



READING COMPREHENSION

Read the following text and choose the correct answer for the questions below.

A NEW PRESIDENT AT THE HELM

Aleksander Čeferin is the seventh UEFA president. The 48-year-old Slovenian lawyer was voted into office by Europe's national associations at the 12th Extraordinary UEFA Congress, held in Athens on 14th September. He pledges to spearhead a new chapter for UEFA and European football.

The Grand Resort Lagonissi, close to the Greek capital, was the setting for UEFA to move into tomorrow with a new man at the helm. The two candidates for the presidency possessed the necessary calibre for the job, with Čeferin having been president of the Football Association of Slovenia since 2011, and Michael van Praag having headed the Royal Netherlands Football Association since 2008. A third candidate, Royal Spanish Football Federation president Ángel María Villar Llona, had withdrawn in the days before the election.

Čeferin emerged victorious by 42 votes to 13. He succeeds a distinguished sextet who have taken charge of the European umbrella body and guided its course since its birth in 1954: Ebbe Schwartz (Denmark), Gustav Wiederkehr (Switzerland), Artemio Franchi (Italy), Jacques Georges (France), Lennart Johansson (Sweden) and Michel Platini (France). The outgoing UEFA president was present at the Athens Congress to thank the associations and close his period of office, which began in 2007.

Following the warm ovation that greeted the result, a clearly moved Čeferin let his feelings show: "Thank you for your fantastic support. It is a great honour, but it is at the same time a great responsibility," he told the associations. "It means a lot to me, and to my family, who are very proud about it. My small but beautiful Slovenia is also very proud, and I hope that one day you will also be proud of me."

Wind of change

Čeferin looked firmly into the future. "Today, the wind of change is blowing through European football," he reflected. "It is the end of an era and the start of a new one; an era of stability, hope, balance and football."

"We are administrators of the most popular sport in the world. We are the guardians of the beautiful game," he continued. "I am a team-player, a man of conviction, a passionate man, a man of his word. I am not a man of unrealistic

promises. We cannot move this organisation further with unrealistic promises.” “Therefore, with a clear conscience and mind, I am ready to deliver the projects that will take UEFA to a new level. I want you, the associations, to take centre stage. Let’s develop the game together and, when necessary, let’s protect it together.”

Čeferin refused to dwell on negative issues. “I don’t want to live in an empire of fear,” he said. “I want to bring out all the good things that UEFA and the associations have been doing. I’m here to find ways to tackle all the problems that surround our game, as someone with a new, clear vision; someone who is brave enough to open a new chapter in the 62-year history of this amazing organisation.” “UEFA has been an exemplary organisation for all other sports bodies for many years. It still is. I want to congratulate UEFA for making us dream and giving us happiness and emotions for more than 60 years.”

FIFA Council female member

As women begin to enjoy greater participation in football’s decision-making process, another vote was held at the Congress in Athens, in which Italy’s Evelina Christillin was elected to represent UEFA on the FIFA Council. According to the FIFA Statutes, each confederation must elect, at least, one woman to this strategic body that sets the vision for world football.

Questions

1. The candidates to be the new UEFA president were...

- a. Aleksander Čeferin, Ángel María Villar and Michael van Praag
- b. Aleksander Čeferin and Michael van Praag
- c. Aleksander Čeferin and Ángel María Villar, as Michael van Praag left before the election.

2. The winner led the other candidate/s by...

- a. 42 votes
- b. 55 votes
- c. 29 votes

3. The year 1954 refers to...

- a. The year in which UEFA was born
- d. The year in which the new UEFA president, Aleksander Čeferin, was born
- b. The year in which the former UEFA president was born

4. The former UEFA president has been at the helm for...

- a. Seven years
- b. 13 years
- c. Nine years