

EHF

# SPORT REPORT

2013/14



Anita Görbicz has had another big season, winning the Women's EHF Champions League for a second consecutive time, whilst also being the top scorer. She still has the EHF EURO in Hungary and Croatia to come.



France are the Men's European champions for the third time at the EHF EURO in Denmark.



A sensational result as first-time VELUX EHF FINAL4 entrants SG Flensburg-Handwitt win in Cologne.

Includes the  
**2012/13**  
season review

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Druckweg 1  
7210 Mattersburg  
Austria

Publication date November 2014

# From the President



Dear Friends,

In spectacular fashion, the 2013/14 handball season concluded on 2 June 2014. The season had it all; there were terrific highs and crushing lows, there were surprising victories and stunning defeats. On the court, in their national and club team colours, the athletes gave 100% to their teammates, clubs, countries, and above all, to their fans. This was handball at its best!

Nevertheless, when all is said and done, the seasons have changed. The end of 2013/14 handball season signified the opportunity for rest and renewal, which ultimately lead to progression. In the autumn, we ushered in the 22<sup>nd</sup> club handball season that will cover the period September 2014 to May 2015.



A trophy carries dust.  
Memories will last forever.

**Mary Lou Retton**



Since 1991, the European Handball Federation (EHF) has been the facilitator enabling national and club teams achieve their sporting objectives. In order to make this happen, the governing body situated in Vienna, Austria has had to maintain flexible structures and operations. And after more than twenty years, the organisation has mastered the art of knowing when to review, restore, and renew. But, it has not always been easy.

Behind the scenes at the European Handball Federation, our professionals continue to work in close cooperation with internal and external partners. Such teamwork ensures the fulfilment of our statutory and mandated obligations to our members, their clubs, and most importantly, their players. Over the years, the advancements seen on a technical level have improved the quality of the game that we get to see on the various handball courts in arenas and halls across Europe. In the international arena, teams from Europe remain the strongest contenders for the top medals.

For those who have dedicated their careers to the sport, handball is akin to an unfinished masterpiece. As we strive to present a flawless product, one keenly coveted by the players and the global sports market, we continue to sculpt the game on all levels as we adapt accordingly to unremitting internal and external influences. Moreover, reminiscent of a dynamic dance the national and club teams continue to perform accentuating their durability and tenacity even when faced with challenges that threatened to impede sporting activities.



Sports do not build character.  
They reveal it.

**Heywood Broun**



The EHF bears an enormous responsibility across the continent; we are duty-bound to undertake the necessary organisation of handball, which not only includes offering attractive competitions whilst maintaining the high levels of performance and development; we do this as we uphold the integrity of the sport.

Best wishes,

**Jean Brihault**  
EHF President

# That was then...

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In 2013, the European Handball Federation changed the structure of its Annual Review, the yearly publication covering all aspects of handball in Europe. Though the publication coincided with the end of the business year, it did not cover the entire season.

This year, the organisation presents the 2014 EHF Sport Report. Though containing a comprehensive review of the season 2013/14 running from July 2013 to June 2014; the report opens with a summary of the 2012/13 season, thus bridging the respective gap created by the structural change to its official publications.

There were many moments of glory for the teams, and instances of pride for the European Handball Federation as we admired the performances of the European Teams on the international stage. It is now time to turn the page and reminisce on a spectacular season of sport.





# VELUX EHF Champions League

For the first time in the history of the EHF Champions League, an extra-time thriller decided the season's champion. Celebrated by 20,000 fans, HSV Hamburg took to winners' podium having demolished the competition even as they surpassed the favoured record Champions League winners, FC Barcelona. It was the perfect victory, a dream season for the team who earned their place in the competition coming from the Wildcard Tournament. The HSV 'not-so-secret' weapons were the legendary goalkeeper, Johannes Bitter, and centre back, Michael Kraus who secured the 30:29 [25:25, 9:11] victory. Thus, following on from the title wins of THW Kiel (2010, 2012), this is the third time that a German team has won the VELUX EHF FINAL4.

In the semi-finals, FC Barcelona faced the Polish debutants KS Vive Targi Kielce and quashed their hopes of advancement with a clear 28:23 [13:10] win. Nevertheless, only a few moments after the final defeat, Coach Xavi Pascual announced, "we will be back next year, and then we'll take the trophy."

The quarter-finals, the last hurdle that stood between the teams and the trophy, also had its fair share of drama: FC Barcelona lost the first leg against BM Atletico Madrid with 20:25, but then qualified for the VELUX EHF FINAL4 on home turf in the Palau Blaugrana with an explosive 32:24 win. THW Kiel had the good fortune to achieve two narrow victories to stand firm against Hungarian champions MKB Veszprém; and even HSV Hamburg was on the brink of elimination despite a 32:26 away victory in the first leg against SG Flensburg-Handewitt, as at one point during the return leg, they were trailing seven goals behind.

KS Vive Targi Kielce seemingly breezed through to the VELUX EHF FINAL4 as they defeated the quarter-final debutants HC Metalurg twice. The closest decision in the Last 16 was the success of Atletico Madrid over the 2012 VELUX EHF FINAL4 participants, Füchse Berlin, where the perfection of the game was illuminated in the dying seconds of the return leg match as the winning goal was scored for the 27:26 result following the 29:29 draw in the first leg in Madrid. Nevertheless, KS Vive Targi Kielce wrote its own piece of history for the season as were the only team, in addition to Atletico Madrid, to win all ten games in the Group Phase.

For HSV Hamburg, the road to Cologne was fraught as the team almost failed to qualify. Shortly before the end of the match in the Wildcard Tournament in St. Raphael, France, the Germans clearly lagged behind their hosts in the final. As the game went to extra-time, Hans Lindberg turned the tide for HSV who won the match 32:31. Lindberg amassed 101



“ This is just unbelievable; we were the underdogs and leave as Champions League winners. Indescribable! ”

**Martin Schwalb**  
HSV coach

goals throughout the season and was presented with the "Golden Ball" as the top scorer of the VELUX EHF Champions League by EHF President Jean Brihault.

Once again, as in the past, all 20,000 seats in the LANXESS arena on the VELUX EHF FINAL4 weekend, and more than 300 media representatives reported from the Cathedral City. On the fringes of the fourth edition of the VELUX EHF FINAL4, as part of the 20 years EHF Champions League celebrations, the stars of the 'Ultimate Selection' were honoured.



## Quarter-finals

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| FC Barcelona Intersport (ESP) vs. Atletico Madrid (ESP) | 52:49 |
| KS Vive Targi Kielce (POL) vs. HC Metalurg Skopje (MKD) | 55:51 |
| THW Kiel (GER) vs. MKB Veszprem (HUN)                   | 61:59 |
| HSV Hamburg (GER) vs. SG Flensburg-Handewitt (GER)      | 55:51 |

## Semi-finals

|   |               |
|---|---------------|
| Vive Targi Kielce (POL) vs. FC Barcelona Intersport (ESP) | 23:28 [10:13] |
| THW Kiel (GER) vs. HSV Hamburg (GER)                      | 33:39 [16:19] |

## 3/4 match

|  |               |
|--|---------------|
| Vive Targi Kielce (POL) vs. THW Kiel (GER) | 31:30 [19:12] |
|--|---------------|

## Final

|  |                     |
|--|---------------------|
| HSV Hamburg (GER) vs. FC Barcelona (ESP) | 30:29 [25:25, 9:11] |
|--|---------------------|

## All Star Team - 20 years EHF Champions League

|                          |                     |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Stefan Kretzschmar (GER) | Left Wing           |
| Filip Jicha (CZE)        | Left Back           |
| Andrei Xepkin (ESP)      | Line Player         |
| Jackson Richardson (FRA) | Centre Back         |
| Olafur Stefansson (ISL)  | Right Back          |
| Mirza Džomba (CRO)       | Right Wing          |
| Tomas Svensson (SWE)     | Goalkeeper          |
| Didier Dinart (FRA)      | Best Defence Player |

## Top Scorers of the 2012/13 VELUX EHF Champions League

|                 |           |                        |
|-----------------|-----------|------------------------|
| Hans Lindberg   | 101 Goals | HSV Hamburg            |
| Siarhei Rutenka | 95 Goals  | FC Barcelona           |
| Anders Eggert   | 79 Goals  | SG Flensburg-Handewitt |



# Women's EHF Champions League

The eighth time was the charm for the former world handball player of the year, Anita Görbicz, and Györi Audi ETO KC; having been part of seven European Cup finals, including the 2009 and 2012 Champions League finals, and walking away empty handed each time. After winning the first leg of the final 24:21 in Norway against Larvik (winners of the coveted trophy in 2011), it was their time to shine in front of a capacity crowd in the sold-out Veszprém Arena as they won the second leg match 23:22 (13:8). The team made history not only by taking the title for the first time, but also the last time in this playing format due to the introduction of the Women's EHF FINAL4 in the next season.

As the winners danced with the trophy on the podium, and the crowd raised the roof with their congratulatory cheers, there was pure exuberance in the arena. Larvik coach, Ole Gustav Gjekstad, remained gracious in defeat by paying tribute to Györi Audi ETO KC.

In the end, it was a Norwegian that stopped the Norwegians from winning another title. The Györi Audi ETO KC goalkeeper Katrine Lunde was almost single-handedly responsible for Györ's commanding 9:2 lead only 16 minutes into the first period; in all, saving 22 shots, Lunde was a sensation. At that time, Larvik was playing catch-up and needed to regain ground; the team spirit and determination of Larvik was admirable, here was a team that was not about to give up, and thanks to their goalkeeper Cecilie Leganger, they managed to close the gap. Nevertheless, from the first to the final whistle, it was Györ's game. In fact, it was the Hungarians' season! The final match in Veszprém was the 15<sup>th</sup> victory for the team in 16 Champions League matches.

It was only in the semi-finals that Györi Audi ETO KC suffered its first and only defeat of the season. Having held out against Oltchim Rm. Valcea in Romania taking the first leg by 24:22, the Hungarians lost the return match by one goal (24:25), but celebrations were still the cause of the day in Veszprém, as Györi Audi ETO KC secured their place in the Women's EHF Champions League final. Larvik were also on tenterhooks after their semi-final first leg defeat by RK Krim Mercator, but the team came through impressively to the finals with a clear 27:19 win in the second leg in Ljubljana.



“ Without you, we could never have done it; this is your trophy. ”

**Anita Görbicz**  
**Györi Audi ETO KC**  
*addressing the fans after winning the Women's EHF Champions League.*

The two subsequent finalists met each other previously in the Main Round of the competition, as a sign of things to come, Györi Audi ETO KC were victorious in both matches. At the end of the Main Round, defending champions Buducnost ran out of steam and their EHF Champions League campaign came to an unexpectedly early end. It was in Group 1 that the defending champion Buducnost ranked only third behind Györ and Larvik. In Group 2, the teams kept everyone guessing as to which two would advance to the semi-finals. In the end, in a tough three-way battle until the very end, RK Krim Mercator came out on top as the group winners, followed by Oltchim Rm. Valcea who managed to surpass FTC Rail Cargo Hungaria.

At the beginning of the season in the Group Phase, for three former winners of the EHF Champions League - Viborg HK (DEN), Hypo Niederösterreich (AUT), and HC Podravka Vegeta (CRO), the competition was over before it had begun: Viborg HK lost all six matches, and the club teams from Austria and Croatia only managed a 50% winning record, when all said and done, is simply not enough to be the best.

## WOMEN'S



### Semi-finals

Oltchim Rm. Valcea (ROU) vs. Györi Audi ETO KC (HUN) 22:24, 25:24

Larvik (NOR) vs. RK Krim Mercator (SLO) 22:24, 27:19

### Final

Larvik (NOR) vs. Györi Audi ETO KC (HUN) 21:24, 22:23

### Top Scorers of the 2012/13 Women's EHF Champions League

|                    |          |                         |
|--------------------|----------|-------------------------|
| Zsuzsanna Tomori   | 95 goals | FTC Rail Cargo Hungaria |
| Katarina Bulatovic | 90 goals | Oltchim Rm. Valcea      |
| Milena Knezevic    | 86 goals | Buducnost               |



“ Györ has truly earned this title; they were the superior team of the season. ”

**Ole Gustav Gjekstad**  
**Larvik coach**

# Men's EHF Cup

The 2012/13 season saw the successful début of a 'new' competition as the Men's EHF Cup and Cup Winners' Cup were effectively merged. This innovation brought a completely new playing system with it; beginning with three qualification rounds, the reformed Men's EHF Cup continued with the Group Phase holding sixteen teams across four groups, before moving into the quarter-finals. The crowning glory was the first Men's EHF Cup Finals, the final tournament held in Nantes, France.

On 19 May 2013, Rhein-Neckar Löwen from Mannheim, Germany made history by not only winning the new and improved EHF Cup, but also winning a title for the first time in the history of the club; for the 12<sup>th</sup> time in the history of the EHF Cup a German club had won the trophy. In an exciting finale in the sold-out Palais des Sports de Beaulieu in Nantes, the team led by their remarkable captain, Uwe Gensheimer, triumphed over the host team 26:24 [16:12]. The third place went to the Danish team Tvis Holstebro; the Danes defeated the dethroned EHF Cup title defenders, Frisch Auf Göppingen from Germany in a tight match that ended 28:27 [15:16].

Following the conclusion of the inaugural event, EHF President Jean Brihault stated: "The EHF Cup in this novel form has proven itself; and for the clubs it is an attractive stepping stone to the EHF Champions League. This is our new success story."



## MEN'S



## FINALS

18<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> MAY 2013

## NANTES FRANCE

### Quarter-finals

|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| Team Tvis Holstebro (DEN) vs. KIF Kolding (DEN)     | 27:26, 24:24 |
| Frisch Auf Göppingen (GER) vs. Maribor Branik (SLO) | 31:30, 26:26 |
| Rhein-Neckar Löwen (GER) vs. SC Magdeburg (GER)     | 27:20, 28:31 |

### EHF Cup Finals in Nantes

#### Semi-finals

|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| Rhein-Neckar Löwen (GER) vs. Frisch Auf Göppingen (GER) | 28:22 [12:7] |
| HBC Nantes (FRA) vs. Team Tvis Holstebro (DEN)          | 26:20 [11:9] |

#### 3/4 Match

|  |               |
|--|---------------|
| Team Tvis Holstebro (DEN) vs. Frisch Auf Göppingen (GER) | 28:27 [15:16] |
|--|---------------|

#### Final

|   |               |
|---|---------------|
| Rhein-Neckar Löwen (GER) vs. HBC Nantes (FRA) | 26:24 [16:12] |
|---|---------------|

Both semi-finals were noteworthy affairs as Rhein-Neckar Löwen trounced Frisch Auf Göppingen with 28:22 [12:7] in the German duel, and HBC Nantes proved superior to Tvis Holstebro as they also seemingly easily won their match 26:20 [11:9]. The EHF Cup Finals also premiered video-based goal-line technology, the first time such a support device has been used in an EHF club competition, this allowed the referees to have instant access to video evidence identifying whether the ball was behind the line or not.

In addition to the new playing system, the regulations governing the EHF Cup were amended to include the imperative that the host of the final tournament can bypass the quarter-final phase, only if the host wins its group or is among the top three second ranked teams of the Group Phase. Since HBC Nantes ranked behind SC Magdeburg in group D of the Group Phase, a direct qualification to the Finals was given and therefore only three quarter-finals were played. In the Danish derby, Tvis Holstebro stunned the crowd by taking the favourite KIF Kolding out of the competition, Rhein-Neckar Löwen had the upper hand from the first to the final whistle in their matches against SC Magdeburg; Maribor Branik of Slovenia gave Frisch Auf Göppingen a tough time in both matches, and just like Tvis Holstebro, the German team made it through to the final tournament on the strength of one goal.





# Women's EHF Cup

With their gold medals hanging proudly around their necks, the players of Team Tvis Holstebro celebrated sweet triumph and their first European Cup title in the history of the club. Following the home defeat [31:35] in the first leg of the finals against Metz Handball from France, it looked as if it was all over for the Danes. And even during the return match despite being ahead by a solitary goal at half-time (15:14), there was still no indication of the success to come.

It was only in the closing stages of the Women's EHF Cup Final that Team Tvis Holstebro managed to gain a strong advantage over Metz and they used the chances presented to take the score to 29:24. It was only at this point, five minutes before the end of the match that Danes realised that their first victory was within reach. With the realisation came a final burst of energy as they entered the dying minutes of the finals, which they ended in spectacular fashion 33:28.



## WOMEN'S



### Semi-finals

Metz Handball (FRA) vs. H.C. Zalau (ROU) 34:15, 26:21  
 Team Tvis Holstebro (DEN) vs. FC Midtjylland (DEN) 29:22, 18:24

### Final

Team Tvis Holstebro (DEN) vs. Metz Handball (FRA) 31:35, 33:28

With the team officials and players alike overwhelmed with excitement, it took a while for the team to get to the podium as their celebrations remained on court long after the final whistle had sounded; an unforgettable moment for all. This was not the first time that Team Tvis Holstebro sent shockwaves through the competition. In the Danish derby, that was the second pairing of the semi-finals, Team Tvis Holstebro surprisingly made it through to the finals by taking the favoured champions, FC Midtjylland, out of the competition by one goal. In the first semi-final, Metz completely dominated both legs of match against H.C. Zalau of Romania.

# Men's Challenge Cup

The final of the Men's Challenge Cup upheld the historical dimensions that have characterised the 2012/13 season. In this competition, we saw SKA Minsk of Belarus finally win another European Cup title after a 23-year drought. In the final, it was the team led by legendary coach Spartak Mironovic that prevailed, defeating Handball Esch in both legs [26:31, 24:32]. The Belarusians also dominated in the semi-finals against IL Runar from Norway; and it was the end of the line for C.S.U. Suceava from Romania after their semi-final bout with Esch.

At the 1999 Extraordinary Congress in Vienna, the club team competition structure was overhauled; changes included giving all national federations the opportunity to have a team participate in the European Cup competitions. This meant that the Men's City Cup, which was played from seasons 1993/94 until 1999/00, morphed into today's Challenge Cup. In the initial years of the Men's City Cup, German teams dominated as they won multiple times within the first seven seasons. German club teams still hold the record for most titles won with six victories, followed by Romanian club teams with four titles. However, beginning with the Challenge Cup in season 2000/01, Germany has not participated in the Challenge Cup as national federations ranked one to seven based on the previous cumulative results of the past three seasons, cannot enter a club team into the Challenge Cup. Only the teams ranked eight to fifty can enter teams into the Challenge Cup event.



## CHALLENGE CUP

### Semi-finals

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| SKA Minsk (BLR) vs. IL Runar (NOR)           | 32:29, 33:31 |
| Handball Esch (LUX) vs. C.S.U. Suceava (ROU) | 21:23, 27:24 |

### Final

|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| SKA Minsk (BLR) vs. Handball Esch (LUX) | 32:24, 31:26 |
|---|--------------|



# Women's Cup Winners' Cup

Completely unchallenged, Hypo Niederösterreich won their first international title since 2000. Thirteen years after lifting the Women's EHF Champions League trophy, the team from Andras Nemeth (who later was replaced by the Dane Morten Soubak) won the 2012/13 Women's Cup Winners' Cup.

Following a clear first leg victory in France at home to Issy Paris Hand, the Austrians took the lead from the very beginning, and ending the match (30:22) taking with them a solid lead going into the return match in Maria Enzersdorf. On home turf, it was smooth sailing as Hypo Niederösterreich kept up the pressure on their French counterparts. With the match seemingly decided at the halfway point (16:8), Hypo Niederösterreich took their victory (31:21) with style and with ease.

Even though Hypo Niederösterreich were knocked out of the 2012/13 Women's EHF Champions League Group Phase, for the Brazilian handball wonder Alexandra do Nascimento, it was the perfect end to the perfect season. Not only was Nascimento the top scorer of the final match with seven goals, she was ultimately the second best scorer of the season with 58 goals and in January 2013, she was named World Handball Player of the Year by the International Handball Federation.

Moving into the Cup Winners' Cup competition, Hypo Niederösterreich gave a fantastic performance; eliminating the HC Thüringer of Germany in the semi-finals. The top scorer of the competition was Regina Shymkute (64 goals) of Rostov Don. With two narrow victories, Issy Paris Hand excluding the Russians from the final.



“ This is a dream come true for us; finally, another trophy! ”

**Alexandra do Nascimento**  
Hypo Niederösterreich



### Semi-finals

Issy Paris Hand (FRA) vs. Rostov Don (RUS) 23:22, 20:19  
Hypo Niederösterreich (AUT) vs. Thüringer HC (GER) 32:32, 24:22

### Final

Hypo Niederösterreich (AUT) vs. Issy Paris Hand (FRA) 30:22, 31:21

# Women's Challenge Cup

The Women's Challenge Cup concluded on 12 May 2013, and in the Sportovni Hala Baník Most in front of 1,250 spectators for the first time in the history of the club and the Czech Republic, a Czech team won an EHF European Cup title. For one 'Black Angel', winning the Challenge Cup meant that handball had come full circle; in the 1980's Beňušková's mother also won a European Cup trophy - in this family, handball binds the generations. Petra Beňušková lifted the Challenge Cup trophy with DHK Baník Most.

Coming into the second leg of the Challenge Cup final with a four-goal deficit did not faze the players of DHK Baník Most. Since entering the competition in the third round of the Challenge Cup, the team from the Czech Republic were unstoppable taking on all comers. As they faced ZRK Samobor (CRO), they were consequent in their play and quickly put their opponents under pressure and quickly took the lead erasing ZRK Samobor's advantage. With only minutes remaining and with their first victory assured, the fans in the sport hall erupted. For DHK Baník Most there was a standing ovation from the appreciative fans and tears of joy when the final whistle sounded and the score was frozen at 26:17. They made handball history, thanks to Hana Martinkova, who with 66 goals was also the top scorer of the competition, Dominika Müllnerová who pulled off some great saves; and the dynamic Petra Beňušková.



### Semi-finals

DHK Baník Most (CZE) vs. Üsküdar BSK (TUR) 27:31, 31:21  
ZRK Samobor (CRO) vs. H65 Höör (SWE) 25:17, 18:23

### Final

DHK Baník Most (CZE) vs. ZRK Samobor (CRO) 20:24, 26:17



# A sea of green...

It was an unforgettable season and a remarkable final! Playing amidst a sea of green, thanks to their fans coming out in full force to show their support, Györi Audi ETO KC took a 3-goal advantage into the 2<sup>nd</sup> leg of the final on home soil after winning the first leg in Norway. And after being part of seven EHF European Cup finals and walking away empty handed, the day 11 May 2013 would now be etched into the memories of the Hungarian champions. It was the day that in front of 5,000 fans in the Veszprém Arena, in a fight to the very end, Györi Audi ETO KC prevailed over Larvik HK or Norway to lift the Women's EHF Champions League trophy.





# Going for gold

To be the best; to realise that all your hard work was leading you to this glorious moment all along, to hoist that trophy high...just asks a player what it takes. Every national team player knows that it is not only about the training or the physical condition; sweet victory or bitter defeat also lies firmly in the mind. The continent of Europe is home to the best players in the world. European players are routinely lauded and presented with many accolades and titles. From that vantage, it looks very easy; and as we all know, looks can be deceiving. Behind the smiles and the gratitude, there are only a select few who know exactly what sacrifices have been made, how much time, energy, dogged determination, and focus has been invested to achieve the ultimate objective.

The European Handball Federation has an excellent stable of competitions for both senior and youth national team players. Yearly, and with pride, we stage these top quality events. Not only do we look forward to seeing the development of the youth teams, and the transition from the Younger Age Category events to the first squad of the senior team - we also get tremendous satisfaction from rewarding the teams for their efforts and distributing the coveted gold medals to the winning delegation.

Time to relive some of those moments...





# 2013 European Beach Handball Championships

The 2013 European Beach Handball Championships were held in Randers, Denmark. The events for senior men's and women's teams saw 26 teams (13 in each category) compete for the golden plate. The atmosphere was immeasurable as new milestones were set in the area of development, as we witnessed full grandstands and unprecedented media interest. TV3 Sport led the way with live transmission of the matches; daily newspapers produced special pull-outs and reported consistently throughout the event, and the hits on the EHF online video platform covering the championships reached levels akin to the indoor European Championships. The unanimous opinion of the European Handball Federation stated that in terms of sporting performance, organisation, and public interest, it was a "landmark event for the future of increasingly professional beach handball."

In the men's tournament, once again, Croatia cemented its position as the leading nation in European beach handball; this was clearly demonstrated by the national team winning their third consecutive title (2009; 2011) by a 2:0 win against Russia in the final. From six of the European Beach Handball Championship titles that have been played since 2000, five of the titles are held by Russia and Croatia. In front of 2,000 spectators, the Croatians dominated the match against Russia; and together with a superior performance from their outstanding goalkeeper Igor Totic, the golden plate was guaranteed. In a dramatic shoot-out, hosts Denmark secured the bronze medal against Serbia. The Danish delegation included Hans Lindberg (HSV Hamburg / winner of the 2013 VELUX EHF FINAL4). Both semi-finals were decided in the shoot-out, which speaks for the balance of the four participants. Following the semi-final participants, Spain led the placement round ranking fifth ahead of the Ukraine, Hungary, and Norway.



## MEN'S TOURNAMENT

### Semi-finals

Serbia vs. Russia 1:2 [19:16; 19:28; 6:7]  
Denmark vs. Croatia 1:2 [24:21; 13:26; 4:6]

### 3/4 Match

Serbia vs. Denmark 1:2 [18:16; 13:18; 4:7]

### Final

Russia vs. Croatia 0:2 [18:24; 16:21]

## AWARDS

|                  |                        |           |
|------------------|------------------------|-----------|
| MVP:             | Marko Pavlovic         | [Serbia]  |
| Best Goalkeeper: | Igor Totic             | [Croatia] |
| Top Scorer:      | Oleksandr Poltoratskyi | [Ukraine] |
| Fair Play Award: | Ukraine                |           |



## FINAL RANKING

- Gold: Croatia
- Silver: Russia
- Bronze: Denmark
- 4. Serbia
- 5. Spain
- 6. Ukraine
- 7. Hungary
- 8. Norway
- 9. Poland
- 10. Turkey
- 11. Sweden
- 12. Switzerland
- 13. Italy



While the men's final was a rather one-sided affair, the women's final between Denmark and Hungary could not have been more dramatic. When the final whistle sound, the tears of sorrow flowed from the host team; thanks to the strong goalkeeper Hanne Frandsen, Denmark won the first period, but lost the second, which meant that a shoot-out in the third period to determine the women's European beach handball champion was inevitable. After missing the deciding goal, Emma Mogensen cut a tragic figure, thus the Danes had lost their second consecutive final (against Croatia in Umag, 2011); whilst the Hungarian celebrations knew no bounds in Randers.

In the women's event, the bronze medal match also was decided with a shoot-out in the third period. Norway managed to keep their nerves in check as they faced and eventually defeated Ukraine. In the final ranking, Italy ranked fifth ahead of Russia, Spain, and Turkey.



**AWARDS**

|                  |                  |           |
|------------------|------------------|-----------|
| MVP:             | Kitti Groz       | (Hungary) |
| Best Goalkeeper: | Hanne Frandsen   | (Denmark) |
| Top Scorer:      | Cathrine Korvald | (Norway)  |
| Fair Play Award: | Italy            |           |



**WOMEN'S TOURNAMENT**

**Semi-finals**

|                     |     |                |
|---------------------|-----|----------------|
| Hungary vs. Norway  | 2:0 | [18:12; 14:12] |
| Ukraine vs. Denmark | 0:2 | [20:24; 15:26] |

**3/4 Match**

|                    |     |                     |
|--------------------|-----|---------------------|
| Norway vs. Ukraine | 2:1 | [19:20; 24:20; 6:3] |
|--------------------|-----|---------------------|

**Final**

|                     |     |                       |
|---------------------|-----|-----------------------|
| Hungary vs. Denmark | 2:1 | [18:19; 21:16; 14:12] |
|---------------------|-----|-----------------------|

| FINAL RANKING          |
|------------------------|
| <b>Gold:</b> Hungary   |
| <b>Silver:</b> Denmark |
| <b>Bronze:</b> Norway  |
| 4. Ukraine             |
| 5. Italy               |
| 6. Russia              |

| FINAL RANKING   |
|-----------------|
| 7. Spain        |
| 8. Turkey       |
| 9. Croatia      |
| 10. Switzerland |
| 11. Greece      |
| 12. Poland      |
| 13. Sweden      |





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# 2014 IHF/EHF Women's Challenge Trophy

Larissa, Greece was the setting for the 8<sup>th</sup> edition of the Women's IHF/EHF Challenge Trophy. The Hellenic Handball Federation, in close cooperation with the European Handball Federation, provided the optimum conditions for the national team event for the emerging nations. This edition of the Challenge Trophy welcomed the host team of Greece and the seven remaining teams of the tournament from Armenia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Estonia, Israel, Latvia, and Moldova.

Being the only team to win all five respective matches in the tournament, Bulgaria was on top of the world as they won their second consecutive IHF/EHF Women's Challenge Trophy. Ultimately, it was the crowning glory on a fantastic season having also won the Intercontinental Trophy in Monterey, Mexico in January 2014, which also secured the team an automatic place to the next edition of the competition.

After three victories in the preliminary round over Israel, Estonia and Armenia, the defending champions beat Belgium in the semi-final after a brilliant first half (16:6), eventually taking the match by 27:23. In the final, Bulgaria took control early in the match and kept the Israeli defence at bay. Going in to half-time with the score 14:8, Israel faced an uphill battle to stay in the game; nevertheless, the match stayed clearly in favour of Bulgaria with a clear 34:23 win. The Bulgarian Elizabeth Omoregie scored ten goals in the final and was later awarded the title of Most Valuable Player.

Greece, the host of the 2014 IHF/EHF Women's Challenge Trophy, topped their preliminary round group and were also the favourites in the second semi-final, but it was not to be as Israel defeated them by one goal (24:23); this was a thrilling match that went to penalties when the score tied after 60 minutes. Despite this, the Greek team recovered quickly from this unlucky defeat and went on to take third place by beating Belgium 23:16 (14:7) in the 3/4 Match in Larissa. Latvia won the neighbours' duel with Estonia to finish fifth, while Moldova were the winners of the 7/8 placement match.



## RESULTS

### Semi-finals

Greece vs. Israel 23:24 (20:20, 13:11)

Bulgaria vs. Belgium 27:23 (16:6)

### 3/4 Match

Greece vs. Belgium 23:16 (14:7)

### Final

Bulgaria vs. Israel 34:23 (14:8)



## FINAL RANKING

1. Bulgaria
2. Israel
3. Greece
4. Belgium
5. Latvia
6. Estonia
7. Moldova
8. Armenia

# Men's EHF EURO 2014 Denmark

On a continental level, the EHF EURO remains the most sought after competition; from the national teams starting in the qualification - there is only but one objective and that is to be among the final fifteen teams to earn a place in the final tournament. The qualification to the EHF EURO 2014 held from June 2012 - June 2013 was full of unpredictable highs, as Spain and France emerged with six wins from six matches, and Austria (who hosted with a direct qualification in 2010) qualified under their own merit; Belarus, and Montenegro returned to the EURO for the first time in years; and crushing lows Germany and Slovenia failed to qualify.

With the teams decided, the Final Tournament was on, and never in the history of the EHF EUROs was the final decided with such a clear result and with more than 40 goals. With superior flair, in a match that was truly unrivalled, France became European Champions for the third time by decimating the hosts, and reigning Champions, Denmark by 41:32 [23:16]. Nevertheless, the Danes alongside France, Spain, and Croatia, booked their tickets to the 2015 IHF World Handball Championship in Qatar.

Despite the taste of defeat lying bitter on the tongue, the exiting coach Ulrik Wilbek stated "The team has a golden future ahead with Gudmundur Gudmundsson. In the next ten years, they will be among the top four in all competitions." Reminiscent of the World Championships in Spain, Denmark was once again powered out, which resulted in dismal handball on their part; even the staunch support of 14,000 spectators in the sold-out Jyske Bank BOXEN Arena in Herning was not enough to bring the Danes to a golden performance; as their weakest performance came at the worst possible moment. France remained focused and calm and was boosted by the incredible saves of goalkeeper Thierry Omeyer and goals of the new dynamic duo of Valentin Porte and Nikola Karabatic.

In the opening minutes of the final match, Denmark was clearly without a functioning defence strategy. In terms of score, they fell behind early, never to recover. Despite two early calls for a time-out, the Danes were down 4:13 in the 17<sup>th</sup> minute, and that double-digit difference was cemented later on at 7:17. At that point, it was clear to all that victory was firmly in the hands of Les Bleus. In the second half, as they continued to play very exciting handball, it was smooth sailing for France, ten minutes before the final whistle, they had extended the goal difference to 10 [35:25]. With the Danes and their army of supporters in shock, with immense pride, team captain Jerome Fernandez received the EHF EURO golden plate delivered by EHF President Jean Brihault. With this great win, Thierry Omeyer, Daniel Narcisse, Jerome Fernandez, Michael Guigou, Nikola Karabatic and Luc Abalo are the team members to hold a triple EHF EURO title.



“ Possibly this was the best ever match of a French team, definitely the best ever final performance. I have never been happier; this new team played a brilliant final. ”

**Claude Onesta**  
France coach



#### Semi-finals

France vs. Spain 30:27 [12:14]

Denmark vs. Croatia 29:27 [13:15]

#### 3/4 Match

Croatia vs. Spain 28:29 [13:16]

#### Final

France vs. Denmark 41:32 [23:16]

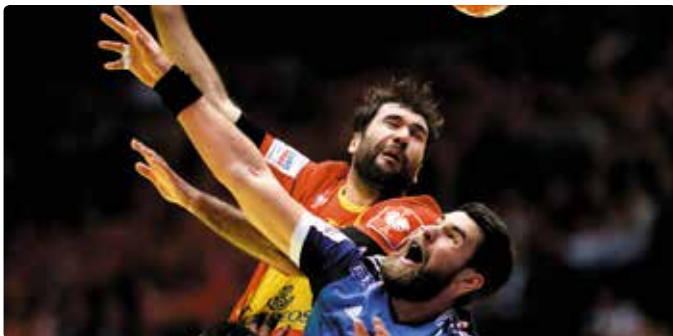


In the battle for third place, Spain took their second EHF EURO bronze medal after defeating Croatia 29:28 [16:13] in a thrilling match. The 3/4 Match was a fast paced, level match; Spain managed to gain the advantage over Croatia as they were boosted by the early goals of Joan Canellas forging ahead to take the score to 16:13 at the halfway stage. Croatia kept coming back, putting pressure on their counterparts, but after missing a few opportunities in the second half, and even bringing the score level in the twilight moments of the match, Canellas stepped in and decided the match putting an end to the hopes of taking a medal home held by the Croatian national team. The secret to the Spanish success was Jose Manuel Sierra, the goalkeeping powerhouse. It was a combination of his skill and the 'straight-shooting' of Joan Canellas, who was later announced as the top scorer of the entire final tournament with 50 goals, which gave the Spaniards the edge over their opponents. The Croatian superstar, Domagoj Duvnjak also scored eight goals during the match, but it was not enough to win another bronze medal; afterwards, Duvnjak was awarded the accolade of "World Handball Player of the Year in 2013" by the International Handball Federation.



“ It is great to finish a tournament like this with a bronze medal. We did not play on our higher level in all matches, but we played with passion and heart. ”

**Joan Canellas**  
Spain line player



The EHF EURO in Denmark set a new record in spectator figures in a final tournament event with 316,000 fans in the hosting venues that followed the 47 matches live. Before the final and bronze medal matches, the fans had already been treated to two real thrillers in the semi-finals, both of which were undecided until the very last moments. France defeated Spain by 30:27 [12:14] thanks to their top scorers Luc Abalo [8 goals] and sensational youngster Valentin Porte [7 goals]. Even the ten goals scored by Canellas were not enough to keep France from getting to the finals. In the semi-final between Denmark and Croatia, goalkeeper Niklas Landin was the national hero after saving the 15 goals that paved the way for the 29:27 [13:15] victory over Croatia, who lost their fourth consecutive semi-final in a major competition [EURO 2012 against Serbia, OG 2012 against France, and WCh 2013 against Denmark].

#### All Star Team

|                       |                         |                |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| Goalkeeper:           | Niklas Landin           | (DEN)          |
| Right Wing:           | Luc Abalo               | (FRA)          |
| Right Back:           | Krzysztof Lijewski      | (POL)          |
| Centre Back:          | Domagoj Duvnjak         | (CRO)          |
| Left Back:            | Mikkel Hansen           | (DEN)          |
| Left Wing:            | Valur Gudjon Sigurdsson | (ISL)          |
| Line Player:          | Julen Aguinagalde       | (ESP)          |
| Most Valuable Player: | Nikola Karabatic        | (FRA)          |
| Best defence player:  | Tobias Karlsson         | (SWE)          |
| Top scorer:           | Joan Canellas           | (ESP) 50 goals |

#### FINAL RANKING

1. France
2. Denmark
3. Spain
4. Croatia
5. Iceland
6. Poland
7. Sweden
8. Hungary

#### FINAL RANKING

9. Russia
10. FYR Macedonia
11. Austria
12. Belarus
13. Serbia
14. Norway
15. Czech Republic
16. Montenegro



# Women's EHF EURO 2014 Hungary / Croatia

After 72 matches across seven groups, the remaining 14 participants of the Women's EHF EURO in Hungary and Croatia were known four days prior to the final tournament draw in Zagreb, Croatia. In this qualification, there were few surprises, most of the favourites prevailed; then again, three participants were only decided in the last group match.

The first team to qualify for the final tournament was the five-time European champion. In Group 6, a group of three together with Romania and Belarus, Norway's ticket was booked after their third consecutive victory in three games. Alongside Denmark, Norway was the only other team from the 26 participants to win all of their qualification matches. Romania qualified thanks to two victories against Belarus. In Group 7, the second group of three, Russia and Germany were tied at the end of the qualification; however, Germany topped the group based on direct comparison. As Germany and Russia proceeded to the EHF EURO, FYR Macedonia was left behind after failing to win a solitary match.

Among the groups one through five, there were some very early indicators as to which teams would progress. After the conclusion of the fourth match day, Denmark (3x EURO gold), Montenegro (defending champion), France (2x EURO bronze) were destined for the 11<sup>th</sup> edition of the EHF EURO; in the end all three teams were at the top of their respective groups. In Group 1, it looked as if Austria was heading the EHF EURO in December 2014, but in the last match of the qualifications, Ukraine played a showstopper of a match. After losing out to Austria 34:28 in their first meeting, the players from Ukraine very much settled the score after trouncing Herbert Müller's squad 23:34, which left them sitting pretty in second place.



In Group 2, behind the unbeaten French national team was not Iceland, as many had predicted, but Slovakia. For the first time in 20 years, the women's national team is back in a major competition. At the heart of this surprising success, was the unpredictable draw that the national team of Slovakia secured in the penultimate game against France. The most exciting match in Group 3 to get that ticket to the EHF EURO 2014 in Hungary and Croatia was the duel between Poland and Czech Republic. In the first match against Poland, the Czechs defeated the Polish team on home soil (22:19) and walked away with a three-goal lead. But when the Poles came to Brno, they paid the Czech team back in kind by winning the match 25:22; and in accordance with the regulations, Poland snatched the final tournament ticket out of their hands based on the away goals rule.

Spain and Netherlands from Group 4 secured their berths at the EHF EURO 2014 early on in the qualification. For both teams having tallied 5 wins and one defeat, it was once again down to the direct comparison from both matches (22:27, 29:22) that determined that Spain would take the top spot in the group. However, there was significantly more drama in Group 5 where prior to last two qualification match days, everything was still open. Serbia started out with a defeat at the hands of Slovenia, and even with two lucky draws against Sweden, they still had their backs against the wall. But when Sweden won their match in Ljubljana, thus ascending to group winner, the path to the EHF EURO was opened once more to Serbia. It was only in the final match that Serbia could breathe a sigh of relief as they took a 32:25 win against Slovenia and their spot at the EURO.

The 11<sup>th</sup> Women's European Handball Championship will be jointly hosted by the National Handball Federations of Hungary and Croatia from 7 - 21 December 2014. The venues for this top event are located in the cities of Varazdin, Osijek, and Zagreb in Croatia and Debrecen, Győr and Budapest in Hungary. The semi-final and final stage of the competition will be played out in the Papp Laszlo Arena in Budapest, which was the setting for the 2014 MVM EHF FINAL4. The Preliminary Round of the competition was drawn 19 June 2014.



## GROUP A - GYŐR, HUN

1. Hungary
2. Spain
3. Russia
4. Poland

## GROUP B - DEBRECEN, HUN

1. Norway
2. Denmark
3. Romania
4. Ukraine

## GROUP C - VARAZDIN, CRO

1. Sweden
2. Germany
3. Croatia
4. Netherlands

## GROUP D - OSIJEK, CRO

1. Montenegro
2. France
3. Serbia
4. Slovakia

# Men's EHF EURO 2016 Poland

With approximately 15 months left to go until the final tournament of the Men's EHF EURO 2016, the next phase of the competition is rapidly approaching. With the Polish Handball Federation (Związek Piłki Ręcznej w Polsce - ZPRP) ready to be the twelfth nation of the Men's European Handball Championship in January 2016, and with the four playing venues already decided, all that is left to determine is which 15 national teams from the 28 qualification participants will join Poland in the final tournament. The first phase of the EHF EURO 2016 qualification was completed earlier in the year; nine teams kicked off the race to final tournament. In April 2014, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Finland and Switzerland took the last three open spots in the second and final phase of the qualification.

The draw for the EHF EURO Qualification took place in Warsaw at the headquarters of the Polish Olympic Committee on 11 April 2014. The draw event was a star-studded affair with attendance from the top-class handball players Petar Nenadic (Serbia), Ivan Cupic (Croatia), Julen Aguinalalde (Spain), and Slawomir Szmaj (Poland); The President and Secretary General of the European Handball Federation Jean Brihault and Michael Wiederer, as well as the President of the Polish Handball Federation, Andrzej Krasnicki, presided over the event.

The first qualification matches will be played at the end of October 2014. Rounds 3 and 4 will be played in April 2015. Rounds 5 and 6 in June 2015. Only the teams ranked on position one and two of each group and the best third ranked team overall will qualify for the Men's EHF EURO 2016 in Poland, for which only the host are directly qualified.



Poland has a wealth of experience in hosting major international sports events and we are looking forward to putting this into practice when we welcome European handball to EHF EURO 2016.

**Andrzej Krasnicki**  
ZPRP President

For the first time the matches of the final tournament will be played over 17 days. The change will see the main round played over seven days instead of five, with three of the four match days played with two matches per day instead of three matches, giving players more rest in between matches. Hosting the 16 national teams will be the cities of Krakow, Wroclaw, Gdansk, and Katowice. Boasting 15,000 seats, the Krakow Arena will be the stage for all the matches of the home team, and both the semi-final and final phases.

The final tournament is scheduled for 15 to 31 January, 2016.

## Qualification Groups



| GROUP 2            |
|--------------------|
| Denmark            |
| Belarus            |
| Lithuania          |
| Bosnia-Herzegovina |

| GROUP 4    |
|------------|
| Serbia     |
| Iceland    |
| Montenegro |
| Israel     |

| GROUP 6        |
|----------------|
| France         |
| FYR Macedonia  |
| Czech Republic |
| Switzerland    |

| GROUP 1     |
|-------------|
| Croatia     |
| Norway      |
| Netherlands |
| Turkey      |

| GROUP 3  |
|----------|
| Slovenia |
| Sweden   |
| Slovakia |
| Latvia   |

| GROUP 5  |
|----------|
| Hungary  |
| Russia   |
| Portugal |
| Ukraine  |

| GROUP 7 |
|---------|
| Spain   |
| Germany |
| Austria |
| Finland |



# 2013 M/W 19 Beach Handball Championships

The 2013 Men's & Women's 19 Beach Handball Championship threw off in Randers, Denmark; the event that was the overture to the senior tournament featured 15 teams across both categories. In the beach handball younger age category tournament, the Hungarian men's and women's national teams proved themselves invincible.

As the month of July opened, so did the beach handball extravaganza in Denmark; with free entry to the event area, an impressive entertainment programme that included DJs, concerts, a beach bar, the attendance of such a handball-loving crowd was inevitable. The tournament was a social media dream with thousands of facebook impressions and in addition to the live streaming of all main court matches for those fans who could not be where the action was.

In the men's 19 event, the championship began with teams spread across two groups; the defending champions Russia were joined by Switzerland, Norway and Spain in Group A. The host team of Denmark completed Group B alongside Turkey, Hungary, and Serbia. The final match of the tournament was a bittersweet affair for the young players of Turkey. Having made it to their second consecutive final, they missed out on the gold medal yet again [after being defeated by Russia in 2012]. For the Hungarians, they could not have asked for a better game or a clearer result [2:0]. The Danes took the bronze medal after keeping the Russian delegation at bay [2:0].

The women's 19 event was played via a round-robin system due to the uneven amount of entrants. Joining Denmark were delegations from Hungary, Turkey, Norway, Russia, Spain and Switzerland. Just as in the men's event, the four same national teams Denmark, Hungary, Turkey, and Russia qualified easily for the semi-finals. Hungary managed to successfully defend their 2012 title in front of 1600 excitable fans by stopping Denmark in their tracks with a 2:0 defeat. Turkey snatched the bronze medal away from Russia thanks to a stunning performance from Sibel Karamেকে, who was later named top scorer of the entire tournament.



## RESULTS MEN

### Semi-finals

|                     |                         |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Turkey vs. Russia   | 2:1 [21:24, 23:17, 3:2] |
| Hungary vs. Denmark | 2:0 [17:16, 21:10]      |

### 3/4 Match

|                    |                    |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| Russia vs. Denmark | 0:2 [18:21, 20:21] |
|--------------------|--------------------|

### Final

|                    |                   |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| Turkey vs. Hungary | 0:2 [6:21, 16:25] |
|--------------------|-------------------|

### Awards

|                       |                                 |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| Most Valuable Player: | Antonio Carrillo Espada (Spain) |
| Best Goalkeeper:      | Mihaly Feher (Hungary)          |
| Top Scorer:           | Attila Kun (Hungary)            |
| Fair Play Award:      | Spain                           |

## RESULTS WOMEN

### Semi-finals

|                    |                    |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| Hungary vs. Russia | 2:0 [20:11, 22:14] |
| Turkey vs. Denmark | 0:2 [13:16, 16:20] |

### 3/4 Match

|                   |                         |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Russia vs. Turkey | 1:2 [13:11, 16:21, 2:5] |
|-------------------|-------------------------|

### Final

|                     |                    |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| Hungary vs. Denmark | 2:0 [25:19, 16:11] |
|---------------------|--------------------|

### Awards

|                       |                              |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| Most Valuable Player: | Christina Wildbork (Denmark) |
| Best Goalkeeper:      | Hatice brats (Turkey)        |
| Top Scorer:           | Sibel Karamেকে (Turkey)      |
| Fair Play Award:      | Hungary                      |

## MEN'S RANKING

- Hungary
- Turkey
- Denmark
- Russia
- Spain
- Norway
- Switzerland
- Serbia

## WOMEN'S RANKING

- Hungary
- Denmark
- Turkey
- Russia
- Spain
- Norway
- Switzerland



# 2013 Men's 19 European Open

On the fringes of the Partille Cup, organised by the Swedish Handball Federation and IK Sävehof, the European Handball Federation presented the fifth edition of the Men's 19 European Open. The competition was inaugurated in 2005 and presents top younger age category tournament for young men and young women in alternate years.

The European Open returned to the city of Gothenburg, the first event of the European handball summer welcomed 22 national team delegations comprising of over 300 persons. For the very first time, a team from Denmark and Faroe Islands registered to take part; the Danes even went as far as to take the bronze medal on their first outing. A total of 83 matches were played out over 5 days in the Liseberg, Valhalla, and Scandinavium sport halls.

In the first spate of matches, Sweden won all their games, securing the top spot in their group, and despite a solitary defeat (against Denmark) in the main round, they still made it through to the final. Though Romania suffered a few early defeats, they won both of their main round matches, but they also benefitted from Spain's defeat at the hands of Portugal, which eventually led Romania into the final.

At the end of the tournament, there was plenty to celebrate in Sweden as the 'home' team took the victory 31:22 (15:10) over Romania in front of 5,700 fans in the Scandinavium. In the bronze medal match, the battle for third place was fought by Denmark and Spain. It was an excitingly close game and the winner was decided only in the very last moment. It was the European Open newcomers that won the Bronze medal by a single goal with 23:22 (10:11), leaving the Spanish national team settling for fourth place.



## RANKING

1. Sweden
2. Romania
3. Denmark
4. Spain
5. Poland
6. Austria
7. Portugal
8. Slovakia
9. Switzerland
10. Norway
11. Iceland

## RANKING

12. Czech Republic
13. Russia
14. Netherlands
15. Lithuania
16. Faroe Islands
17. Belgium
18. Israel
19. Finland
20. Estonia
21. Italy
22. Great Britain

## RESULTS

### 3/4 Match

Denmark vs. Spain 23:22 (10:11)

### Final

Sweden vs. Romania 31:22 (15:10)

### All Star Team

|                       |                         |              |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| Goalkeeper:           | Flavio Wick             | SUI          |
| Left wing:            | Edgar Perez Lopez       | ESP          |
| Left back:            | Simon Jeppson           | SWE          |
| Centre back:          | Kragh Cornelius Aastrup | DEN          |
| Line player:          | Adrian Vladut Rotaru    | BIH          |
| Right back:           | Ignacy Bak              | POL          |
| Right wing:           | Matthias Fuhrer         | AUT          |
| Most Valuable Player: | Alln Somlea             | ROU          |
| Best defence player:  | Alexsander Kotov        | RUS          |
| Top scorer:           | Dimitrij Tripe          | SUI 56 goals |



EUROPEAN OPEN  
M19



# 2013 W19 European Championship

The setting for a superb display of Russian dominance was the 2013 Women's 19 European Handball Championship in Denmark. The team, which included Anna Vyakhireva awarded with the MVP title of the tournament, finished the YAC EURO without the loss of a single point; even in the finals, they took their victory 36:28 (19:11) with ease over Hungary. The final was already decided at half-time thanks to the handball hurricanes, the top scorers Alena Ikhneva with nine goals and Daria Dmitrieva with 8 goals. In front of 2,000 fans in Kolding, after their semi-final defeat against Russia, Denmark recovered quickly to take the Bronze medal in the Nordic duel with a clear 33:22 over Norway.

In the semi-finals, Hungary had a tough time against the Norwegian defence, but eventually had their breakthrough to take the match 28:20. The battle royal between Denmark and Russia could not have been more thrilling, with two periods of extra time, the Russians proved to have the most perseverance and combined with the eleven goals scored by Anna Vyakhireva, they powered their way into the finals.



| RANKING        |  |
|----------------|--|
| 1. Russia      |  |
| 2. Hungary     |  |
| 3. Denmark     |  |
| 4. Norway      |  |
| 5. Romania     |  |
| 6. Netherlands |  |
| 7. France      |  |
| 8. Sweden      |  |

| RANKING            |  |
|--------------------|--|
| 9. Austria         |  |
| 10. Germany        |  |
| 11. Spain          |  |
| 12. Slovenia       |  |
| 13. Croatia        |  |
| 14. Czech Republic |  |
| 15. Portugal       |  |
| 16. Slovakia       |  |

Coming out of the preliminary round, Norway, Russia, Netherlands, and Hungary went into the main round undefeated. Russia remained the only team with a clean slate after winning group 1 ahead of Norway, Romania, and France. In group 2, the level of play was more balanced; Hungary, Denmark, and Netherlands all amassed four points. The 'Oranje' missed the semi-finals based on goal difference. The Dutch eventually ranked sixth ahead of France, but behind Romania; Sweden ranked eighth.

The top three teams emerging from the 2013 Women's 19 European Championship, Russia [Gold], Hungary [Silver] and Denmark [as the reigning U19 world champion], also secured their automatic entry to the 2014 IHF U20 World Championship in Croatia.



W19 EHF EURO // DENMARK

## RESULTS

### Semi-finals

|                    |                             |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| Russia vs. Denmark | 35:33 (12:13, 26:26, 30:30) |
| Hungary vs. Norway | 28:20 (16:9)                |

### 3/4 Match

|                    |               |
|--------------------|---------------|
| Denmark vs. Norway | 33:22 (16:11) |
|--------------------|---------------|

### Final

|                    |               |
|--------------------|---------------|
| Russia vs. Hungary | 36:28 (19:11) |
|--------------------|---------------|

### All Star Team

|                       |                    |              |
|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Goalkeeper:           | Zsofi Szemerey     | HUN          |
| Left Wing:            | Ekaterina Chernova | RUS          |
| Left Back:            | Anne Mette Hansen  | DEN          |
| Centre Back:          | Daria Dmitrieva    | RUS          |
| Line Player:          | Jenny Groeten      | NED          |
| Right Back:           | Luka Szekerczes    | HUN          |
| Right Wing:           | Kelly Vollebregt   | NED          |
| Most Valuable Player: | Anna Vyakhireva    | RUS          |
| Best Defence Player:  | Annika Meyer       | DEN          |
| Top Scorer:           | Monica Soares      | POR 50 goals |



# 2013 W17 European Championship

**E**vigt Sverige! In the city of Gdynia, for the first time in the history of the Swedish national team, the women's youth squad won the Women's 17 European Championship title. To the surprise of experts, the 'three crowns' not only made it to the finals, but they also dethroned the reigning champions, Russia - the clear favourites. Having stormed through the entire tournament unscathed, not losing a single point, Russia went into the finals self-assured of victory - especially after their 35:23 semi-final win against Portugal.

Sweden on the other hand, suffered defeat at the hands of the Russians in the main round, but still managed to qualify to the semi-finals, by ranking second in the group ahead of Denmark in a surprising 30:28 win. Once again, the Danes had missed a YAC final, yet equivalent to their older counterparts, won the bronze medal with by thrashing surprise semi-finalists Portugal 48:28. And again, similar to the Women's 19 EURO event that had taken place weeks earlier; a Russian, this time Elizaveta Malashenko was voted the Most Valuable Player of the tournament.

In the preliminary round, it was Romania, Russia, Denmark, and Croatia that came out on top of their respective groups. The host team, Poland failed to advance to the main round and eventually ranked 15<sup>th</sup>. At the end of the main round, in group 1, Portugal was sitting pretty in third place behind Romania and Denmark; and in group 2, it was very clear early on that it was Russia and Sweden who would progress to the next round.

In addition to qualifying for the 2014 Youth World Championship, Russia and Sweden also booked their tickets to the 2014 Youth Olympic Games in Nanjing, China. Based on performance, the national teams of Denmark, Portugal, Montenegro, Romania, Norway, Croatia, Hungary, Germany, France and Netherlands also qualified for the IHF event in FYR Macedonia.



## RESULTS

### Semi-finals

|                     |               |
|---------------------|---------------|
| Denmark vs. Sweden  | 28:30 (14:14) |
| Russia vs. Portugal | 35:23 (20:8)  |

### 3/4 Match

|                      |               |
|----------------------|---------------|
| Denmark vs. Portugal | 42:28 (22:16) |
|----------------------|---------------|

### Final

|                   |               |
|-------------------|---------------|
| Sweden vs. Russia | 26:24 (13:12) |
|-------------------|---------------|

### All Star Team

|                       |                          |              |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|--------------|
| Goalkeeper:           | Althea Rebecca Reinhardt | DEN          |
| Left Wing:            | Olivia Mellegard         | SWE          |
| Left Back:            | Sandra Santiago          | POR          |
| Centre Back:          | Yaroslava Frolova        | RUS          |
| Line Player:          | Sophia Fehri             | FRA          |
| Right Back:           | Djurdjina Malovic        | MNE          |
| Right Wing:           | Emma Ekenman-Fernis      | SWE          |
| Most Valuable Player: | Elizaveta Malashenko     | RUS          |
| Best Defence Player:  | Maria Lykkegaard         | DEN          |
| Top Scorer:           | Cristina Laszlo          | ROU 56 goals |



## RANKING

- Sweden
- Russia
- Denmark
- Portugal
- Montenegro
- Romania
- Norway
- Croatia

## RANKING

- Hungary
- Germany
- France
- Netherlands
- Spain
- Czech Republic
- Poland
- Slovakia

## The world stage

---

**T**he European Handball Federation takes great pride in watching the fine performances of European teams in the intercontinental competitions that take place across the globe. In the past sporting seasons, 57 teams from Europe took part in six events organised by the International Handball Federation as well as the European Olympic Committee.

The Europeans performed exceedingly well taking 14 out of 24 gold, silver, and bronze medals combined. We take this moment to congratulate our teams once again.



# 2013 Men's Handball World Championship

The 23<sup>rd</sup> IHF Men's World Handball Championship will be remembered for the clearest final score of all time. The Spanish national team celebrated winning the 2013 World Championship with 35:19 (18:10) over the hapless Danes. For Spain, this was the second World Championship victory since winning the 2005 title in Tunisia. For Coach Valero Rivera it was the perfect farewell, as only a few months after winning the gold medal in his native Spain, he announced his resignation; Rivera currently coaches the national team of Qatar, the hosts of the upcoming 2015 IHF World Handball Championship.

The Final Tournament was hosted from 11 - 27 January 2013 across the cities of Barcelona, Seville, Zaragoza, and Madrid. As expected, the continent of Europe dominated the World Championship. Fourteen teams were entered into the competition and, as in 2011, only European teams were to be found in the top ten. With the exception of one team, the Europeans performed strongly throughout the competition; from the quarter-finals onwards, Europe was the only continent represented.



## All Star Team

|              |                    |     |          |
|--------------|--------------------|-----|----------|
| Goalkeeper:  | Niklas Landin      | DEN |          |
| Left Wing:   | Timur Dibirov      | RUS |          |
| Left Back:   | Alberto Entrerrios | ESP |          |
| Centre Back: | Domagoj Duvnjak    | CRO |          |
| Right Back:  | Laszlo Nagy        | HUN |          |
| Right Wing:  | Hans Lindberg      | DEN |          |
| Line Player: | Julen Aguinalalde  | ESP |          |
| MVP:         | Mikkel Hansen      | DEN |          |
| Top Scorer:  | Anders Eggert      | DEN | 55 goals |

On 27 January 2013 as the Spanish 'fiesta' took place in Barcelona, the Danish national team, will be remembered as the team that totally ran out of steam. After exiting the Preliminary Round with the 'perfect 10', and then eliminating Hungary (quarter-finals) and Croatia (semi-finals), there was clearly no more energy left in their reserves. This was a shockingly poor showing by the Danes when compared to their amazingly honourable performance in the 2011 event in a game that went into extra time and where the Danish national team was only narrowly defeated by France. On this occasion, they simply had nothing left to give; nevertheless, they were very deserving of precious metal.

Up until the semi-finals, when they suffered a 6-goal defeat at the hands of Denmark, Croatia was the best team of the World Championships. They still managed to walk away with the bronze medal after defeating Slovenia (31:26).



## FINAL RANKING

**Gold:** Spain

**Silver:** Denmark

**Bronze:** Croatia

4. Slovenia

5. Germany

6. France

7. Russia

8. Hungary

9. Poland

10. Serbia

11. Tunisia

12. Iceland

## FINAL RANKING

13. Brazil

14. FYR Macedonia

15. Belarus

16. Egypt

17. Algeria

18. Argentina

19. Saudi Arabia

20. Qatar

21. Korea

22. Montenegro

23. Chile

24. Australia



## Results

### Quarter-finals

ESP vs. GER 28:23 (12:14)

SLO vs. RUS 28:27 (14:13)

CRO vs. FRA 30:23 (13:12)

DEN vs. HUN 28:26 (18:11)

### Semi-finals

ESP vs. SLO 26:22 (13:12)

DEN vs. CRO 30:24 (14:11)

### 3/4 Match

CRO vs. SLO 31:26 (14:13)

### Final

ESP vs. DEN 35:19 (18:10)

# 2013 World Games

At the 2013 World Games in Cali, Colombia organised by the International Handball Federation, there was a repeat performance of the 2012 World Championship finals as Brazil once again won both titles in the beach handball tournament. This was the first time that beach handball was on the official World Games programme, despite being a demonstration sport on three occasions.

Though one Pan-American dominated, the remaining four medals in both categories were won by teams from Europe. With five teams representing the continent, only Ukraine returned home empty-handed. In the men's event, Russia won the silver medal and Croatia, the bronze; in the women's event, the two European entrants, Hungary and Norway took silver and bronze respectively.



| RESULTS MEN        |                           | RANKING      |
|--------------------|---------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Semi-finals</b> |                           | 1. Brazil    |
| Brazil vs. Croatia | 2:1 [20:21, 20:17, 5:2]   | 2. Russia    |
| Qatar vs. Russia   | 1:2 [19:18, 17:18, 10:11] | 3. Croatia   |
| <b>3/4 Match</b>   |                           | 4. Qatar     |
| Croatia vs. Qatar  | 2:1 [19:10, 8:14, 7:4]    | 5. Ukraine   |
| <b>Final</b>       |                           | 6. Venezuela |
| Brazil vs. Russia  | 2:0 [26:16, 27:26]        | 7. Colombia  |
|                    |                           | 8. Australia |

| RESULTS WOMEN             |                        | RANKING           |
|---------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Semi-finals</b>        |                        | 1. Brazil         |
| Norway vs. Hungary        | 0:2 [10:16, 10:13]     | 2. Hungary        |
| Brazil vs. Chinese Taipei | 2:0 [20:13, 20:13]     | 3. Norway         |
| <b>3/4 Match</b>          |                        | 4. Chinese Taipei |
| Norway vs. Chinese Taipei | 2:0 [28:11, 19:17]     | 5. Uruguay        |
| <b>Final</b>              |                        | 6. Colombia       |
| Brazil vs. Hungary        | 2:1 [14:8, 10:11, 6:3] | 7. Australia      |
|                           |                        | 8. Tunisia        |



# 2013 Men's Youth World Championship

Thirteen European teams were seeded to play the fifth edition of the Men's Youth World Championship. And with European teams comprising of 54% of the total entrants, many were confident that the teams would put on a great performance. At the end of the competition, European teams had coveted all three medals. As 16 of the 24 participating teams moved out of the preliminary round to the next stage, 13 European teams were among them; once the Youth World Championship entered the quarter-final stage, it became an all-European event.

In the semi-finals, the Germans lost out to Croatia with 26:29, while Denmark had prevailed over Spain thanks to a much focused match that ended 32:23. The bronze medal was won by Germany; facing Spain in the match for third place, the young German squad played a great game [29:23], leaving the Spaniards with little to no chances to turn their luck around.

Denmark successfully defended their World Championship title with a clear victory over Croatia in a first class final. Though the teams were tied shortly before half-time [12:12], Denmark started strong in the second half taking the score to 23:19; though Croatia managed to find their second wind to tie the score again at 25:25, Denmark finished strong in the final moments of the game for a decisive 29:26 win. Instrumental to the Danish success was Kristian Larsen Stoklund who scored ten goals; he was also awarded the top scorer accolade.



## RESULTS

### Semi-finals

Croatia vs. Germany 29:26 [13:15]  
Denmark vs. Spain 32:23 [17:13]

### 3/4 Match

Germany vs. Spain 9:23 [13:15]

### Final

Croatia vs. Denmark 26:32 [12:12]

## RANKING

1. Denmark
2. Croatia
3. Germany
4. Spain
5. Norway
6. Sweden
7. Serbia
8. Slovenia
9. Brazil
10. Hungary
11. Romania
12. Belarus

## RANKING

13. France
14. Egypt
15. Qatar
16. Austria
17. Japan
18. Argentina
19. Tunisia
20. Venezuela
21. Korea
22. Angola
23. Gabon
24. Chile

## All Star Team

Goalkeeper: Sebastian L. Frandsen DEN  
Left Wing: Lovro Mihic CRO  
Left Back: Marko Mamic CRO  
Centre Back: Tim Suton GER  
Line Player: Ingacio Plaza Jimenez ESP  
Right Back: Niklas Kirlokk SWE  
Right Wing: Sebastian Karlsson SWE  
Most Valuable Player: Simon Hald Jensen DEN

# 2013 Men's Junior World Championship

The third time was definitely the charm for Sweden as the team became Junior World Champion thanks to a 28:23 [12:10] win over Spain following on from their victories in 2003 and 2007. For Spain, this edition of the World Championship marked the fifth time a junior delegation entered the finals and left with the silver medal (1987, 1989, 1995, and 2001).

The Swedes dominated the tournament from the very beginning, winning all nine games in Bosnia Herzegovina, where an international tournament of this kind was hosted for the very first time. In the finals, it was clear that the Swedish victory was due to the outstanding goalkeeper Peter Johannesson, and Philip Stenmalm who was named the Most Valuable Player.

Even though five European teams took the top five spots in the final ranking, the continental opponents proved a force to be reckoned with. In front of 8,000 fans in the Arena Skenderija in Sarajevo, the host team failed to advance to the quarter-finals, due to an unexpected and unfortunate defeat against Egypt. There were other disappointments; early in the second phase, the defending champions Germany were taken out of the competition after being defeated by France, in the end Germany ranked eleventh. Denmark also failed to make it to the quarter-finals, whilst Russia did not even make it through the preliminary round.

In the semi-final pairings, France defeated Sweden by five goals (24:29); however, it was the match between Spain and Croatia that had the handball fans on the edge of their seats. Spain dominated the match, punishing Croatia for each technical mistake, and after the first period, the score was 17:12 in favour of the Spaniards. In the second half, Croatia came back strongly and as the final whistle sounded, the score was tied at 30:30. To decide which team would enter the final, it was down to extra-time. And after many intense moments, Spain took the match by one goal, which was more than enough to meet Sweden in the final.

## RESULTS

### Semi-finals

France vs. Sweden 24:29 [11:17]

Spain vs. Croatia 36:35 [30:30, 17:12]

### 3/4 Match

France vs. Croatia 32:27 [15:11]

### Final

Sweden vs. Spain 28:23 [12:10]



## All Star Team

|                       |                        |     |          |
|-----------------------|------------------------|-----|----------|
| Goalkeeper:           | Peter Johannesson      | SWE |          |
| Left Wing:            | Andreas Berg           | SWE |          |
| Left Back:            | Adora Quentin          | FRA |          |
| Centre Back:          | Pablo Cacheda Gonzales | ESP |          |
| Line Player:          | Gonzalo Porras Perez   | ESP |          |
| Right Back:           | Alex Dujshebaev        | ESP |          |
| Right Wing:           | Ante Tokic             | CRO |          |
| Most Valuable Player: | Philip Stenmalm        | SWE |          |
| Top Scorer:           | Abdullah Algharaballi  | KUW | 65 goals |

## RANKING

1. Sweden
2. Spain
3. France
4. Croatia
5. Netherlands
6. Brazil
7. Switzerland
8. Egypt
9. Slovenia
10. Serbia
11. Germany
12. Hungary

## RANKING

13. Denmark
14. Bosnia-Herzegovina
15. Tunisia
16. Argentina
17. Russia
18. Korea
19. Qatar
20. Kuwait
21. Angola
22. Congo
23. Chile
24. Algeria



# 2013 Women's Handball World Championship

**T**welve teams from Europe completed the 24 team line-up for the 2013 Women's World Championship. In addition to the directly qualified teams from Serbia (host) and Norway (defending champion), based on their performance at EHF EURO 2012, Montenegro (winner) and Hungary (bronze medallist) completed the pool of directly qualified teams.

The eight World Championship Play-Off Europe matches were drawn on the final day of the EHF EURO 2012 in Belgrade. Following the conclusion of the matches on 9 June 2013, there was one sensational shock...for the first time since 1973, four-time world champion Russia failed to make it to the final tournament of a world championship despite a 27:26 away victory in the first leg in the Netherlands. However, the 'Oranje' left the Russians reeling in Rostov as they secured their world cup ticket with a 33:21 victory in the return match. Sweden and Croatia were also missing during the final tournament having been eliminated from the competition by Poland and France respectively.

## Results Play-Off Europe

|                            |       |                |
|----------------------------|-------|----------------|
| Russia vs. Netherlands     | 49:58 | [21:33; 27:26] |
| Ukraine vs. Germany        | 38:49 | [22:25; 16:24] |
| Croatia vs. France         | 44:48 | [26:30; 18:18] |
| Romania vs. Slovakia       | 53:43 | [30:22; 23:21] |
| Poland vs. Sweden          | 58:54 | [32:31; 26:23] |
| Czech Republic vs. Iceland | 55:38 | [26:21; 29:17] |
| Denmark vs. Turkey         | 75:50 | [31:26; 42:24] |
| Spain vs. FYR Macedonia    | 54:37 | [27:16; 27:21] |

Although seven of the eight quarter-finalists came from Europe; in the end, it was the non-European team that crushed Serbia's dream of taking world championship gold on home soil. In front of 19,467 spectators (record spectator figures for the women's event) in the Kombank Arena in Belgrade, Brazil became the first Pan-American team to win the Women's World Handball Championship title, and the second non-European team to win the gold medal (1995 Korea). With a most deserved victory 22:20 (13:11), Brazil was also the only team to remain unbeaten in Serbia, despite the shaky win against Hungary in the quarter-finals. Though the final match was seemingly balanced; on the whole, Brazil had the more accurate shooters. Nevertheless, by winning the silver medal, Serbia celebrated the best result in the history of the team. The 2013 Women's World Handball Championship was also a memorable occasion

## All Star Team

|                       |                  |     |          |
|-----------------------|------------------|-----|----------|
| Goalkeeper:           | Barbara Arenhart | BRA |          |
| Left Wing:            | Maria Fisker     | DEN |          |
| Left Back:            | Sanja Damjanovic | SRB |          |
| Centre Back:          | Anita Görbicz    | HUN |          |
| Line Player:          | Dragana Cvijic   | SRB |          |
| Right Back:           | Susann Müller    | GER |          |
| Right Wing:           | Sun Hee Woo      | KOR |          |
| Most Valuable Player: | Eduarda Amorim   | BRA |          |
| Top Scorer:           | Susann Müller    | GER | 62 goals |

for the national team of Denmark. For the first time since 1997 when they won the gold medal, the Danes won another piece of world championship precious metal. In the 3/4 Match, Denmark triumphed over Poland (30:26); the Polish delegation relished their status as the unexpected participant having eliminated France in the quarter-finals. Even more surprising was the success of Serbia who made it to the quarter-finals and subsequently ended any dreams the defending champions (Norway) had of retaining their title; this was the first time the Norwegian national team had missed out on advancing to the semi-finals of a major tournament in years. Germany was also another team that started well, but ran out of energy when they came up against Denmark in the final phase of the world championship. The semi-final games for Serbia and Brazil were then unique affairs that ended clearly in their favour.



## RESULTS

### Semi-finals

|                    |       |         |
|--------------------|-------|---------|
| Poland vs. Serbia  | 18:24 | [6:14]  |
| Brazil vs. Denmark | 27:21 | [14:10] |

### 3/4 Match

|                    |       |         |
|--------------------|-------|---------|
| Denmark vs. Poland | 30:26 | [12:15] |
|--------------------|-------|---------|

### Final

|                   |       |         |
|-------------------|-------|---------|
| Brazil vs. Serbia | 22:20 | [13:11] |
|-------------------|-------|---------|

## RANKING

- Brazil
- Serbia
- Denmark
- Poland
- Norway
- France
- Germany
- Hungary
- Spain
- Romania
- Montenegro
- Korea

## RANKING

- Netherlands
- Japan
- Czech Republic
- Angola
- Tunisia
- China
- Argentina
- DR Congo
- Paraguay
- Algeria
- Dominican Republic
- Australia

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# Through my eyes... The Organiser of Championship Events



**Morten Stig Christensen**  
*Secretary General of the Danish Handball Federation*

The season 2013/14 was the “year of handball” in Denmark. The Danish Handball Federation hosted four completely different events starting with the younger age category and senior European Beach Championship in Randers, followed by the Women's 19 European Championship, and highlighted by the Men's EHF EURO 2014. Morten Stig Christensen, Secretary General of the Danish Handball Federation (DHF) talks about the challenges and the success to be a multiple organiser.

## The DHF hosted four events within the space of seven months; how difficult was the organisation?

» These events were really big for Denmark, as only a few people were running the championships on a professional basis; it was the old band of brothers, as we said. We were also able to depend on a large number of volunteers who regularly take up to two weeks leave from their professional jobs to assist and be part of such events. However, they could not allocate their time for all four events. Therefore, we solved the problem by initiating a new educational system for young people who are taught leadership in clubs and regional federations. These volunteers assisted us in a brilliant way, especially during the beach championships. On the other hand we have well-experienced people like President Per Bertelsen, who is in charge of organising major handball events since the 1999 Women's World Handball Championship. The enthusiasm of the volunteers combined with the experience allowed us to enjoy exciting and well-organised events.

## The four events had to be organised on completely different terrains i.e. beach handball...

» This was a huge challenge for us; Denmark had never hosted an international beach handball tournament before, so we did not know what exactly to expect. Thankfully, we enjoyed brilliant sunny weather for two weeks, strong support from the EHF Beach Handball Commission and a great cooperation with the Municipality of Randers. Following the success of the 2013 Beach Handball European Championships, the city officials are planning to use this area as the national stadium for beach sports such as beach handball, beach volleyball, and beach football. So I believe we will see some more top beach handball events there. In general, it was a colossal experience. Even during the junior tournament the stands were full, at the matches of the Danish national teams during the senior event, we were at full capacity, and we had daily, live TV coverage for three hours. So everybody was completely happy with this enjoyable event.

## Some weeks later the top European talents faced other at the Women's 19 European Championships, which resulted in a bronze medal for the Danish team. Was it also satisfying from the organisational point of view?

» This event was an investment in the future of Danish handball; we are in the process of building up a new strong team on women's side. From an organisational standpoint, this was not a profitable event for the DHF, but was an investment from a sportive point of view, which enables us to hope for a bright future. The atmosphere was brilliant and the semi-final Denmark vs. Russia was even broadcasted live on a public TV channel.

## In January, Denmark was revelling in a sea of red and white during the Men's EHF EURO 2014. Did you expect the amount of public interest surrounding a tournament like this?

» The Men's EHF EURO was not only the biggest handball and indoor sport event ever in Denmark, but apparently the second biggest sport event next to hosting the road cycling world championship some years ago. When I started working for the DHF in 2007, it was one of my main goals to host a major men's event – as the last one was in 1978, when I participated as a young player; so 36 years had passed since Danish players had a major match on home soil. The event was a dream come true. The arena in Herning was sold-out every day, the spectators created a great atmosphere and utilised all the possibilities of the Boxen Arena for the huge fan zone. Additionally, the media praised us for the great working conditions, and TV2 as the official broadcaster had the best TV figures ever. For the Organising Committee, this event was already a great success even before the start of the first match in terms of ticket sales. It was the right decision to start the ticket sale right after the draw event. Now we look forward to the completion of the new arena in Copenhagen, then we will have access to two large venues for such events.

## What is the legacy of the four events, mainly the Men's EHF EURO 2014?

» Most of the surplus earned from this event will be invested in nationwide handball projects. The club system is under pressure, so more time and money will be spent to attract young people to our sport. The DHF is also in the process of developing a new educational structure for clubs and regional federations. The EHF EURO 2014 came exactly at the right time to raise awareness for handball and to have the financial opportunities to implement those projects, not only for children, but also for adults aged 35+, called handball fitness. Our sport is not only elite handball, but a sport for all kinds of people. And now we have the opportunities to reach out to them.

# Through my eyes... The Beach Handball Coach



## Sasa Kuburovic

*Former Serbian National Team Coach & EHF Beach Handball Lecturer*

“Beach handball is a relatively new sport, so it is normal that at the beginning first steps were slower, sometimes weak, sometimes confused, even wrong; but since the objectives and targets are now more clear, we are off and running. Within the next few years everyone will be amazed with the reach of beach handball.”

### What has been done to increase the interest?

» The sport just needed to be seen by a lot of people. The sportive quality is in a state of permanent increase and development; this includes the level of event organisation as well. We need to foster presence of media, TV above all. Internet live stream has been standard practice for beach handball events for a very long time, but we must target wider range of spectators.

### What needs to be done to increase the number of players, coaches and officials?

» We must explain to the many handball coaches that the presence of their players on the sandy courts is a fantastic advantage for them; they will improve as players. Beach handball looks for creative, fast thinking players who must know how to anticipate and recognize the play of the opponent much more than in indoor handball. After the beach handball season, they will return to the indoor court as better players. Additionally we need to cradle a new generation of players.

### What are the key points which make beach handball so interesting?

» First of all, we spend time in the natural environment. The most important issue are the Rules of the Game that are written in order to make it attractive, dynamic, and breathtaking. In beach handball, everything is possible. Because of that, six different countries have won titles in eight European championship competitions. The same can be said in the men's competition; we have medal winners like Italy, Turkey, and Belarus, which explains the power of beach handball. On a global level, five world championships were organised on four different continents and with champions from three continents.

### Will beach handball take away spectators from indoor handball?

» No, as it is played in a different time of the year. But even the time of year is not important, what is important that we have encountered a lot of people that did not have any idea about handball but after the initial contact with the sport, which that they made through beach handball, they started watch indoor handball as well. It must be accepted, starting with Europe, that on each continent we have countries with a stronger position in beach handball than in indoor handball. Beach handball is a fantastic platform to help handball become a global sport.



## On the rise... **Tim Sutton**



### **“I want to become the youngest world handball player of all time” Interview with Germany’s rising star, Tim Sutton.**

Tim Sutton is 18 years old; his father Goran Sutton is a former Yugoslavian national team player and now successful trainer. Sutton was born in Bosnia Herzegovina and relocated to Germany at an early age, where he became a nationalised German citizen. With over 250 goals, He was the top scorer of the handball second division in Germany and in the 2014/15 handball season, he will be on the roster of the 2013 EHF Cup winners, Rhein-Neckar Löwen. In the 2013 Youth World Handball Championship in Hungary, he led Germany to bronze and was elected to the ‘All Star’ team.

#### **You have just finished school, what are your intentions? Do you plan to continue with your education, focus on handball, or both?**

» The next three years are the most important years in the development of my handball career; so right now, my entire focus will only be applied to handball for the first time in my life...I need to train more.

#### **You will make the switch from the second division to the Rhein-Neckar Löwen - a big leap?**

» I occasionally played and trained there last season, so know what to expect. I am ready for this challenge.

#### **When did you realise that handball was the sport for you?**

» Actually, I started to play at a high level quite late, in former Yugoslavia, I had been told “too late”. But, thanks to my father, I was always in the halls, during the training sessions and the games there. At some point, I stopped football and started playing handball. Already in the D-youth and C-youth squads, I was scoring 14-15 goals per game, and have always been the youngest in the team.

#### **Were you heavily influenced by your father to enter into the world of handball as a player?**

» My father never put pressure on me. By the time it became clear that I played better handball than my peers, and that I could do well, my father just gave me the extra layers. He has always been ready to provide additional stimuli; he showed me many techniques that have helped me - but without causing our father-son relationship to suffer.

#### **What percentage of your performance is based on talent, ambition, and training?**

» Without talent you will not get far, but without ambition the greatest talent brings nothing. What can be taken as a prerequisite is a solid foundation, which is very important, but if you are not working permanently on your own self-improvement, you cannot get far, even with the most amazing talent; it is all a matter of attitude. To be a great player, talent is one thing, but everything else is a combination of work and ambition.

#### **How do you view your own personal ambition?**

» I have never wanted to lose. Not that I am a sore loser, but I just never wanted to lose, regardless of what I was doing. My ambition goes hand in hand with my enthusiasm for something, and when I am no longer inspired by it, I have to leave it behind. And there was always a healthy sibling rivalry...the ambition to be better than my older brother.

#### **Do you see yourself as a classic shooter?**

» For this I am missing at least nine inches, to be a real shooter you should be no less than two metres. I see myself more as a prolific playmaker. I can play in the centre, but also on the line as I am playing now. In my youth, I was only rated by the amount of goals I scored. I personally prefer to assist my teammates, and at the end of the match instead of seven goals from ten attempts, I would rather see 15 goals from 24 attempts.

#### **The experts have nothing but great things to say about you, they even compare you with the young Duvnjak, or the young Karabatic. How does it feel?**

» It is nice to be compared with Karabatic and being on par with the young Duvnjak's or Hansen's, but you can always make such comparisons at this respective age. Honestly, I have no role models in handball except my father and my brother. What Duvnjak does and what he achieves does impress me, but he is not my role model. If you emulate, you become a copy, and you can never be better than the original. I will continue to look to the world-class players, with the intention of being better myself.

#### **When will we see you in the men's national team?**

» I will not give the age of 25 for my debut; at 25, you are no longer a young player. I do not want to wait until 2019 when the World Championship returns to Germany to be part of the national team, but much earlier; though I cannot say when, because that remains the decision of the national team coach, Martin Heuberger. In Croatia, for example, with 20 years old, you are no longer considered a ‘talent’ - either you have made a breakthrough, or it is over. You need to be in the starting line-up and taking responsibility in the A-team by 20, otherwise you cannot be a player like Karabatic.

#### **How important for your career planning was your nomination to the All Star Team at the 5<sup>th</sup> Men's Youth World Championship in August 2013?**

» That meant a lot to me, it was the reward for years of hard work. This award showed me that it pays to work hard. The equation is simple: more work equals more success.

#### **What is your biggest goal in handball?**

» I have five years left to become the youngest world handball player of all time, younger than Hansen and younger than Balic. This is my personal dream.

## On the rise... **Anna Vyakhireva**



### **“Any award motivates me to play better and better.” Interview with Russia’s rising star, Anna Vyakhireva**

Anna Vyakhireva is ranked among the best younger age category players in the world. In 2012 she was already part of the Russian youth and junior teams at the world championships in the Czech Republic and Montenegro. She led her youth team to the silver medal, and was awarded the Most Valuable Player title. In 2013 she received the same accolade again and was instrumental in winning the gold medal at the Women’s 19 European Championship in Denmark. Despite her age, at 19, Vyakhireva has been playing on the Zvezda Zvenigorod team for the past three years. Anna Vyakhireva is rising to the top and is well on her way to being a star in the Russian women’s national team.

#### **Handball is a key element in your family, as your sister is also a national team player. When did you start playing handball?**

» When I was little, our family moved to Togliatti, the spotlight of Russian women’s handball, we lived near the arena, where my father introduced me to sports, in particular handball, which my older sister Polina was already playing.

#### **Growing up, was there time for other hobbies – or was handball everything to you?**

» I learned to read very early, when I was four years old. So sports and reading were my main hobbies in childhood.

#### **Your father was your first coach – was he responsible for your development?**

» My father always was my coach, as now he is the second coach of the Zvezda team, but the coach of my first team in Togliatti was Irina Kos.

#### **At what point did you realise that handball had become your career?**

» It was at the time when I signed my first professional contract.

#### **What are your strengths, and in which parts of the game you still have to learn?**

» Playing in defence is not so easy for me. I am not very tall, so it is a problem for me to stay in a 6-0 defence, so I like to play a 4:2 defence system as an advanced player. According to my father, this is most suitable position for me.

#### **Do you have any handball role models?**

» There are many great handball players across the globe, and I want to learn from them.

#### **In women’s handball, Russia is always one of the top nations in younger age categories competitions – why do you think that is?**

» I think it is because Russia has good schools for young female handball players; our first national team has not performed so well in the last years, but I think that will change.

#### **What are your plans and dreams for the future on the level of club and the national team participation?**

» I want to win the Russian championship and a European Cup competition with my club; I would also like to go to Rio and win an Olympic medal.



## On the rise... Estavana Polman



**“To score 19 individual goals in the finals of the EHF Cup is a brilliant result – but if you still leave without the trophy, then the excitement of 19 goals is not that big of a deal.” Interview with Estavana Polman**

Dutch international Estavana Polman had mixed emotions after her Danish club Team Esbjerg missed out on the win in the finals of this competition against Russian side Lada Togliatti (25:36, 32:32). But Polman (21) is eager and optimistic to grab the chance and to raise the trophy next season.

### How did it feel to score 19 goals – including 13 in the second leg on home ground – in the finals of the EHF Cup against Lada?

» I would have rather liked to score only once, but win the competition. It is not about individuals, it is about team success. I wanted to help my team, but in the end, we did not make it after a complete disaster in the first leg, when we lost by 25:36 in Russia.

### Despite the draw on home ground – how big was your disappointment?

» We were totally disappointed, as the first match was so terrible, because we all knew that we can play much better. When we were back in Denmark, we said: ok, we will try everything to turn this deficit around, but then we missed so many penalty shots and clear chances that it was obvious quite early that we would fail in getting this trophy. To catch up twelve goals was too much for us.

### But you and your team were really lucky to make it to the final after a real thriller in the semi?

» It was thrilling, it was dramatic, indeed. We had lost our home match against Hungarian side Fehervar by 24:25 and we were trailing by 24:26 in the second leg just three minutes before the end. Then we equalized – but with only ten seconds left to play, we needed to score, but Fehervar had possession of the ball. But we managed to score, simply incredible! Thousands of spectators, who were screaming and shouting some seconds before, were calmed down within seconds. I have never experienced a change of atmosphere and a more thrilling match in my whole life. It sent shivers down my spine.

### What is your ambition with Esbjerg after making it to the 2014 finals?

» Esbjerg never came that far in any international competition. We are hungry for more now. Again, we have qualified for the European Cup competitions, and next season we are aiming to win a trophy.

### How important is playing an EHF European Cup competition for your personal development?

» Highly important! To face international club sides like those from Hungary, Serbia or Russia boosts your experience and improvement. It is completely different to matches in the Danish league, as the international games are tougher, and you learn mainly what to expect when playing abroad. You can learn so many things in this competition, and those experiences are also important for the development of the national team.



# Holding the cards... The Referee Report

Another season has passed and the European Handball Federation has continued to nurture the development of the referees and delegates who oversee in excess of seven hundred matches per season. Our nominated officials travel the span of the continent to officiate matches from the realm of clubs, national teams, and additional activities.

Supervised by Dragan Nachevski of the EHF Competitions Commission, much emphasis is placed on the enhancement of skills and the expansion of knowledge. Ample time and consideration is taken to, both physically and mentally, educate the referees in order for them to progress from officiating the events allocated to those in the Young Referees Programme (YRP), to ensuring that they are ready to whistle the final of an EHF European Championship across all the classifications.

The European Handball Federation boasts 143 referee couples from 42 EHF Member Federations. From within this number, 25 pairs are female and come from 20 different national federations. Back in 2010, the EHF vowed to place more emphasis on the development of females in handball both on and off the court. Currently, there are now 46 young women who are making headway in the Young Referee Programme. This is a clear and positive investment in the future.



## Female EHF Referees for the 2014/15 season

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Ana Vranes / Marlis Wenninger             | AUT |
| Tatjana Prastalo / Vesna Todorovic        | BIH |
| Silviya Markovska                         | BUL |
| Helena Crnojevic / Emina Kostecki Radic   | CRO |
| Karina Christiansen / Line H. Hansen      | DEN |
| Charlotte Bonaventura / Julie Bonaventura | FRA |
| Maike Schilha / Tanja Schilha             | GER |
| Katalin Pech / Maria Vagvölgyi            | HUN |
| Viktorija Kijauskaite / Ausra Zaliene     | LTU |
| Marija Ilieva / Silvana Karbeska          | MKD |
| Jelena Vujacic / Andjelina Kazanegra      | MNE |
| Kjersti Arntsen / Guro Røen               | NOR |
| Joanna Brehmer / Agnieszka Skowronek      | POL |
| Malgorzata Lidacka / Urszula Lesiak       | POL |
| Marta Sa / Vania Sa                       | POR |
| Diana-Carmen Florescu / Anamaria Stoia    | ROU |
| Cristina Nastase / Simona Raluca Stancu   | ROU |
| Viktoria Alpaidze / Tatyana Berezkina     | RUS |
| Vanja Antic / Jelena Jakovljevic          | SRB |
| Branka Maric / Zorica Masic               | SRB |
| Alexandra Laurell / Natasha Engberg       | SWE |
| Maria Bennani / Safia Bennani             | SWE |
| Pinar Ünlü Hatipoglu / Mehtap Simsek      | TUR |
| Tetyana Rakytina / Iryna Tkachuk          | UKR |
| Olena Kaverina / Marina Sliptsova         | UKR |

## Female YRP Officiators & Referee Candidates\* for the 2014/15 season

|  |      |
|--|------|
| Naila Chikayeva / Rumia Khametova                      | AZE* |
| Maike Bogaert / Lynn De Moor                           | BEL  |
| Iliyana Illieva / Veselina Petrova                     | BUL  |
| Lorena Jurenc / Maja Vajdic                            | CRO  |
| Katerina Brzoskova / Karolina Pavelova                 | CZE* |
| Frederikke L. Hallsson-Elhauge / Charlotte Luk Nielsen | DEN  |
| Julia Glantz / Annika Laaksonen                        | FIN  |
| Coralie Cochard / Victoria Hery                        | FRA* |
| Florine Martineau / Julie Tissier                      | FRA  |
| Carloine Romatet / Morgane Rosso                       | FRA  |
| Christina Ralli / Sofia Ralli                          | GRE  |
| Bettina Balogh / Viktoria Toth                         | HUN  |
| Gianna S.Merisi / Luliana A. Rosca                     | ITA  |
| Linda Brikmane / Kristine Kirejeva                     | LAT  |
| Marylyn Agius / Brenda Camilleri                       | MLT  |
| Carina Marie Brataas / Jannicke Kirkelund              | NOR  |
| Alina Muntean / Mirabela Turdean                       | ROU* |
| Cristina Rapa / Roberta Rica                           | ROU  |
| Alexandra M. Balacescu / Corrina F. Radut              | ROU  |
| Evgeniya Gombaleskaya / Anastasia Zavyalova            | RUS  |
| Sandra Stanojevic / Milica Denic                       | SRB  |
| Natalie Lundgren / Madalene Nyberg                     | SWE  |
| Liliya Kuznetsova / Helen Tkachenko                    | UKR  |
| Viktoria Zhosan / Anastasiya Chalchenko                | UKR* |



# Holding the cards... The Referee Report

In 2013/14 season, in cooperation with the EHF Competence Academy & Network, two referee courses were hosted on the fringes of 2014 Women's Challenge Trophy in Larissa, Greece, and the 2013 & 2014 European Open in Gothenburg, Sweden. In all, 16 couples achieved the Continent Referee Europe status upon the successful completion of their training.

## Congratulations to the referees who achieved EHF Status in...

### Summer 2014

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Karina C. Christiansen / Line H. Hansen | DEN |
| Maïke Schilha / Tanja Schilha           | GER |
| Matan Lindenbaum / Dor Laron            | ISR |
| Francesco Simone / Pietro Monitillo     | ITA |
| Tomas Barysas / Povilas Petrusis        | LTU |
| Alain Rauchs / Philippe Linster         | LUX |
| Marta Sa / Vanja Sa                     | POR |
| Doru Manea / Radu Iliescu               | ROU |
| Maria Bennani / Safia Bennani           | SWE |
| Olena Kaverina / Marina Sliptsova       | UKR |

### Summer 2013

|                                     |     |
|-------------------------------------|-----|
| Florian Hofer / Andreas Schmidhuber | AUT |
| Aleksandar Jovic / Nedim Arnautovic | BIH |
| Mads Dahl Hermann / Jesper Madsen   | DEN |
| Fabian Baumgart / Sascha Wild       | GER |
| Lars Jorum / Kim-Rune Stenhaugmo    | NOR |
| Marko Sekulic / Vladimir Jovandic   | SRB |

At this time, the European Handball Federation takes this opportunity to say thank you and farewell to the continental referees listed below, who for a variety of reasons decided to end their careers following the conclusion of the 2012/13 & 2013/14 handball seasons. We thank them for their professionalism and their dedication to handball. We wish them all the best in their future endeavours.

## Salutations...

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Ihar Yudchyt's / Siarhei Kot              | BLR |
| Andreas F. Hansen                         | FAR |
| Alfonso Rodriguez Murcia                  | ESP |
| Hlynur Leifsson                           | ISL |
| Valdemaras Liachovicus / Valdas Gecevicus | LTU |
| Kenneth Abrahamsen / Arne M. Kristensen   | NOR |
| Havard Kleven / Christian W. Ramberg      | NOR |
| Vasile Pavel / Eugen-Marian State         | ROU |
| Ales Veber / Damjan Janez Pangerc         | SLO |
| David Wyss / Kevin Zowa                   | SUI |
| Slavomir Struhar / Peter Hascik           | SVK |
| Patrick Hakansson / Maths Nilsson         | SWE |
| Henrik Mäkinen / Göran Johnsson           | SWE |

Over the past two seasons in the realm of off-court officiating, the Competitions Commission has reconfigured the educational processes for delegates. Currently, on the continent, there are 139 active delegates coming from 45 EHF Member Federations; at this time, there are only 13 female delegates. In 2014, the EHF Competence Academy & Network organised a Delegate Candidate Seminar in Vienna, Austria. The seminar was held parallel to the 2014 Top Referees Course from 30-31 August. 18 delegates, 5 of which were women, from 18 nations were in attendance to undergo various examinations, which they all passed. Further instruction and training was given in the area of event arena set-up. In 2014/15 season, more subtle changes to the current systems will be implemented.



Talking  
tactics...

# Coach Juan Carlos Pastor



**Interview with Juan Carlos Pastor, coach of Pick Szeged and winner of the Men's EHF Cup, who raised the trophy on this 46<sup>th</sup> birthday.**

"To be honest, the biggest gifts in my life are the facts that I can coach handball teams and be with my family. But to be even more honest, the best presents are the ones you don't expect. So, becoming a father on my birthday, and reaching the final, then winning the EHF Cup title on my birthday was the icing on the cake."

**What was the key to winning the final against MAHB Montpellier in Berlin?**

» My players have worked very hard over the whole year and they really believed that they could win. Additionally, so many spectators travelled from Hungary to Berlin and supported us in a great manner. And it showed again that Pick Szeged is not only a club, it is more like a big family.

**When you look back on the time from your arrival in Berlin to the awarding ceremony, what happened to your team?**

» We arrived in Berlin with confidence, but were supposed to be the underdogs in this group of participants. However, I was sure that we could achieve something in Berlin. I never expected to win the trophy on that Friday, but I - and the whole team - knew that the key to a big success would be a victorious semi-final against Füchse Berlin. I was very confident, as during my work as a coach in Spain I had won several final tournaments with two matches in two days. And we strongly believed that if we could beat Füchse Berlin in the semi-final, we might have a chance to win the final.

**Roland Mikler was instrumental to the success of the team, and was awarded best goalkeeper of the tournament. Did it feel bittersweet that the final against Montpellier was his last match for Pick Szeged before leaving to Veszprem?**

» This is sport. Players come and players go. But in case of Roland Mikler it was the brilliant fact that Roli gave all he could until the very last second of his contract. It is a pity that he leaves, but we all still have the hope that he might return to Szeged someday. We signed Jose Manuel Sierra for the next season, another world class goalkeeper. As I said, in sports players come and go.

**What were the rules for the team at the winners' party?**

» There were no rules. The only thing they had to remember was that the team bus to the airport left on Monday morning at 05:45hrs. They were allowed to celebrate wherever and however they wanted to. They deserved that party - and nobody arrived late for the bus, and the party even continued in Szeged.

**Not only did you make history by becoming the first Hungarian club team to win the EHF Cup, but you continued history of Spanish coaches winning titles with Hungarian sides, after Ambros Martin led Győr to the trophy at the MVM EHF FINAL4. Do you believe that this trophy put pressure on your fellow countryman Carlos Antonio Ortega, who made it to the VELUX EHF FINAL4 with Hungarian side Veszprem?**

» [Laughs] Great question! I do not think that there is any pressure on Carlos Antonio Ortega and his team. They made it to Cologne and they have the same role as Kiel and Barcelona, belonging to the favourites of this competition. Veszprem will have the same fate as we had in Berlin. Two matches in 24 hours, with the option to win or lose. Why should Ortega not manage to win this trophy? Everything is open - and in case he makes it, this would be a historic moment for both Hungary and Spain. But just wait and see what happens.

“ A perfect birthday present!  
Juan Carlos Pastor ”

## Talking tactics... **Coach Niklas Harris**



### **“I could not believe what I saw, as this dream became reality for our club” Interview with Niklas Harris, coach of H65 Höör who talks about the development of his young team.**

It was one of the biggest surprises of the 2013/14 European Cup season, when H65 Höör raised the Women's EHF Challenge Cup trophy. The Swedish team had lost the first leg at home against the internationally much more experienced club Ivry Paris 19:21, but then, following an unexpected sensation, Höör's dream came true through a 23:21 win in Paris, thanks to the bigger number of away goals. Höör already faced a similar situation in the Last 16 phase of the competition against Sokol Poruba [24:25, 23:22]. H65 Höör had won their first title in their second ever European Cup campaign!

#### **After losing the first leg of the final at home 19:21, did you expect to succeed in Paris?**

» Absolutely not! Before the first leg, I mentioned that our chances to beat Paris - one of the strongest clubs in Europe - are approximately 30 per cent. After the first match this number had dropped to between 5 and 10 per cent. Though only in our second European Cup season, we knew that losing a home match by two goals leaves you in a really bad position.

#### **But your team finally managed to win on aggregate?**

» The match in Paris had started terrible for us. We were down by 1:6 after ten minutes. So I looked at my watch and thought: we have 50 minutes still to catch up eight goals, which is pretty tough for a young club like us. We tried to stop their key player Stine Oftedal, we changed our defence, and at the break the deficit was only two goals. We had control of the match, but we needed to score one more goal 15 seconds before the end, so I replaced the goalkeeper by an additional field player. And we scored, Paris got the last shot, and our goalkeeper made the save. But to be honest, I could not believe what I saw, as this dream became reality for our club. We had selected our players since the start of our project four, five years ago not only from a sportive point of view, but mainly from their attitude. This attitude provided us with the trophy.

#### **How important is playing European Cup competitions for the development of your club?**

» It can be said very easy: those two years of playing the EHF Challenge Cup were worth five years without it. We learnt so much. Some years ago, when we relegated to the first Swedish league, it was our goal to be a good team on domestic ground. In 2012 we got the chance to play the Challenge Cup, so our objectives grew and grew. It was our hope that those international matches would help us in the development of the team and the club. And we were right; playing European Cup was and is crucial for us.

#### **So how have your goals changed for the next international season?**

» As the winner of the Challenge Cup we received a wild card for the EHF Cup, which we accepted. This competition is the next step in our development, but we again want to play a good role in the EHF Cup. And since winning the Challenge Cup we clearly set higher goals: we want to become Swedish champions in the next two years to play the EHF Champions League. And to say that goals like this are only based on the last two years in the Challenge Cup.

## Moving on... Transfers

On 27 January 2013, the International Handball Federation (IHF) made minor changes to the "Regulations for Transfer between Federations". In the same year, the IHF Council lowered the administration fee for amateur transfers. This meant that releasing federations are no longer obligated to pay €400; instead this amount has been lowered to €123. Moreover, some federations within Europe continue to use the mutual agreement system, claiming only €100, a token sum, for the transfer of an amateur player. The global transfer system hinges on enabling handball players to enjoy freedom of movement. This is not limited to professional players; an ongoing trend remains the increase in the number of student transfers and § 5.3 releases.

With some many high profile athletes in Europe and a wealth of young talents on the rise, the race to sign these top players has been intense. Nevertheless, the European handball transfer market continues to be effected by ongoing economic austerity. Many clubs have faced a mass exodus of players who, at the end of their contracts, left for pastures new during the past two handball seasons. As expected, with over 20,000 professional players, approximately 5 per cent of players signed new contracts. High profile signings included big names such as Karabatic, Narcisse, Sigurdsson, Pineau, Neagu or Bulatovic.



At the end of the 2012/13 season, the Romanian top women's club, Oltchim Rm. Valcea, who up until recently was a permanent fixture in the Women's EHF Champions League had to endure the departure of four key players. Former World Handball Player of the Year (2010) and native to Romania, Cristina Neagu left to join Buducnost (MNE), the Champions League finalists from the 2013/14 season. Alexandrina Cabral Barbosa was the second left back to leave Oltchim Rm. Valcea. The last season saw Barbosa playing in Germany for Thüringer HC, but she changed again last summer signing for CJF Fleury Loiret. The French centre back, Allison Pineau signed to the FYR Macedonia top club WHC Vardar SCBT. Györi Audi ETO KC, winner of the 2013/14 Women's Champions League, welcomed right back Katarina Bulatovic to the team only to see her comeback to Buducnost after their triumph at the MVM EHF FINAL4.

In similar vein to Oltchim Rm. Valcea, THW Kiel bade farewell to the likes of Thierry Omeyer, Daniel Narcisse, Momir Ilic, Christian Zeitz and Gudjon Valur Sigurdsson. Omeyer, goalkeeper extraordinaire, made a stop at Montpellier HB [his second stint at the club], before moving to Paris St. Germain HB. There to welcome him was former teammate,



Daniel Narcisse who made the direct leap from THW Kiel to PSG. After four years with THW Kiel, Serbian left back, Momir Ilic made the move to Hungarian champions MKB-MVM Veszprém followed by Zeitz one year later, while Sigurdsson transferred to Kiel's bitter rivals FC Barcelona.

Also on the move during the 2012/13 season was Nikola Karabatic; after a pit stop at Pays D'Aix UC, the 30-year-old centre back realised a longstanding dream and signed for the ultimate Champions League team, FC Barcelona.

Making his first international transfer, after playing for Spanish clubs since the beginning of his playing career (1999), Julen Aguinalde signed with the Polish champions, KS Vive Targi Kielce in the summer of 2013.

In all, during the period 1 July 2013 to 15 May 2014, the European Handball Federation administered 2,776 transfers; this figure comprised of 1,152 IHF transfers, students, § 5.3 releases (all without fee), 736 amateur players, 888 professional players. The massive increase in the number of student transfers underlines the importance of and our commitment to the freedom of movement for all handball players.





# Draw Highlights

The 2013/14 season opened in an historic setting as Europe's top clubs gathered in the Gloriette overlooking Vienna's magnificent Schönbrunn Palace for the first draw event of the season, the draws for the group phases of the VELUX EHF Champions League and Women's EHF Champions League. In all, 48 competition draws were held throughout the season in all of the EHF's club and national team competitions for senior, junior and youth competitions in both indoor handball and beach handball.

Events across Europe brought tension, delight and occasionally disappointment to the continent's players, officials and fans as they followed proceedings via television, streaming and live on the EHF's social media channels. Highlights throughout the season included the Men's EHF EURO 2016 qualification draw in the headquarters of the Polish Olympic Committee in Warsaw in April, drawn by top players Petar Nenadic from Serbia, Ivan Cupic from Croatia, Julen Aguinagalde from Spain and Slawomir Szmaj from Poland.

In May, the focus turned to the final rounds of Europe's top club competitions with draws for the Men's EHF Cup Finals in Berlin's TV Tower and for the VELUX EHF FINAL4 in Cologne. In June, the Women's EHF EURO 2014 draw was held in Zagreb, with entertainment from the world-famous Croatian musician Ana Rucner, with the draw made by top players Katarina Bulatovic from Montenegro, Jelena Eric from Serbia, Andrea Penezic from Croatia and Viktorija Soos from Hungary.



# Golden quotes... Winners' statements



“ We were under pressure from the start and went down 9:4, but we came back fine and reduced the gap to 13:11 before half-time. We had a good break and a fine talk about things, and then all of a sudden we had the chance to also win in Zvenigorod. That was really cool. ”

**Christian Dalmose**  
coach Viborg HK (DEN),  
winner Women's Cup  
Winners' Cup



“ It is our coach's birthday and now we got him the trophy which was much cheaper than buying an actual gift. And I think that he is much happier with the trophy. I would like to thank our spectators. They were so loud today; it felt as if we were playing at home. I felt like we just could not lose this match. ”

**Attila Vadkerti**  
team captain Pick Szeged (HUN),  
winner Men's EHF Cup



“ It is an amazing feeling. We have a really good team and it doesn't matter which team we play against. We know we can do it. It was so wonderful for me. It is also amazing to have our fans and parents here. ”

**Ida Reinholdsson**  
player Sweden, winner of  
the Women's 17 European  
Championship in Poland



“ It felt so great to have this trophy in our hands. We felt like we were top of the world. We were so strong and we never stopped fighting. This is a great achievement for us, for our coach, for our fans, and for the club. ”

**Sanja Damnjanovic**  
player Viborg HK (DEN),  
winner Women's Cup  
Winners' Cup



“ It means a lot to our young team to achieve this triumph; it is a fantastic way to end the season. ”

**Magnus Johansson**  
coach IK Sävehof (SWE), winner  
Men's EHF Challenge Cup



“ I'm very happy with what we achieved as a team as well as for the individual prizes I won. We showed the handball world that Bulgaria can play good handball. Despite the poor preparation we had, caused by financial problems, Bulgaria performed pretty well – and deserved to win this trophy again. ”

**Elizabeth Omoregie**  
player Bulgaria, winner of the  
Women's IHF/EHF Challenge  
Trophy and Most Valuable Player  
of the tournament



“ It was a brilliant tournament for us. We had been beaten by Denmark last year in the world championship final. Now we managed to beat them – and then took the title in style, unbeaten and without losing a single point. We have shown a great team spirit, and I am so proud of my team after this brilliant tournament. ”

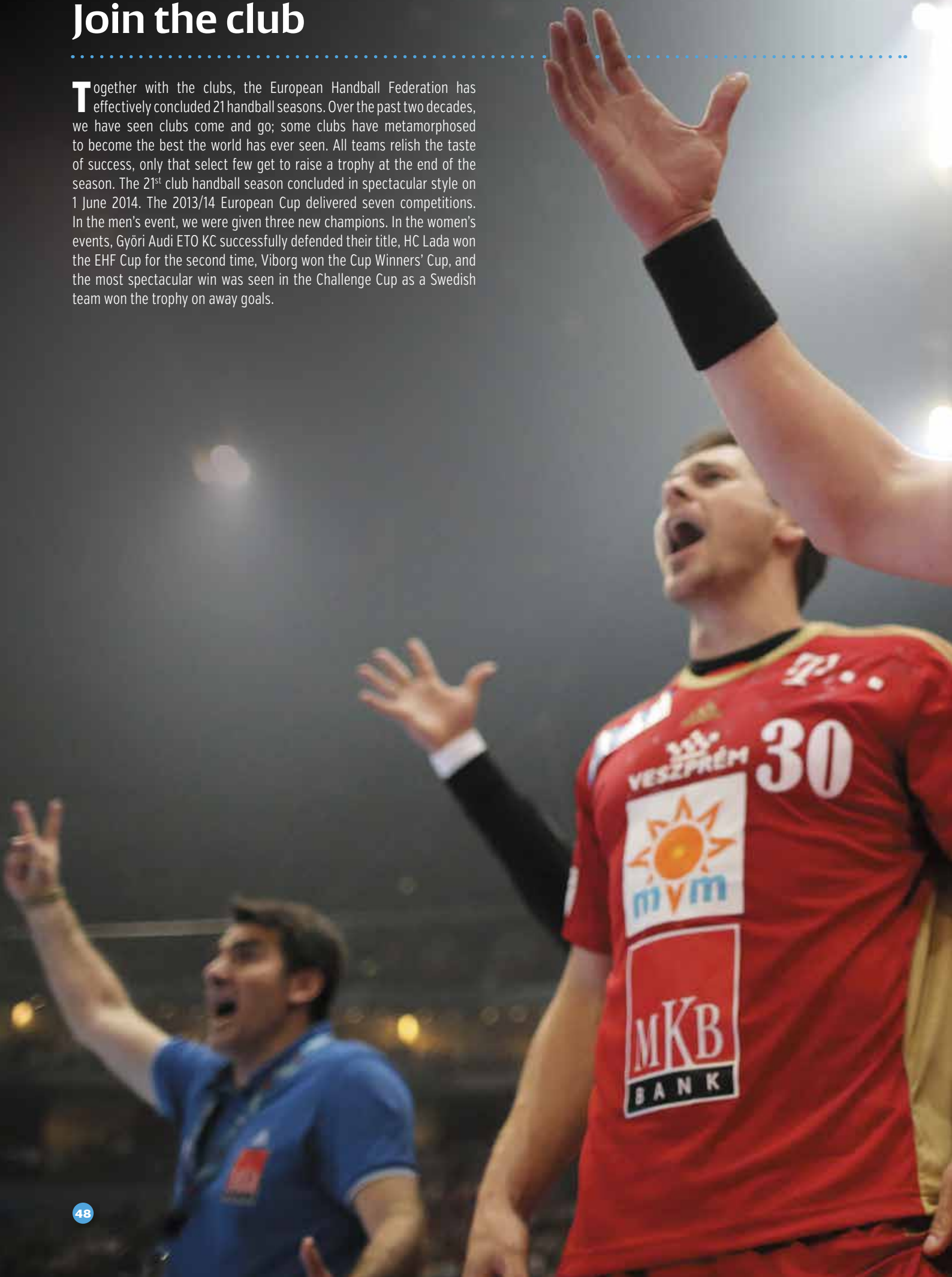
**Daria Dmitrieva**  
player Russia, winner and All Star  
team member of the Women's 19  
European Championship

“ We have dominated both finals – and it feels great to have another cup in our hands. Russian women's handball is reaching out for more, and we were the lucky ones to win the Russian-Danish finals. Winning a trophy is always something great, something which motivates you for the next season to win it again. ”

**Nadezda Muravyeva**  
player Lada Togliatti (RUS), winner of the Women's EHF Cup

# Join the club

**T**ogether with the clubs, the European Handball Federation has effectively concluded 21 handball seasons. Over the past two decades, we have seen clubs come and go; some clubs have metamorphosed to become the best the world has ever seen. All teams relish the taste of success, only that select few get to raise a trophy at the end of the season. The 21<sup>st</sup> club handball season concluded in spectacular style on 1 June 2014. The 2013/14 European Cup delivered seven competitions. In the men's event, we were given three new champions. In the women's events, Györi Audi ETO KC successfully defended their title, HC Lada won the EHF Cup for the second time, Viborg won the Cup Winners' Cup, and the most spectacular win was seen in the Challenge Cup as a Swedish team won the trophy on away goals.







# 2013/14 VELUX EHF Champions League

**T**wenty qualification matches, 120 group phase matches, 16 Last 16 matches, eight partially dramatic quarter-final matches – all in all, 164 matches to determine the participants of the VELUX EHF FINAL4. Two of the teams that went to Cologne were extremely lucky to be there SG Flensburg-Handewitt (against HC Vardar-Skopje) and FC Barcelona (against Rhein-Neckar Löwen) only made it through to the last phase of the competition because, due to the goal difference being the same, the decision was based on the number of away goals.

Contrary to this, for THW Kiel it was smooth sailing into the VELUX EHF FINAL4. They achieved this advancement through two wins and a goal difference of +18 goals against HC Metalurg; this was the largest goal difference in a quarter-final match since the introduction of the VELUX EHF FINAL4 in the 2009/10 season. MKB-MVM Veszprém also experienced little difficulty in making the transition from the quarter-finals to the VELUX EHF FINAL4 as they won both matches against the French champions PSG Handball, and with that securing their entry to the VELUX EHF FINAL4 for the very first time.



But first things first: due to HSV Hamburg missing out on the national championship title, in the 2013/14 season for the very first time, the defending champion had to endure the qualification phase of the competition. Only by a hair's breadth, did HSV Hamburg make it to the group phase of the competition after defeating Füchse Berlin (30:30, 27:26). Also emerging successful from the qualification were the teams of HK Drott Halmstad (SWE), HC Dinamo Minsk (BLR), HC Motor Zaporozhye (UKR), FC Porto Vitalis (POR), HC Metalurg (MKD) and Orlen Wisla Plock (POL). From the seven teams to make it through to group stage, only four progressed to the Last 16.

In the group phase, for the most part, the favourites advanced to the last sixteen; the closest decision was made in Group A where HC Motor Zaporozhye took a surprising victory over the previously unbeaten group winners MVM-MKB Veszprém in the last game, this meant that HC Croatia Osiguranje Zagreb were also left behind. After 120 matches, no team was left unscathed. The defending champion HSV Hamburg with +18 points followed by THW Kiel, FC Barcelona, and MKB-MVM Veszprém (all with +17 points) all made the smooth transition into the Last 16.



But by the end of the next round, the dream was over for HSV Hamburg; after succumbing to a draw in Skopje and suffering a sensational home defeat at the hands of HC Vardar-Skopje, once again, the defending champion would not be at the FINAL4 in Cologne and a new champion was guaranteed. The closest decision in the last sixteen was in the match between Rhein-Neckar Löwen [GER] and KS Vive Targi Kielce [POL]; with the score tied at a cumulative 55:55, away goals decided the fate of the teams, in this case, the 'Lions' prevailed. In another Champions League novelty aspect, two teams from the same city, HC Metalurg and HC Vardar-Skopje after their respective wins, progressed to the quarter-finals.

In the 23<sup>rd</sup> season of the VELUX EHF Champions League, a new playing system will be introduced. An additional four extra teams will be part of the group phase. 16 teams out of a total of 28 will be then seeded into two groups of eight in which home and away matches will be played; to accommodate this change four more match days will be scheduled. The two group winners will progress directly to the quarter-finals. From the remaining teams, those ranked 2 to 6 in both groups will qualify for the quarter-finals; those teams ranked 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> will be eliminated from the VELUX EHF Champions League at this stage.



The remaining 12 teams will play in two groups of six in a home/away mode. Here only the two group winners will progress to the last sixteen. The remaining team will play for the remaining spots in the quarter-finals; the VELUX EHF FINAL4 will then play out as in seasons past.



# 2014 VELUX EHF FINAL4

For the second time in a row, the VELUX EHF FINAL4 threw up another surprise winner from Germany. In the space of 24 hours, SG Flensburg-Handewitt defeated FC Barcelona and THW Kiel, following in the footsteps of HSV Hamburg. Both the fans and the experts were in agreement, this was a most deserved title win. As team captain Tobias Karlsson received the trophy from EHF President Jean Brihault, the biggest success story in the history of SG Flensburg-Handewitt was complete.

SG Flensburg-Handewitt is now part of the illustrious circle of teams that have won all three European Cup titles; they won the EHF Cup in 2001 and the Cup Winners' Cup in 2012. Known for his quiet demeanour, coach Ljubomir Vranjes of SG Flensburg-Handewitt enthusiastically exclaimed that "This is incredible, amazing, and unimaginable! I am so proud of my team. Now it is time to celebrate in style!" Once again, the underdog had travelled to Cologne and took the most coveted prize home.

In the end, the visitors to the VELUX EHF FINAL4 were rewarded with a memorable 30:28 victory, which in the history of the EHF, was the second all-German men's Champions League final. THW Kiel failed to win their fourth EHF Champions League title; and record holders and competition favourites FC Barcelona also missed out on their chance to win the eighth title for their club. Both of these "Goliaths" were slewed by "David" who came from the North of Germany in the form of SG Flensburg-Handewitt. Nevertheless, FC Barcelona were pleased after winning the nail-biting 3/4 Match against MKB-MVM Veszprém. The Hungarians, after an intense match, lost the first semi-final 26:29 against THW Kiel.



It was clear that the residual entertainment programme of the fifth edition of the VELUX EHF FINAL4 would be outstanding; the 20,000 fans had the four teams to thank for all the drama and suspense that was delivered over the course of the weekend, especially SG Flensburg-Handewitt who arrived in Cologne with the motto "just enjoy" and got to live the motto at the end when they stood on the winners' rostrum.

"Games so exciting have never been seen before in Cologne; we could not offer the fans better handball. Excellent!" This was the opinion of Jean Brihault, President of the European Handball Federation EHF President. In the second semi-final, SG Flensburg-Handewitt managed to come back from being the underdog in the match against FC Barcelona, who were leading 26:32 and bring the match to an unbelievable draw. Extra time was called where neither team could break the impasse (36:36). Every single person in the LANXESS Arena was captivated, for the first time, a VELUX EHF FINAL4 semi-final was to be decided on penalties. Thanks to the trio of "young guns" Gottfridsson, Radivojevic, and Wanne who took the shots for Flensburg, and Mattias Andersson, the goalkeeper who saved the penalty shot of Nikola Karabatic, this unbelievable match ended 41:39.

A day later, Andersson controlled the match almost single-handedly, which secured SG Flensburg-Handewitt their first title by saving 23 goals. Andersson said "It is amazing to finish the season this way. Though my first Champions League title was won with THW Kiel in 2007, that event was not on my mind. This is an incredible feeling that I cannot really put into words."


**VELUX®**

 EHF  
CHAMPIONS  
LEAGUE

**FINAL4**

### Semi-finals

THW Kiel (GER) vs. MVM-MKB Veszprém (HUN) 29:26 (13:13)

 FC Barcelona (ESP) vs. SG Flensburg-Handewitt (GER)  
39:41 (17:18, 32:32, 36:36)

### 3/4 Match

FC Barcelona (ESP) vs. MVM-MKB Veszprém (HUN) 26:25 (9:10)

### Final

SG Flensburg-Handewitt (GER) vs. THW Kiel (GER) 30:28 (14:16)

### 2013/14 VELUX EHF Champions League All Star Team as voted by the fans

|                |                 |     |                    |
|----------------|-----------------|-----|--------------------|
| Goalkeeper:    | Niklas Landin   | DEN | Rhein-Neckar Löwen |
| Left Back:     | Momir Ilic      | SRB | MKB-MVM Veszprem   |
| Left Wing:     | Timur Dibirov   | RUS | HC Vardar-Skopje   |
| Centre Back    | Mikkel Hansen   | DEN | PSG Handball       |
| Line Player    | Renato Sulic    | CRO | MKB-MVM Veszprem   |
| Right Back:    | Kiril Lazarov   | MKD | FC Barcelona       |
| Right Wing:    | Luc Abalo       | FRA | PSG Handball       |
| Best Defender: | Timuzsin Schuch | HUN | MKB-MVM Veszprém   |

### Top Scorers of the 2013/14 VELUX EHF Champions League

|                 |           |                  |
|-----------------|-----------|------------------|
| Momir Ilic      | 103 Goals | MKB-MVM Veszprém |
| Renato Vugrinec | 95 Goals  | HC Metalurg      |
| Marko Vujin     | 85 Goals  | THW Kiel         |

For the first time in long EHF Champions League history of THW Kiel, the club was defeated in the final by a non-Spanish team. Moreover, after a long seven year wait, SG Flensburg-Handewitt balanced the scale after suffering defeat at the hands of THW Kiel in 2007. The top matches and the electric atmosphere in Cologne turned the VELUX EHF FINAL4 into the handball highlight of the season. Throughout the season in which 90 matches where the players gave their all, Cologne was the icing on the cake. Even fourth placed MKB-MVM Veszprém, who were supported by a huge fan base, celebrated their FINAL4 début and the accolade presented to their teammate, Serbian Momir Ilic, who scored 103 goals over the course of the 2013/14 VELUX EHF Champions League season.

The award for Most Valuable Player was presented to the Icelander Aron Palmarrsson from THW Kiel, even though only a few moments earlier he had missed out on the third Champions League title of his career, he said "This is a great award, and with a little distance, I can be proud of it. But, in this moment, I am still disappointed over the defeat to be happy about the award."

After the half-time break, SG Flensburg-Handewitt managed to turn the game around and after gaining the lead with the score at 20:19, did not relinquish the lead. Thus, for the sixth time a German team ascended the podium to collect the Champions League trophy; SG Flensburg-Handewitt had now followed in the footsteps of SC Magdeburg [2002], THW Kiel [2007, 2010, and 2012], and HSV Hamburg from last season.



Once again, the tournament was perfectly organised down to the smallest detail, which included a high profile show event presenting the official Champions League song "Do It Like Us" performed by Rob Fowler at the opening party before thousands of spectators in front of the LANXESS arena, as well as numerous fan activities in and around the arena. As the profile of the VELUX EHF FINAL4 continues to rise, which remains in the Cologne until 2016, over the weekend 6,000 tickets to the 2015 FINAL4 event were sold.

On the fringes of the VELUX EHF FINAL4 in Cologne, the charity golf tournament which has become a fixture was once again attended by numerous handball legends that came out to support Deutsche Krebshilfe (German Cancer Aid). In addition to the revenues from the prize raffle, EHF Treasurer Ralf Dejaco was able to make a donation of €40,000 on behalf of the European Handball Federation.

In the end, the winners' and losers' boarded the same plane as they departed Cologne for Hamburg. "It is much nicer, to be the one to take the trophy home, and not be the one to watch as the trophy as it gets carried from the aircraft," said Dierk Schmäschke, manager of SG Flensburg-Handewitt. By winning the VELUX EHF FINAL4, Schmäschke's team qualified for the European place at the IHF Super Globe in Doha.



# 2013/14 Women's EHF Champions League

The season began with 29 teams in the first qualifying round, 17 teams met in the second qualification round where the race was on for the last four places in the next phase of competition. Making the cut were HC Leipzig (GER), debutants WHC Vardar SCBT (MKD), HCM Baia Mare (ROU), and FTC Rail Cargo Hungaria (HUN). Of the last four teams to qualify only one would survive the group matches.

With the sixteen teams complete and drawn across the four groups, the race was now on, and the only objective of all the teams, including the defending champion and the other 12 national champions spread across Groups A to D, was to get to the main round. Again, it was Györi Audi ETO KC who emerged from the group matches unscathed, conceding not a solitary defeat in six matches. After the 48 group matches, the eight participants of the main round were known. The closest decision was in Group A, where the German champions, Thüringer HC defeated Hypo Niederösterreich (AUT), the Women's EHF Champions League record holder. In Group B, Buducnost who already suffered two defeats at the hands of FTC Rail Cargo Hungaria and FC Midtjylland, had to utilise all their efforts to win their last scheduled match, but it was enough to get them to the main round.

Moving into the main round, the draw for the two groups produced a very exciting line up. It was Group 1 that provided for the thrills and spills. From this group, the two semi-finalists were only decided in the final matches of the main round. Despite amassing seven points from six games, Thüringer HC missed out on becoming the first German team to be in a Women's EHF Champions League semi-final. In the end, it was goal difference that decided that the Danish champion, FC Midtjylland would be heading to Budapest as the second best team behind WHC Vardar SCBT.



In the second group, the "Group of Death" saw the current title holders, Györi Audi ETO KC, and three former EHF Champions League winners, Buducnost, RK Krim Mercator, and Larvik all in the same group. And though this group was expected to be undecided until the very last moments, surprisingly it was resolved a lot faster than the experts had imagined. In the main round, Buducnost and Györi Audi ETO KC held each other hostage as both of their matches ended in draws. As Buducnost conceded their third draw of the main round against Larvik (NOR), Györi Audi ETO KC finished at the top of the group.



The main round was much more balanced than the group matches: six of the 24 matches ended in a draw, whilst in three other matches the winner was decided based on the difference of a solitary goal. Györi Audi ETO KC was the only team among the four semi-finalists who were part of the final phases at the end of the season 2012/13; this was the Hungarian champions' eighth consecutive semi-final appearance. Also for Buducnost from Montenegro this would be their eighth semi-final; FC Midtjylland entered the semi-finals for the first time since the 1998/99 Champions League season. WHC Vardar SCBT from FYR Macedonia would be in the last phase of the competition for the first time, and this coming the only team to withstand the qualification, group matches, and main round; this was a tremendous feat.

During the season, prior to the MVM EHF FINAL4 in Budapest, WHC Vardar SCBT and Buducnost had the highest amount of spectators at their matches and averaged 5,000 per match. Buducnost also had the best defence during the group matches and the main round, whilst Györi Audi ETO KC had the best offence.

Following the introduction of a FINAL4 tournament to close the season in the Women's EHF Champions League, there are more changes ahead for the competition system. In the new season, three teams from the group matches will now qualify for the main round. A quarter-finals stage will follow the main round from which the four participants of the FINAL4 will be decided.



# 2014 MVM EHF FINAL4

Anita Görbicz was overcome with emotion, not only had she just defended the Women's EHF Champions League title - her second with Györi Audi ETO KC, and became the recipient of the adidas 'Golden Ball' for being the top scorer of the 2013/14 season, but also it was her team that was victorious at the premiere of MVM EHF FINAL4 in the Papp Laszlo Sportarena, cheered on by 10,000 fans.

As in 2013, Györi Audi ETO KC received the trophy from the hands of EHF President Jean Brihault for the second time; this was in part, but not exclusively, down to the amazing support of the fans. Just moments before in a true battle of will, the Hungarian national champions won the final against Budućnost of Montenegro, and thus achieved a little payback for the wafer-thin defeat in the 2012 final. In the 3/4 Match, Women's EHF Champions League debutant, WHC Vardar SCBT managed to defeat the Danish champions FC Midtjylland with a 34:31 win.

From the very first minute until the last, the final was a completely one-sided affair. Despite another strong performance from goalkeeper Clara Woltering, Budućnost did not stand a chance. In the early stages when the score stood at 7:2, Györi Audi ETO KC had the game under control. And, as ever, when the game seemed very tight, goalkeeper Katrine Lunde was on hand to deliver a top-class performance; she was rewarded in kind with her fourth Champions League victory (2009, 2010 with Viborg and 2013, 2014 with Györi Audi ETO KC). Illuminating her exceptional talent in the final match by keeping her opponents at bay, Görbicz scored seven goals in the match bringing her season total to 87, which landed her the accolade of top scorer. Even when Budućnost had the upper hand by being in numerical superiority, they still could not find the magic needed to get past the outstanding defence presented by Györi



“ Thank you, Budapest! Thank you for allowing us to play here! Thank you for your great support! ”

**Anita Görbicz**  
Györi Audi ETO KC

Audi ETO KC. “I raise my hat to these incredible players. This was the culmination of a tremendous season,” said Ambros Martin, coach of Györi Audi ETO KC, whose team secured 12 wins and two draws to remain the unbeaten winner of the Women's EHF Champions League.

Moreover, all eyes were on the first MVM EHF FINAL4 in Budapest. The event was jointly organised by the European Handball Federation, the Hungarian Handball Federation, and event agency, Hungarofest. The MVM EHF FINAL4 participants only had positive commentary. “It is amazing when 10,000 fans are behind you, spurring you on. It was a weekend that you will remember for a really long time,” said Györi goalkeeper, Katrine Lunde. Indira Kastratovic, the coach of Vardar was quoted as saying: “The tournament is a super idea. The organisers have done a great job; all the fans celebrated this great handball extravaganza as one. The tournament was extremely professional.” The Women's EHF FINAL4 withstood its “baptism of fire”, the Papp Laszlo Sportarena in Budapest was sold out on both event days; and more than 3,000 handball fans enjoyed the event al fresco on the big screen in the city.

From the side of the European Handball Federation, Secretary General Michael Wiederer stated that the tournament was a “perfect product”. He continued a lot it be known that without question the second edition of the Women's EHF FINAL4 would be held to complete the 2014/15 EHF Champions League season. EHF President Jean Brihault said “This tournament, with its great games and enthusiastic fans will give women's handball in Europe a boost.” In other areas of event organisation, the European Handball Federation set new standards; all four matches were with the exception of one officiated by female referees and delegates. “The FINAL4, coupled with the future model, is a perfect way to appeal to new sponsors and media interest in the Women's EHF Champions League,” said Wiederer.





In the semi-finals, an outstanding performance from Katrine Lunde combined with a greater number of play rotations, added to a superior defence secured the expected result for Györi Audi ETO KC who were victorious over FC Midtjylland who won the match 29:26 (16:11). At one point in the first semi-final, the score was 8:15 in favour of Görbicz & Co., it looked as if the Danes were speeding towards a very humiliating defeat, but then they came through and achieved a 6:1 series of goals until Coach Martin requested a team time-out in the dying seconds of the first period putting an end to FC Midtjylland's streak. Though eventually, the Danes played a good match and managed to keep the Hungarian team on their toes, some would say that they posed no real threat to the team that ultimately won the competition.

In comparison, the second semi-final was packed with drama; a south-eastern European duel that went into extra time. WHC Vardar SCBT met Buducnost; and Buducnost just barely won, the team knew exactly who they had to thank for their victory. Clara Woltering, Buducnost goalkeeper extraordinaire, successfully saved 16 attempts on goal from the Vardar players. In the first half, her team had their opponents cornered thanks to an incredible defensive performance. This left WHC Vardar SCBT unable to score a single goal in a 15-minute period and facing an uphill battle to close the five goal gap.



But in the next period, everything changed; Buducnost seemed to throw away every chance that came their way and in the second half they only managed to score five goals. For WHC Vardar SCBT, the team finally found their inner reserve. Goalkeeper Amandine Leynaud came into her own as she defended her goal against Buducnost. The second period ended with both teams on an even footing - 16:16; the game had to be decided through extra time.

Taking refuge in an unexpected third period of playing time, Buducnost took the score to 20:17 in their favour, but WHC Vardar SCBT was not ready to serve up an easy victory, they pushed back bringing balance back to the score (20:20). In a true battle that had displayed both courage and despair, it was the team from Montenegro who were able to tip the balance. Thanks to the efforts of Clara Woltering and a successful penalty throw from Petrovic, Buducnost won 20:22 after an extreme defensive extra time encounter.



#### Semi-finals

Györi Audi ETO KC [HUN] vs. FC Midtjylland [DEN] 29:26 (16:11)  
WHC Vardar SCBT [MKD] vs. Buducnost [MNE] 20:22 (6:11, 16:16)

#### 3/4 Match

WHC Vardar SCBT vs. FC Midtjylland 34:31 (14:12)

#### Final

Buducnost vs. Györi Audi ETO KC 21:27 (10:15)

#### Top Scorers of the 2013/14 Women's EHF Champions League

|                    |     |                   |          |
|--------------------|-----|-------------------|----------|
| Anita Görbicz      | HUN | Györi Audi ETO KC | 87 Goals |
| Andrea Lekic       | SRB | WHC Vardar SCBT   | 79 Goals |
| Katarina Bulatovic | MNE | Györi Audi ETO KC | 72 Goals |

#### 2013/14 All Star Team as voted by the fans

|                |                       |     |                   |
|----------------|-----------------------|-----|-------------------|
| Goalkeeper:    | Clara Woltering       | GER | Buducnost         |
| Left Back:     | Euarda Amorim Idalina | BRA | Györi Audi ETO KC |
| Left Wing:     | Majda Mehmedović      | MNE | Buducnost         |
| Centre Back    | Anita Görbicz         | HUN | Györi Audi ETO KC |
| Line Player    | Ana Djokic            | MNE | WHC Vardar SCBT   |
| Right Back:    | Katarina Bulatovic    | MNE | Györi Audi ETO KC |
| Right Wing:    | Jovanka Radicevic     | MNE | WHC Vardar SCBT   |
| Best Defender: | Suzana Lazovic        | MNE | Buducnost         |



# 2013/14 Men's EHF Cup

The day he turned 46 Juan Carlos Pastor will never forget. It was the day that his team Pick Szeged won the EHF Cup – the first international trophy in the history of the club. Moreover, it was the first time in EHF history that a Hungarian club team won the EHF Cup title. On this occasion, there was also a hint of history repeating itself, as only two weeks before, another Hungarian club team, led by a Spanish coach also won a coveted European title as Győr dominated at the MVM EHF FINAL4.

The second edition of the EHF Cup Finals, the apex of the newly reformed Men's EHF Cup was played out in front of 7,000 handball fans, this time in the Max-Schmeling-Halle in Berlin, Germany; and Pick Szeged from Hungary was the team not only with the best goalkeeper, but also nerves of steel. Most deserving of the title 'Best Goalkeeper of the Tournament', Roland Mikler on this occasion played his last match for the Hungarian team. Beginning with the 2014/15 season, Mikler will wear the colours of local rivals, MKB-MVM Veszprém.

Mikler was the hero of the semi-finals, with his help; Pick Szeged prevailed over the host team Fűchse Berlin, subsequently demolishing the German team's dream of their first international title. With this success, Pick also ended Fűchse's winning streak. Following the conclusion of the semi-final, it was clear that the EHF Cup would not be staying in Germany; this would be the first time since 2004 that a German team failed in their efforts to win this particular title. In the second semi-final, French giants, Montpellier Agglomeration HB had little trouble in stopping HCM Constanta, the surprise semi-finalist from Romania with a 36:32 victory.

In the race for third place, HCM Constanta almost had Fűchse Berlin on the ropes, but with only five minutes to go before the end of the match, the Spaniard Iker Romero, who was playing his last international match of his long career, turned up the heat. This left HCM Constanta tasting bitter defeat for the sake of one goal, they eventually lost the match 28:29. Romero, two times winner of the EHF Champions League, was named most valuable player of the tournament.



“ I am speechless; unbelievable! ”

**Attila Vadkert**  
Team Captain  
Pick Szeged



**MEN'S**



**EHF CUP**

**FINALS**

17<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> MAY 2014

**BERLIN**

**GERMANY**

**Semi-finals**

Fűchse Berlin (GER) vs. Pick Szeged (HUN) 22:24 (9:13)

HCM Constanta (ROU) vs. Montpellier Agglomeration (FRA) 32:36 (14:18)

**3/4 Match**

HCM Constanta (ROU) vs. Fűchse Berlin (GER) 28:29 (14:13)

**Final**

Montpellier Agglomeration (FRA) vs. Pick Szeged (HUN) 28:29 (14:16)

In the thrilling final, Pick Szeged kept on edging ahead to take the lead during the duration of the match, but they could not shake the dogged determination of Montpellier. The score was even and five minutes of time was remaining on the clock, but in this time whenever the opportunity arose for the French team to take the lead, they were stopped cold, either by nerves or by the magical Mikler. The final score was 29:28 in favour of Pick Szeged, and the only trophies that returned to France were those awarded to the Slovenian Dragan Gajic for being the top scorer of the final match (19 goals) and the entire tournament (72 goals).

As the event came to a close, EHF President Jean Brihault praised the club Fűchse Berlin and the City for organising a great tournament and especially the impressive fringe programme. As in the previous year, when the City of Nantes (FRA) hosted the event, Fűchse Berlin bypassed the quarter-finals based on their performance in the group phase. In a French derby, Montpellier Agglomeration HB triumphed over Nantes in the quarter-finals to secure their ticket to Berlin. By reaching the EHF Cup Final Tournament, HCM Constanta of Romania had achieved its biggest success in 20 year of men's handball; it was with ease that they defeated Lugi Lund (SWE), and Pick Szeged, the overall champion, had to battle to get to the final, as Sporting Lisabon (POR) was not easy to defeat.

At the beginning of the season, all four participants in the EHF Cup Final Tournament failed to qualify for the VELUX EHF Champions League. Pick Szeged, Montpellier Agglomeration, and Fűchse Berlin fell by the wayside in the wildcard matches, whilst HCM Constanta was not able to advance from the qualification tournament in Porto (POR).



# 2013/14 Women's EHF Cup

Team Esbjerg from Denmark entered the EHF Cup for the first time in the 2010/11 season, and in their third appearance in this competition, not only did they make it past the quarter-finals, which was their best result until then, but they did so in spectacular fashion. In the quarter-finals, the less experienced team was destined to meet Dinamo Volgograd, despite its changing face has participated in every season since 1997; a veteran among the teams who have ever played an EHF European Cup competition.

Losing 36:30 to Dinamo Volgograd in the first leg of the quarter-finals in Russia, came as no surprise to anyone. But no-one was prepared for the spectacular comeback in the second leg on home soil in the Blue Water Dokken sports hall just one week later. Not only did Team Esbjerg destroy the six-goal advantage of Dinamo Volgograd, but by holding the Russians at bay with a 36:27 win, they took the match, and ended Dinamo's campaign with a 3-goal surplus.

The semi-finals also had their fair share of dramatic moments and only thanks to the away goals did Esbjerg advance. Team Esbjerg, from the moment they entered the competition until conclusion of the semi-finals, advanced to the next round based on away goals. In this way, they ended the ambitions of the Hungary team, Fehérvár KC. After 24:25 home defeat, the Danes defeated the Hungarians by one goal (27:26). The second semi-final was a Russian derby, after losing the first leg to Astrakhanochka, Lada made it to the finals by securing a 31:22 home victory.



“ We will be back next season. ”

**Lars Frederiksen,**  
Team Esbjerg coach

## WOMEN'S



### Semi-finals

Team Esbjerg (DEN) vs. Fehérvár KC (HUN) 27:26, 24:25

Lada (RUS) vs. Astrakhanochka (RUS) 31:22, 24:31

### Final

Lada (RUS) vs. Team Esbjerg (DEN) 36:25, 32:32

Nevertheless, after their spectacular achievement in the quarter-finals of the 2013/14 EHF Cup, the burden of the EHF Cup final was too much to bear for the “Esbjerg Wonders”. In the first leg of the final in Togliatti, the three Russian internationals Ilina, Davydenko, and Chernov Ivanenko almost single-handedly defeated Esbjerg as they scored a total of 21 goals between them. From the very start of the final, the former 2007 Champions League finalist dominated the match; the Lada defence was almost impenetrable. Team Esbjerg was not able to gain a foothold in this match and as they entered the second half, they were already lagging nine goals behind. The Danes were trounced by Lada; with the score at 25:36, an eleven-goal advantage for the Russians seemed like a mission impossible, and they were right. Despite finishing the match with a 32:32 draw in Denmark on 11 May 2014, it was Lada who hoisted the trophy. For Lada it was their second EHF Cup success since 2012, and their third European Cup triumph after winning the Cup Winners' Cup in 2002.

Team Esbjerg managed to hold on to the lead going into the half-time break (16:14), but even with 13 goals from the Dutch Estafania Polman, their efforts were not enough to compensate for the 11-goal advantage held by Lada. The Russians on the other hand remained calm, and the key to their success was a tight team performance.





# 2013/14 Women's Cup Winners' Cup

Thanks to an outstanding performance in the first leg of the final, and even though the return match in Russia against former EHF Champions League winners Zvezda Zvenigorod was at times chaotic, Viborg HK completed their collection of European Cup titles. Following the 31:22 home victory, Viborg HK also won the return leg in Russia with a final score of 24:23 (11:13). This meant that the Danish club secured the EHF Cup Winners' Cup, taking the title for the first time in the history of club; giving Viborg HK a unique triple when taking their Champions League (2006, 2009, 2010) and EHF Cup titles (1994, 1999, 2004) into consideration.

Going into the second leg in Russia, the Danes were not confident in their ability to win the match. On their way to Russia, the team experienced an unexpected and unscheduled landing in Düsseldorf, Germany; the team spent the early hours of Sunday morning in a fast-food restaurant at the airport; this was clearly not in the team plan. The rigorous 30-hour journey to Moscow had taken its toll on the players; this was clear to see at the beginning of the match, as Zvezda Zvenigorod made a great start and kept the Danes at bay with a 9:4 lead; Viborg HK could do nothing but watch as their 9-goal advantage melted away.

The tide started to turn in Viborg's favour after coach Christian Dalmose, called his first time-out and introduced a new variant to this final game by adding a seventh field player to ease the pressure on goalkeeper. This move paid off; going into the half-time break, Viborg had managed to close the gap leaving only a two-goal deficit. In the second period, Viborg came back energised and managed to gain the upper hand, thanks to their goalkeeper Cleopatre Darleux; meaning for the first time in the game, Viborg was in the lead (16:15). From that moment, the Danes retained the lead until the final whistle. In the decisive match, though Zvezda Zvenigorod had the better starting position, their experience of the second half was very difficult for the Russians, who had to endure eighteen minutes of play without scoring a single goal.



“ We lost concentration and made some unforced losses of the ball, though. At the end, of course, the weariness from a busy match schedule was obvious. We had to play the finals of the Russian championship parallel to these Cup Winners' Cup finals. ”

**Alexandr Revva,**  
Zvezda Zvenigorod coach

In the end, two seasons after losing the 2012 Cup Winners' Cup final, the Danes added this final club handball title to their collection. In the quarter-finals, Viborg ended the campaign of FTC Budapest; in a strange twist of fate, it was the Hungarian team who defeated Viborg in the 2012 final. In the semi-finals, both finalists took on their opponents' with ease winning both home and away matches; Viborg eliminated the second Russian team, Rostov-Don; whilst Zvezda sent the Norwegians from Byasen Trondheim home empty handed.



## CUP WINNERS' CUP

### Semi-finals

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| Viborg HK (DEN) vs. Rostov-Don (RUS)               | 34:19, 27:25 |
| Zvezda Zvenigorod (RUS) vs. Byasen Trondheim (NOR) | 39:27, 27:26 |

### Final

|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| Zvezda Zvenigorod (RUS) vs. Viborg HK (DEN) | 23:24, 22:31 |
|---|--------------|



# 2013/14 Men's Challenge Cup

For the first time in the history of the Challenge Cup the final was played out as a single match. Due to the flooding catastrophe in eastern Europe, the first leg of the final between RK Metaloplastika Sabac of Serbia and IK Sävehof from Sweden had to be cancelled. After much discussion between the relevant parties, the EHF and the two clubs concerned, it was decided that the first match (first leg) would not be recognised, thus the winner of the 2013/14 Men's Challenge Cup would be decided after only 60 minutes.

On 25 May 2014, in the 'Partillebohallen' sports hall and in front of 2,000 spectators, IK Sävehof won their first international handball trophy in the history of the club. Though both teams got off to a seemingly equal start, once the Swedes pulled ahead they stayed in the lead. As the match progressed, IK Sävehof dominated the match. By the end of the first half, IK Sävehof was ahead by 4 goals (18:14). Midway through the second half, the Swedish team remained unchallenged; by the time the score had reached 30:22, the final was most definitely decided. At the final whistle and with a final score of 37:26, IK Sävehof lifted the Challenge Trophy.



RK Metaloplastika Sabac returned to a European Cup final after a 20 year absence; they last won the former European Champions Cup in 1985 and 1986. Decades later, their performance throughout the season was not the strongest, as most of their matches were won on away goals, but it was enough to get them to the finals. However, the team was denied their first EHF title despite the ten goals scored by Milos Dragas.

For IK Sävehof, though Viktor Ottoson and Victor Friden both scored eight times, their man of the hour was goalkeeper Peter Johannesson. IK Sävehof had prevailed in the semi-finals against the Portuguese team Aguas Santas-Milaneza, while RK Metaloplastika Sabac defeated KS "Azoty-Pulawy" of Poland.

The win of IK Sävehof only added to the euphoria in city as only the day before, IK Sävehof's female counterparts won the National Championship, thereby qualified themselves for the 2014/15 Women's EHF Champions League. IK Sävehof is the second Swedish team after IFK Skövde (2004) to win the Men's EHF Challenge Cup.



CHALLENGE CUP

### Semi-finals

RK Metaloplastika Sabac vs. Aguas Santas-Milaneza 29:21, 25:29  
 IK Sävehof vs. KS "Azoty-Pulawy" 40:38, 30:28

### Final

IK Sävehof vs. RK Metaloplastika Sabac 37:26 (18:14)



# 2013/14 Women's Challenge Cup

The final of the EHF Women's Challenge Cup was a real sensation that resulted in a historic result for the Swedish club H65 Höör. From the outset, it was the French team from the club Issy Paris Hand who were the clear favourites in this final pairing. This idea was further cemented following their success in Sweden during the first leg of the final that ended 19:21 in their favour.

Issy Paris Hand held all the cards after their first leg away win, and even at the start of the second leg on home soil, they quickly gained the lead over H65 Höör when the score was at 6:1 early on in the game. Even though H65 Höör's was seemingly down, they were definitely not out. They kept playing handball with determined focus. In the final four seconds of the match, Swedish sensation, Rebecca Lindberg broke the Parisian defence for the last time bringing the score to 23:21. As the French team failed to score with their final direct free throw, the players from Issy Paris Hand slumped to the floor after the final whistle in Paris, the atmosphere of shock in the arena was palpable. But the Swedish sensations were oblivious, as their celebrations began.

Having entered the European Cup for the very first time in the history of the club, the team has played an impeccable season. As they continued to progress through the competition and as they stood in the semi-final for the first time, their coach, Niklas Harris said, "This is indescribable. We knew we could do something, but we would have never expected that we would lift this trophy up at the end."

In the previous eight games of the season, H65 Höör conceded only one defeat, but that was not enough to stop them from progressing to the semi-finals where they managed to get the upper hand against Galytchanka Lviv in both matches defeating the Ukrainians by a total of 11 goals. In the first semi-final, Issy Paris Hand took on their fellow countrywomen from Mios Biganos; in both matches, the Parisians dominated and moved to the final with ease. However, for the second time, after getting to a final and having lost out to Hypo Niederösterreich [AUT] in the 2013 Cup Winners' Cup final, once again, they left empty handed.



## CHALLENGE CUP

### Semi-finals

Issy Paris Hand [FRA] vs. Mios Biganos [FRA] 31:24, 25:22  
H65 Höör [SWE] vs. Galytchanka Lviv [UKR] 29:22, 29:25

### Final

Issy Paris Hand [FRA] vs. H65 Höör [SWE] 21:19, 21:23



“ I don't know what happened. They fought like lionesses, and they probably wanted it more. They took confidence as the game went on, whereas ours was going downwards. It's a huge disappointment. ”

**Stine Oftedal,**  
Issy Paris Hand

# 2014 Season Calendar

## - JULY -

2014 Women's U20 IHF Junior World Championship in Croatia  
2014 Women's 18 European Open in Sweden  
2014 Men's & Women's 18 Beach Handball European Championship  
2014 Women's U18 IHF Junior Youth World Championship in FYR Macedonia  
2014 Men's 20 European Championship in Austria

2014/15 European Cup Draws

## - AUGUST -

2014 Women's U18 IHF Junior Youth World Championship in FYR Macedonia  
2014 Men's 20 European Championship in Austria  
2014 Men's 18 European Championship in Poland  
2014 Men's and Women's Youth Olympic Games in China

## - SEPTEMBER -

VELUX EHF Champions League *Qualification / Group Phase 1*  
Women's EHF Champions League *Qualification*  
Men's EHF Cup *Qualification 1*  
Women's European Cup *Qualification*

## - OCTOBER -

Men's National Team Week  
Women's National Team Week  
EHF EURO 2016 Poland *Qualification 2 / Rounds 1-2*  
2015 Women's IHF World Championship *Qualification Europe 1 / Rounds 1-2*  
VELUX EHF Champions League *Group Phase 2-4*  
Women's EHF Champions League *Group Matches 1-3*  
Men's EHF Cup *Qualification 2*  
Men's Challenge Cup *Qualification*  
Women's European Cup *Round 2*  
Women's Challenge Cup *Qualification*

## - NOVEMBER -

Women's National Team Week  
2015 Women's IHF World Championship *Qualification Europe 1 / Rounds 3-4*  
VELUX EHF Champions League *Group Phase 5-7*  
Women's EHF Champions League *Group Matches 3-6*  
Men's EHF Cup *Qualification 3*  
Men's Challenge Cup *Round 3*  
Women's European Cup *Round 3*

## - DECEMBER -

Women's National Team Week  
2015 Women's IHF World Championship *Qualification Europe 1 / Rounds 5-6*  
EHF EURO 2014 Hungary/Croatia *Final Tournament*  
VELUX EHF Champions League *Group Phase 8*





# 2015 Season Calendar

## - JANUARY -

Men's National Team Weeks  
 XXIV Men's World Handball Championship  
*in Qatar*  
 Men's U21 World Championship *Qualification*  
 Women's EHF Champions League  
*Main Round*

## - FEBRUARY -

XXIV Men's World Handball Championship  
*in Qatar*  
 VELUX EHF Champions League  
*Group Phase 9-10*  
 Men's EHF Cup *Rounds 1-3*  
 Men's Challenge Cup *Round 4*  
 Women's EHF Champions League *Main Round*  
 Women's European Cup *Round 4*  
 2014/15 European Cup Draws

## - MARCH -

Women's National Team Week  
 2015 Women's 17 European Championship  
*Qualification*  
 VELUX EHF Champions League *Last 16*  
 Men's EHF Cup *Rounds 3-6*  
 Men's Challenge Cup *Quarter-final*  
 Women's EHF Champions League *Main Round*  
 Women's European Cup *Round 5*  
 2014/15 European Cup Draw

## - APRIL -

2015 Women's 19 European Championship  
*Qualification*  
 Men's EHF EURO 2016 *Qualification 2/Rounds 3-4*  
 Men's EHF EURO 2018 *Qualification 1/Rounds 3-4*  
 VELUX EHF Champions League *Quarter-final*  
 Men's EHF Cup *Quarter-final*  
 Men's Challenge Cup *Semi-final*  
 Women's EHF Champions League *Quarter-final*  
 Women's European Cup *Semi-final*  
 2014/15 European Cup Draws

## - MAY -

Men's EHF EURO 2016  
*Qualification 2 / Rounds 3-4*  
 Men's EHF EURO 2018  
*Qualification 1 / Rounds 3-4*  
 VELUX EHF FINAL4  
 Men's EHF Cup Finals  
 Men's Challenge Cup *Finals*  
 Women's EHF FINAL4  
 Women's European Cup *Finals*

## - JUNE -

Men's National Team Week  
 Women's National Team Weeks  
 Men's EHF EURO 2016  
*Qualification 2 / Rounds 5-6*  
 Men's EHF EURO 2018  
*Qualification 1 / Rounds 5-6*



# Afterword

Though time has passed since the formal start of the 2014/15 season in which we are now immersed, the European Handball Federation developed a brochure with useful information looking back on the competitions of the 2012/13 and 2013/14 seasons. In the very near future, the 2014 Business Report will be published, which will provide the full scale look of the activities that took place off the court in the calendar year.

We do hope that in a world of electronic, and by that, immediately accessible information, there will be enough time left to review the past seasons and store a hard copy of the competition results should a quick reference comparison be needed.

The EHF Sport Report has delivered a comprehensive insight of the competitive events of the past two seasons, and as enjoyable it is to review the victories of the select few, I use this moment to commend each and every team that participated in the past two seasons. As we look forward to the new results of the exciting competitions, I hope that you have enjoyed these memories.

*Wieder*

**Michael Wiederer**  
EHF Secretary General



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