

Case study

ESEM preparation gives Dynamo Kiev the edge



Part of your team



Long-established as one of the foremost clubs in Ukrainian football, Dynamo Kiev went into their mid-season winter break leading the way in the Vyscha Liga and sure of a place in the Ukrainian FA Cup semi final. However, their eyes were firmly fixed on not two but three major prizes.

Having been eliminated from the Champions League, the team was faced with a huge challenge if it was to go any further in the UEFA Cup. Following the six-week break, the next competitive fixtures would see Yuri Semin's men play Valencia over two legs for a place in the last 32 of the competition. In addition to that, the next two domestic fixtures would see them come up against their two main challengers for the Vyscha Liga title in Metalist Kharkiv and Vorskla Poltava, who at the time lay second and third in the table.

The Challenge

Given the importance of the next few fixtures, the club needed to ensure that its preparations for what would be a season-defining period were absolutely right. The challenge for ESEM managing director, Christian Machowski and his team was to facilitate the best possible team preparation ahead of these key games in an environment which would enable to players and key staff to re-charge their batteries away from the harsh Ukrainian winter and ready themselves for the forthcoming matches.

Benefits:

- ESEM's professional 'hands on' approach ensures that key members of staff are always available to react and facilitate any requirement 24 hours a day.
- With Christian Machowski being an accredited UEFA match agent, ESEM was able to take away the pressure of organising suitable friendly fixtures during the six week stay.
- ESEM's extensive knowledge of the finest hotels in both Marbella and Valencia ensured that the players and management were able to prepare in suitable surroundings.
- With forward thinking always being important, ESEM's foresight in ensuring that an emergency ambulance was on hand to transfer a seriously injured player from the training complex to a nearby private hospital was invaluable.

The solution

With the team always scheduled to train at the outstanding MPFS facility in Marbella, ESEM initially booked the party in at the beachside Kempinski Bahia Hotel in Estepona.

Situated just a short drive from MPFS, the hotel provided the team with a relaxing environment in which to unwind from the strains of the first half of the domestic season. However, at the same time, during those initial 13 days, there were still three friendly games to be played. Christian explains: "As a licensed UEFA match agent, I am able to arrange friendly matches and during the six weeks away, the team played a total of seven games against a variety of opposition from all over Europe."

After having played three friendly games whilst at the Kempinski Bahia Hotel, the party travelled home for a five-day break with their families before returning to Marbella's Westin La Quinta Hotel for the second leg of their preparations ahead of the all-important UEFA Cup game against Valencia on 19th February. Christian continues: "Once again, the hotel was of a high standard and with MPFS situated just a two minute coach ride away, the players and management team were able to prepare in a tremendous environment.

"In playing some high profile friendly matches against the likes of Russian Champions, Rubin Kazan and also Dynamo Moscow, the team built up in intensity for the imminent first leg against Valencia. Unfortunately, it was during the Rubin Kazan game that key defender, Pape Diakhate, sustained a terrible knee injury that effectively ended his season.

However, even then, the foresight of ESEM came into play: "Thanks to our having negotiated for an ambulance crew to be on hand near the MPFS complex, we were able to get the player to hospital in quick time so that he could be made comfortable and the extent of his injury could be diagnosed," says Christian.

"As always on such projects, our commitment extended to establishing links with private medical clinics to ensure that should players pick up more serious injuries that may have required scans or more specialised treatment, appropriate care was on hand. In addition, we also ensured that when players were rejoining the squad after International duty, we were available to pick them up from the airport."

After the first leg of the Valencia tie had ended in a 1-1 draw to set up an intriguing decider at the Estadio Mestalla, the squad travelled back to Marbella and another six days of training ahead of the return clash. During that time, they played another Russian side in Krylya Sovetov before flying to Valencia where they checked into the Las Arenas Hotel for two days prior to the game. As Christian explains, the game lived up to expectations and ultimately ended in success: "In a dramatic match, the team fought back from behind to end up with a superb 2-2 draw which saw them win on the away goals rule.

"Given that they went into the tie as undoubted underdogs, the result was tremendous and gave us a fitting end to a long but ultimately successful winter training camp during which time the preparation had been 100% professional.

"Furthermore, on returning to Ukraine, the team went on to beat both Metalist Kharkiv and Vorskla Poltava to move even closer to retaining the Vyscha Liga title. Overall, the trip could not have gone any better and everyone at ESEM was delighted that the team's all-important objectives were achieved."



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