Sunday 18 May 2014

Ta' Qali National Stadium - Ta' Qali 18/05/2014 - 17:45CET (17:45 local time)



Portugal

0-2

England



Solanke 52

Roberts 74

Portugal: Fábio Duarte; Hugo Santos, Rúben Dias, Yuri Ribeiro (Pedro Empis 75), Francisco Ferreira; Rúben Neves (C), Gonçalo Rodrigues (Buta 54), João Carvalho (Pedro Delgado 78); Diogo Gonçalves, Alexandre Silva, Renato Sanches.

England: Freddie Woodman; Jonjoe Kenny, Tafari Moore (Mandela Egbo 72), Joe Gomez, Taylor Moore; Ryan Ledson (C), Lewis Cook; Adam Armstrong (Joshua Onomah 36), Dominic Solanke, Izzy Brown, Patrick Roberts (Callum Cooke 77).

Attendance: 2107

Yellow cards: Portugal - Alexandre Silva (29); England - Lewis Cook (68), Mandela Egbo (80+3)

Referee: Alexander Harkam (AUT)

Assistant referees: Dag-Roger Nebben (NOR), Oleksandr Korniyko (UKR)

Fourth official: Andreas Ekberg (SWE)

Group A

Teams	P	W	D	L	F	A	+/-	Pts
Netherlands	3	3	0	0	10	4	6	9
England	3	2	0	1	7	3	4	6
Turkey	3	1	0	2	7	7	0	3
Malta	3	0	0	3	2	12	-10	0

Legend:

P: Played W: Won D: Drawn L: Lost F: For A: Against +/-: Goal difference

Final tournament - Group stage - Friday 9 May 2014

Ta' Qali National Stadium - Ta' Qali 09/05/2014 - 11:00CET (11:00 local time)



Netherlands

Verdonk 54 (P)

Nouri 69

Ould-Chikh 75

3-2

Turkey

Enes Ünal 43

Fatih Aktay 79



Netherlands: Yanick van Osch; Keziah Veendorp (C), Calvin Verdonk, Wellington Verloo, Rick van der Meer; Donny van de Beek, Jari Schuurman, Marlon Slabbekoorn (Abdelhak Nouri 55); Steven Bergwijn, Dani van der Moot (Bilal Ould-Chikh 55), Anthony Berenstein (Kenneth Paal 80).

Turkey: Tarık Çetin; Savaş Polat, Bahadır Çiloğlu, Burak Bekaroğlu, Ertuğrul Ersoy; Hasan Özkan, Birhan Vatansever (Tuncay Kılıç 76), Emirhan Aydoğan, Doğuş Can Incedere (Hayrullah Alici 55); Sabit Yılmaz, Enes Ünal (C) (Fatih Aktay 78).

Attendance: 3947

Yellow cards: Turkey - Doğuş Can Incedere (31), Bahadır Çiloğlu (54)

Referee: Nikola Dabanović (MNE)

Assistant referees: Istvan Albert (HUN), Audrius Jagintavičius (LTU)

Fourth official: Clayton Pisani (MLT)

Final tournament - Group stage - Friday 9 May 2014

Ta' Qali National Stadium - Ta' Qali 09/05/2014 - 18:00CET (18:00 local time)



Malta

0-3

England



Roberts 15, 48
Armstrong 25

Malta: Jamie Azzopardi; Daniel Buckle, Jean Borg, Nick Ghio (Iusef Meli 73), Christian Degabriele; Matthew Guillaumier, Jake Grech (Juan Corbolan 73), Conor Borg (C); Aidan Friggieri, Kyrian Nwoko, Joseph Mbong (Myles Beerman 41).

England: Freddie Woodman; Jonjoe Kenny, Tafari Moore, Joe Gomez, Dael Fry; Ryan Ledson (C), Joshua Onomah (Lewis Cook 69), Josh Sims; Adam Armstrong, Dominic Solanke (Callum Cooke 59), Patrick Roberts (Demetri Mitchell 50).

Attendance: 7015

Referee: Aleksandrs Anufrijevs (LVA)

Assistant referees: Jure Praprotnik (SVN), David Chigogidze (GEO)

Fourth official: Aliyar Aghayev (AZE)

Final tournament - Group stage - Monday 12 May 2014

Gozo Stadium - Gozo 12/05/2014 - 11:15CET (11:15 local time)



England

4-1

Turkey



Solanke 22, 49
Kenny 58
Armstrong 64

Enes Ünal 16

England: Freddie Woodman; Jonjoe Kenny, Tafari Moore (Mandela Egbo 66), Joe Gomez, Taylor Moore; Ryan Ledson (C), Lewis Cook; Adam Armstrong (Demetri Mitchell 70), Dominic Solanke (Callum Cooke 65), Izzy Brown, Patrick Roberts.

Turkey: Tarık Çetin; Savaş Polat (Okan Çelik 57), Bahadır Çiloğlu, Ertuğrul Ersoy, Furkan Ünver; Hasan Özkan, Emirhan Aydoğan, Doğuş Can Incedere (Tuncay Kılıç 41), Alican Özfesli (Sabit Yılmaz 35); Enes Ünal (C), Fatih Aktay.

Attendance: 1631

Red Cards: Turkey: Hasan Özkan (40)

Yellow cards: Turkey - Hasan Özkan (24), Hasan Özkan (40), Emirhan Aydoğan (79)

Referee: Jonathan Lardot (BEL)

Assistant referees: Oleksandr Korniyko (UKR), David Elias Biton (ISR)

Fourth official: Andreas Ekberg (SWE)

Final tournament - Group stage - Monday 12 May 2014

Gozo Stadium - Gozo 12/05/2014 - 15:15CET (15:15 local time)



Malta

2-5

Netherlands



Mbong 37
Friggieri 64

Schuurman 5, 27, 42
Bergwijn 13, 69

Malta: Jamie Azzopardi; Daniel Buckle, Jean Borg, Nick Ghio, Christian Degabriele (Iusef Meli 46); Matthew Guillaumier, Jake Grech, Conor Borg (C) (Juan Corbolan 65); Aidan Friggieri, Kyrian Nwoko (Myles Beerman 55), Joseph Mbong.

Netherlands: Yanick van Osch; Hidde ter Avest, Keziah Veendorp (C) (Segun Owobowale 60), Calvin Verdonk, Wellington Verloo; Donny van de Beek, Jari Schuurman, Abdelhak Nouri; Steven Bergwijn, Anthony Berenstein (Kenneth Paal 22), Bilal Ould-Chikh (Dani van der Moot 59).

Attendance: 1145

Yellow cards: Malta - Aidan Friggieri (59)

Referee: Aliyar Aghayev (AZE)

Assistant referees: Mesrop Ghazaryan (ARM), Dag-Roger Nebben (NOR)

Fourth official: Alexander Harkam (AUT)

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England

0-2

Netherlands



Verdonk 45
van der Moot 68

England: Sam Howes; Jonjoe Kenny, Joe Gomez, Dael Fry, Mandela Egbo; Ryan Ledson (C), Demetri Mitchell (Taylor Moore 68), Joshua Onomah, Callum Cooke (Patrick Roberts 59), Josh Sims (Adam Armstrong 47); Izzy Brown.

Netherlands: Yanick van Osch; Hidde ter Avest (Rick van der Meer 74), Keziah Veendorp (C), Calvin Verdonk, Mauro Savastano; Donny van de Beek, Jari Schuurman, Kenneth Paal (Marlon Slabbekoorn 67), Abdelhak Nouri; Segun Owobowale (Dani van der Moot 67), Bilal Ould-Chikh.

Attendance: 1240

Yellow cards: England - Jonjoe Kenny (54)

Referee: Alexander Harkam (AUT)

Assistant referees: David Chigogidze (GEO), Mesrop Ghazaryan (ARM)

Fourth official: Alan Mario Sant (MLT)

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Ta' Qali National Stadium - Ta' Qali 15/05/2014 - 11:00CET (11:00 local time)



Turkey

4-0

Malta



Hayrullah Alici 43, 58
Fatih Aktay 70, 76

Turkey: Tarık Çetin; Bahadır Çiloğlu, Burak Bekaroğlu, Ertuğrul Ersoy, Mehmet Çelik; Birhan Vatansever, Emirhan Aydoğan, Uğur Tezel; Sabit Yılmaz (Doğuş Can Incedere 41), Enes Ünal (C) (Fatih Aktay 41), Hayrullah Alici.

Malta: Jamie Azzopardi; Daniel Buckle (Neil Spiteri 61), Jean Borg, Iusef Meli; Matthew Guillaumier, Jake Grech, Conor Borg (C) (Juan Corbolan 79), Myles Beerman, Mark Scicluna (Luke Galea 80); Aidan Friggieri, Joseph Mbong.

Attendance: 8129

Referee: Jonathan Lardot (BEL)

Assistant referees: David Elias Biton (ISR), Jure Praprotnik (SVN)

Fourth official: Aleksandrs Anufrijevs (LVA)

Group B

Teams	P	W	D	L	F	A	+/-	Pts
Portugal	3	3	0	0	4	0	4	9
Scotland	3	2	0	1	4	3	1	6
Germany	3	0	1	2	1	3	-2	1
Switzerland	3	0	1	2	2	5	-3	1

Legend:

P: Played W: Won D: Drawn L: Lost F: For A: Against +/-: Goal difference

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Germany

Henrichs 58

1-1

Switzerland

Babic 72



Germany: Timo Königsmann; Robin Tim Becker, Nicolas Clasen (Matthias Bader 80+4), Benedikt Gimber, Lukas Boeder; Damir Bektic, Max Besuschkow, Oguzhan Aydogan (Finn Porath 53); Arianit Ferati, Benjamin Henrichs (C), Phillipp Ochs (Alessandro Fiore Tapia 79).

Switzerland: Gregor Kobel; Tobias Schättin, Alban Selmanaj, Mirlind Kryeziu (C), Kevin Rüegg; Remo Arnold, Arxhend Cani (Boris Babic 63), Djibril Sow, Dimitri Oberlin, Robin Huser (Derek Kutesa 70); Alban Ajeti (Harun Alpsoy 78).

Attendance: 1448

Red Cards: Switzerland: Remo Arnold (75)

Yellow cards: Germany - Max Besuschkow (52); Switzerland - Boris Babic (80+3)

Referee: Alexander Harkam (AUT)

Assistant referees: Dag-Roger Nebben (NOR), Mesrop Ghazaryan (ARM)

Fourth official: Jonathan Lardot (BEL)

Final tournament - Group stage - Friday 9 May 2014

Gozo Stadium - Gozo 09/05/2014 - 15:15CET (15:15 local time)



Scotland

0-2

Portugal



Renato Sanches 18
Luís Mata 78

Scotland: Robby McCrorie; Sam Wardrop, Thomas Lang (Calvin Miller 67), Jack Breslin (C), Kyle Cameron, Aidan Mcilduff (Ryan Hardie 41); Joseph Thomson, Aidan Nesbitt, Cameron Ballantye; Craig Wighton, Scott Wright (Steven Boyd 41).

Portugal: Pedro Silva; Hugo Santos, Rúben Dias, Yuri Ribeiro, Francisco Ferreira; Rúben Neves (C), Gonçalo Rodrigues (Pedro Delgado 64); Diogo Gonçalves (João Carvalho 76), Alexandre Silva, Renato Sanches, Buta (Luís Mata 56).

Attendance: 341

Referee: Andreas Ekberg (SWE)

Assistant referees: David Elias Biton (ISR), Oleksandr Korniyko (UKR)

Fourth official: Alan Mario Sant (MLT)

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Switzerland

0-1

Portugal



Luís Mata 54

Switzerland: Gregor Kobel; Samir Bajrami, Tobias Schättin (Boris Babic 71), Mirlind Kryeziu (C), Noah Loosli, Harun Alpsoy; Arxhend Cani (Alban Selmanaj 71), Djibril Sow, Dimitri Oberlin, Derek Kutesa (Roberto Alves 65); Alban Ajeti.

Portugal: Pedro Silva; Hugo Santos, Rúben Dias, Yuri Ribeiro, Francisco Ferreira; Rúben Neves (C), Gonçalo Rodrigues (Pedro Rodrigues 71); Diogo Gonçalves (João Carvalho 58), Alexandre Silva, Renato Sanches, Buta (Luís Mata 53).

Attendance: 2563

Yellow cards: Switzerland - Gregor Kobel (35)

Referee: Nikola Dabanović (MNE)

Assistant referees: David Chigogidze (GEO), Audrius Jagintavičius (LTU)

Fourth official: Clayton Pisani (MLT)

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Germany

0-1

Scotland



Wright 41

Germany: Timo Königsmann; Robin Tim Becker, Nicolas Clasen, Benedikt Gimber, Lukas Boeder; Damir Bektic (Oguzhan Aydogan 66), Max Besuschkow (Ole Käuper 49); Arianit Ferati, Benjamin Henrichs (C), Phillipp Ochs, Finn Porath (Alessandro Fiore Tapia 41).

Scotland: Robby McCrorie; Sam Wardrop, Jack Breslin (C), Kyle Cameron (Thomas Lang 73), Zak Jules; Joseph Thomson, Aidan Nesbitt, Cameron Ballantye, Jake Sheppard; Scott Wright (Craig Wighton 65), Calvin Miller (Aidan Mcilduff 73).

Attendance: 1206

Yellow cards: Germany - Damir Bektic (40+1), Benjamin Henrichs (51), Phillipp Ochs (72); Scotland - Jack Breslin (12), Scott Wright (18), Kyle Cameron (61), Sam Wardrop (80+3)

Referee: Aleksandrs Anufrijevs (LVA)

Assistant referees: Istvan Albert (HUN), Jure Praprotnik (SVN)

Fourth official: Alan Mario Sant (MLT)

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Portugal

1-0

Germany



Pedro Rodrigues 51

Portugal: Fábio Duarte; Rúben Dias (C), Pedro Rodrigues, Francisco Ferreira, Diogo Izata; Gonçalo Rodrigues (Rúben Neves 52), Pedro Empis, João Carvalho (Yuri Ribeiro 73), Pedro Delgado; Luís Mata, Buta (Alexandre Silva 41).

Germany: Timo Königsmann; Nicolas Clasen, Matthias Bader (Patrick Kammerbauer 67), Benedikt Gimber, Lukas Boeder; Damir Bektic (Finn Porath 62), David Sauerland; Arianit Ferati (Max Besuschkow 74), Benjamin Henrichs (C), Phillipp Ochs, Alessandro Fiore Tapia.

Attendance: 1172

Yellow cards: Portugal - Buta (32), Diogo Izata (80+2)

Referee: Andreas Ekberg (SWE)

Assistant referees: Oleksandr Korniyko (UKR), Istvan Albert (HUN)

Fourth official: Nikola Dabanović (MNE)

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Switzerland

Oberlin 20

1-3

Scotland

Wighton 45

Sheppard 56

Hardie 63



Switzerland: Gregor Kobel; Samir Bajrami, Tobias Schättin, Alban Selmanaj (Robin Huser 77), Mirlind Kryeziu (C), Harun Alpsoy (Derek Kutesa 58); Remo Arnold, Arxhend Cani (Boris Babic 58), Djibril Sow, Dimitri Oberlin; Alban Ajeti.

Scotland: Robby McCrorie; Sam Wardrop, Jack Breslin (C), Kyle Cameron, Zak Jules; Joseph Thomson, Aidan Nesbitt, Cameron Ballantye (Craig Wighton 41), Jake Sheppard; Scott Wright (Michael Kelly 79), Calvin Miller (Ryan Hardie 41).

Attendance: 514

Yellow cards: Switzerland - Remo Arnold (64), Djibril Sow (69); Scotland - Cameron Ballantye (36), Zak Jules (72)

Referee: Aliyar Aghayev (AZE)

Assistant referees: Audrius Jagintavičius (LTU), Dag-Roger Nebben (NOR)

Fourth official: Clayton Pisani (MLT)

Match officials

Name	Country	Date of birth	FIFA
Referees			
Aliyar Aghayev	Azerbaijan	17/10/1987	2013
Aleksandrs Anufrijevs	Latvia	08/01/1984	2012
Nikola Dabanović	Montenegro	18/12/1981	2009
Andreas Ekberg	Sweden	02/01/1985	2013
Alexander Harkam	Austria	17/11/1981	2012
Jonathan Lardot	Belgium	31/01/1984	2012
Assistant referees			
Istvan Albert	Hungary	17/01/1980	2007
David Elias Biton	Israel	17/06/1978	2011
David Chigogidze	Georgia	26/07/1989	2013
Mesrop Ghazaryan	Armenia	19/07/1982	2012
Audrius Jagintavičius	Lithuania	13/09/1984	2012
Oleksandr Korniyko	Ukraine	20/04/1981	2012
Dag-Roger Nebben	Norway	05/09/1980	2005
Jure Praprotnik	Slovenia	24/08/1985	2013
Fourth officials			
Clayton Pisani	Malta	31/07/1978	2009
Alan Mario Sant	Malta	16/08/1980	2010

Fair play rankings

Pos.	Team	Points	Matches played
1	 Netherlands	8.657	5
2	 England	8.614	5
3	 Malta	8.536	3
4	 Portugal	8.536	4
5	 Germany	8.25	3
6	 Scotland	8.009	4
7	 Switzerland	7.917	3
8	 Turkey	7.774	3