

Brussels International Supporter Award - The Project



European Football Supporters Award

Reward supporters developing positive initiatives in or around football stadiums...

An award of financial gain to 6000 € for the winner!

Five years already - a remarkable result

It is not possible to approach the new season without thinking about the first African World Cup, which has confirmed the global interest in football. This immense success, that has made football a central feature of modern society, still does not allow us to forget that “the beautiful game” is far from living in a bubble that shields it from certain distractions. Great leaders, like Michel Platini, have clearly understood that, to continue to be respected, football must continue to be respectable.

Five years ago, we wanted to extend that respect to the supporters who, every week, in their hundreds of thousands, attended matches on the grounds of Europe. That is how the European Football Supporters Award was born in the shadow of the tragic circumstances that saw thirty-nine football enthusiasts die on the terraces of a stadium. It was, we remind ourselves, 29th May 1985 at the Heysel in Brussels.

Twenty-five years have passed. Football has evolved on the pitch for sure but also in the stadiums. The problems of security have been addressed by the public authorities in most European countries, the stadiums have been adapted (often renovated or rebuilt), the forces of order have been multiplied significantly. The violence, even if there was a utopian dream to eradicate it totally, has been diminished. Could we say then that “all goes well in the best of worlds”?

The fact of the matter is that there is still a long way to go before football can be declared to have the atmosphere of festivity and conviviality that should be its true *raison d'être*. It was with that objective in mind that the European Football Supporters Award was created.

As its winners list shows, up to now it has rewarded various groups that have carried out actions against all forms of discrimination and intolerance. They have accomplished remarkable educational work among youngsters and even encouraged the access of minorities among supporters within football grounds. Recently, the promoters even discovered that certain of its

actions could also have a social aspect. It's a result of which they have every reason to be proud. It is worth reminding ourselves that each of the prize-winners has benefitted from a prize of 6000 euros that has often enabled them to extend their activities.

Since its creation, the European Football Supporters Award has been financially supported by UEFA, which has not been short of encouragement, as well as by the City of Brussels. Leading personalities from the world of sport, like the President of the IOC, Jacques Rogge and the President of UEFA, Michel Platini, have added their backing. Finally, from this year on, the prize is sponsored by the European Parliament.

According to the development plan put together during the conference of April 2009 in Brussels, a national prize, reserved for Belgian supporters and named T12 with reference to the famous 12th man, will be organised this year in collaboration with this country's sporting journalists. It will be solemnly presented on the occasion of the Belgium– Germany match that opens Euro 2012 - an example that we propose to all the member federations of UEFA.

The European Football Supporters Award is now well-known across the continent. Since its creation, entries have been received from some fifteen countries. **Today, we are launching an appeal to all European supporters for the sixth year of the award – so that they know there are always 6000 euros to be won!**

Over and above – in fact, well above – that financial benefit, it is the respect of the world of football that they will gain as well as the congratulations of all those who work tirelessly to create or recreate a spirit of festivity in the stadiums and around the grounds.

Philippe Housiaux

Spokesperson and initiator of the European Football Supporters Award

Organised by:

and supported by:



