



EUROPEAN FUTSAL CHAMPIONSHIP 2012

Zagreb Arena

Location: **Zagreb (Croatia)**

Inauguration: **2008**

Capacity: **15,000**

Spaladium Arena

Location: **Split (Croatia)**

Inauguration: **2008**

Capacity: **11,000**

European Futsal Championship 2012

Period: **from January 31 to February 11**

Number of teams: **12**

Matches Played: **20**

Goals scored: **109**

Attendance: **95,726**

Five a Side
(Croatia)

THE SUCCESS OF THE CROATIAN EDITION OF THE UEFA FUTSAL EURO CHAMPIONSHIP DEMONSTRATES THE INTEREST THAT 'FIVE-A-SIDE' FOOTBALL HAS EARNED OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS. THE PLAYING FIELD DESIGNED BY MONDO HAS BECOME AN INTEGRAL PART OF THIS EVENT THAT IS IMPROVING FROM YEAR TO YEAR.

A GREAT SUCCESS

The 2012 **European Futsal Championship**, which was played in **Croatia** from January 31 to February 11, was full of goals and excitement. It was also marked by a record setting public attendance. The matches of the eighth edition of the tournament, organized by UEFA, were held at the **Zagreb Arena** in Zagreb (which, in addition to the preliminary matches, also hosted the tournament's semifinals and finals) and at the **Spaladium Arena** in Split. The twelve teams participating in the tournament played on **Mondo's Fast Break System 2**, flooring finished in black laminated wood, the same type used in the 2010 Hungarian edition. "The format was similar to that of the previous edition featuring twelve teams and two facilities to host the matches. The changes affected mostly the size of the arenas (15,000 seats in Zagreb, 11,000 in Split), which required a greater commitment. From the point of view of the playing surface, we worked along the same lines as what was done in Hungary. Given the positive response from all parties concerned, we decided, once again, to adopt the black surface," said **Laurent Morel**, UEFA Futsal Competition Manager.

SOMETHING HAS CHANGED

In truth, there were some changes, compared to the 2010 event. "After the Hungarian edition of the tournament - said Laurent Morel – we spoke to

Andrea Vallauri (International Sales Director of Mondo's sports Division) about the color of the playing surface's perimeter, and his opinion was that, in general, the black / blue combination looked a bit 'cold'. So, for 2012, we thought of a way to link the color of the playing surface to the colors of the host nation and we opted for red in a hue similar to the one featured in the Croatian flag. It was a change that actually added 'warmth' to the court, in sharp contrast to the extreme weather conditions outside of the buildings (-18 ° C). "The changes made to the playing surface were greatly appreciated, even by the fans watching the event on TV". The station that broadcast the event - continues Morel – appreciated the **new color of the perimeter** and congratulated Mondo for making improvements to the playing surface, which had less reflection than the one used in Hungary".

PRACTICALITY AND DURABILITY

Another aspect that was appreciated by the event organizers was the ease and speed with which the Mondo floorings were assembled and disassembled and the prompt assistance that the Italian Company provided on site. "Mondo staff arrived with the trucks transporting the material to create the playing surfaces in Zagreb and Split. With support from local laborers (six), the floorings were installed quickly under Mondo's technical supervision. In addition, two Mondo experts commuted between the two arenas to ensure that the playing surfaces were properly maintained," said Morel.

Thanks to the excellent durability of the Mondo's five-a-side football surface, it was possible to re-use the playing surface, unaltered, and even after the end of such a tough competition as the European Championship." After the end of an event, ideally, a playing surface is sold in the country where it was used, as it was the case in Kazakhstan. Of course this is not an easy market, given that very few clubs have their own arena to play while many are forced to share space with participants who play other sports. When the playing surface is in good condition, it can be reused for another competition. The surface used for the UEFA Futsal Euro, for example, can be reused for the UEFA Futsal Cup Finals," said Laurent Morel.

GREAT SPAIN, CONGRATULATIONS TO CROATIA

At thirty-four seconds from the last whistle blow of the final match, as **Spain** trailed **Russia** by one goal, few would have bet on the "Red Furies" actually winning the championship again. A goal by **Sergio Lozano** tied the score, however, overturning the outcome of a match that appeared to have been written already. This allowed Spain to push the match into overtime and ultimately to prevail by winning the match with a 3-1 score. It was a great test of character for the Iberian team as it won its sixth continental title, the fourth in a row. Behind Spain were Russia and Italy, which defeated the great revelation of the tournament, Croatia, in the final for third place. The Croatian team, which had not taken part in the finals since 2000 - never managing to pass beyond the group stage -took advantage of the warmth of the home fans to achieve the extraordinary feat of reaching the semi-final stage. They lost the match against Russia in front of **14,300** spectators - a record number for this event – in a hard fought match. Nevertheless, it was not surprising that the 'ambassador' of the tournament, former Croatian footballer Robert Jarni, named the Croatian team's performance: a sports "miracle".





