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- The history of the IKF and the World Games
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- The history of the IKF Europa Cup tournament for club teams
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THE HISTORY OF THE IKF EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP

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CONTENTS

CONTENTS.....	1
The IKF and the IKF European Korfball Championship	2
Early history.....	2
First IKF European Championship in Portugal in 1998	2
Second IKF European Championship in Catalonia (Spain) in 2002.....	3
Third IKF European Championship in Budapest (HUN) in 2006	3
Fourth IKF European Championship in 2010 in the Netherlands	4
Appendix.....	6
Results of the IKF European Championships	6
1st IKF European Championship in Estoril (POR) from 16-19 April 1998	6
2nd IKF European Championship in Catalonia (ESP) from 31 March-7 April 2002	7
3rd IKF European Championship in Budapest (HUN) from 16–22 April 2006.....	9
4th IKF European Championship in Rotterdam, Leeuwarden, Tilburg, Almelo, The Hague (NED) from 22 - 31 October 2010.....	10

The IKF and the IKF European Korfball Championship

Early history

At the instigation of the British Korfball Federation the three members of the IKF (Belgium, Great Britain and The Netherlands) agreed in 1962 to institute an annual tournament for their national selections. The very first of such encounters was held in London in 1963.

As the years went by it became clear, however, that the ultimate aim – to raise the standard of British korfball to that of the Low Countries - would remain a challenge for a long time. In 1973 the tournament was, therefore, replaced by a European Championship for National Youth teams.

In the 20 odd years since then the number of European member countries increased to 14 and it was logical that their national selections wanted to pit their strength against each other to see how far they had advanced in their development. It was to meet those wishes that it was decided to have a try-out with an IKF European Championship and since the IKF calendar did not yet include any outdoor tournaments it was agreed to make this championship an outdoor event in September 1992.

In view of the previous history it was fitting that the first IKF European Championship was held in England in the municipality of Merton (Surrey). In spite of their limited resources the British hosts acquitted themselves extremely well of their tasks and although heavy rain on the first day threatened to spoil things, the sun shone benevolently on the second day's proceedings. A deserved win over their eternal rivals Belgium gave The Netherlands some compensation for the loss of their world title in the previous year.

Final ranking in 1992: 1. The Netherlands; 2. Belgium; 3. Great Britain; 4. Germany; 5. Czecho Slovakia; 6. Hungary; 7. Spain.

The question then was whether there should be a sequel to this event. Several countries had declined the invitation to participate in the IKF European Championship because outdoor korfball was not practiced in their country. Should the next championship perhaps be held indoors or should the IKF organise two European championships, one indoor and one outdoor? As time went by it became clear that the majority of the European members was against official outdoor tournaments. It would, however, take another 5 years before the first indoor IKF European Championship was held.

First IKF European Championship in Portugal in 1998

Eight (8) countries qualified for this first indoor European Championship in Estoril (POR) from 16 – 19 April 1998:

- The host country: Portugal
- The remaining three European countries that had qualified for the 1997 World Games in Lahti (FIN): the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany.
- The first four teams from a qualification tournament which was held in Wolvega (NED) over Easter 1997 and which had produced the following final ranking: 1. Czech Republic; 2. Poland; 3. Great Britain; 4. Slovakia; 5. Spain; 6. Hungary; 7. France; 8. Armenia; 9. Luxemburg.

The pool matches provided no real surprises. On the final day the Netherlands did beat their Belgian rivals by a relatively large margin (26-13) and so become the first winners of the Ton Marteyn trophy, donated by and named after IKF's long serving Secretary General who had retired the year before. After their disappointing performance at the World Games the Portuguese rehabilitated themselves by winning the bronze medals.

Final ranking: 1. The Netherlands; 2. Belgium; 3. Portugal; 4. Czech Republic; 5. Great Britain; 6. Germany; 7. Poland; 8. Slovakia.

Second IKF European Championship in Catalonia (Spain) in 2002

The organisation of the 2nd IKF European championship from 31 March until 7 April 2002 had been awarded to Catalonia (Spain). During the first three and the last two days matches were played in Terrassa. On days 4, 5 and 6 play took place in Badalona, Sant Boi and Mataró respectively.

Ten (10) countries had qualified for the event;

- The host country: Catalonia (Spain)
- The first six (6) teams of the previous IKF European championship: the Netherlands, Belgium, Portugal, Czech Republic, Great Britain and Germany
- The first three (3) teams from a qualification tournament which was held in Wormer (NED) over Easter 2001 and which had produced the following final ranking: 1. Slovakia; 2. Poland; 3. Hungary; 4. Armenia; 5. France

For the championship the IKF had devised a rather unique formula: to make the tournament more interesting for the teams, the media and the spectators 8 of the 10 teams (all but the expected finalists from the Netherlands and Belgium) would play each other in two pools of four, whereafter the teams from the Low Countries would enter the tournament by playing the winners of the two pools (Germany and the Czech Republic) plus the winners of the matches between the numbers 2 and 3 of each pool (Portugal and Great Britain).

The very first of the second round matches produced a shock result: the team of the Czech Republic beat their Belgian opponents by 20 goals to 19! This meant that the next day already the Belgians had to play their eternal rivals from the Netherlands. Bitterly disappointed they did not put on much of a fight and lost the game by a large margin (15-24). The Czechs and the Dutch went on to win all their matches. That the Czech win over Belgium was no fluke they proved in the final of the championship when they pressed the Dutch so hard that the world champions had great difficulty in prolonging their European title (15-9). No wonder that the underdogs received more applause from an enthusiastic crowd than the winners of the Ton Marteiijn Trophy. Belgium revenged itself by trouncing Germany 29-9 for the bronze medals.

Final ranking: 1. The Netherlands; 2. Czech Republic; 3. Belgium; 4. Germany; 5. Great Britain; 6. Portugal; 7. Catalonia; 8. Hungary; 9. Slovakia; 10. Poland

Third IKF European Championship in Budapest (HUN) in 2006

As more and more European countries joined the IKF it was perceived that there was a need for a two level IKF European Championship which could give teams a closer series of matches than playing the top countries in Europe. Such a tournament would also act as a qualification event for the upcoming IKF European and World Championships.

The first of such events was held in Terrassa (CAT) in October 2005 where the teams competed for the Jan Hanekroot European Bowl, named after the long serving IKF volunteer who had tragically passed away earlier that year.

The tournament produced the following final ranking: 1. Catalonia; 2. Russia; 3. Portugal; 4. Poland; 5. Armenia

The first two teams qualified for the 2006 IKF European championship in Budapest, together with the nrs. 1 – 5 of the previous European championship (NED, CZE, BEL, GER and GBR) plus the host country (HUN).

After the experience of the previous championship when Belgium was eliminated for the final in its very first match, the IKF reverted to the usual line-up with two pools of four teams each.

In pool A results went to expected form. This time Belgium did not let itself surprise by the Czechs and scored a clear 23-16 victory over their opponents, who in turn kept Catalonia and Hungary in the lower half of the pool.

Apart from the Netherlands the teams in pool B were of a more similar standard. In their first match Germany lost to Russia (10-12). After an exciting game produced a 15-12 win for Great Britain against the Russians on the second day, the British became the favorites for second place in the pool. But what a difference 24 hours can make. The following afternoon Britain seemed unable to regain their form losing 7-14 against a determined and defiant

Germany. This meant that 3 teams had 3 points each and Great Britain finished not second but last while Germany earned its place in the semi-final due to a better mutual goal difference.

Again Belgium and the Netherlands gained places in the grand championship final following their matches against resp. Germany (17-10) and the Czech Republic (28-10).

After the Russians had beaten the host team 21-13 for 7th place there were two games on the final day which kept the audience especially enthralled. The 5th/6th place tussle between Great Britain and Catalonia saw a lack luster Britain allow their adrenaline boosted opponents to take a six goal lead (12-6) just after half time. With just 18 minutes to go the Catalans scored a 13th goal to lead 13-8. No way could anyone have guessed that from that point only the British would score. Reaching deep into the psychological reserves they steadily pulled back and finally went ahead with just two minutes on the clock. An almost perfect display of play possession that pushed the rules to the limit ensured that the Catalans would have no chance of leveling, never mind winning (14-13).

The other exciting game was for third place. A tight goal for goal game until the Germans pulled out a lead of three goals with just two minutes left. Unbelievably, unlike Britain, their attempt of possession play failed badly and they conceded three goals, two in the last 30 seconds, resulting in a Golden Goal decider period. After six minutes of play it was again Germany who erred and the resulting free pass goal broke the German's hearts and made the Czech Republic the bronze medal winners (16-15).

The final of the competition demonstrated just how far ahead of the rest of Europe the Netherlands team then was. Belgium fought bravely but the result was never in doubt. With their 25-14 win the Dutch were worthy champions.

Final ranking: 1. The Netherlands; 2. Belgium; 3. Czech Republic; 4. Germany; 5. Great Britain; 6. Catalonia; 7. Russia; 8. Hungary.

Fourth IKF European Championship in 2010 in the Netherlands

No less than 23 countries registered to compete in the 2010 IKF European Championship, a substantial increase from the number of member countries having registered for the previous championship, demonstrating the fast growth of korfball activity in Europe.

The IKF decided that 10 countries would be directly qualified for the final round in the Netherlands from 22-31 October 2010, which numbered 16 countries for the first time. Based on the World Ranking, these 10 countries (in alphabetical order) are: Belgium, Catalonia, Czech Republic, England, Germany, Hungary, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal and Russia.

The remaining 6 places were determined in two pools of the European Bowl competition. The first pool took place on 31 October and 1 November 2009 in Prievidza (SVK) and included the following countries: Armenia, Greece, Italy, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Turkey. The second pool was contested on 6 and 7 November 2009 in Luxembourg (LUX) and included the following countries: France, Ireland, Luxemburg, Scotland, Sweden and Wales. The best three teams from each pool did qualify for the final round in the Netherlands.

In Prievidza the teams of Slovakia, Serbia and Turkey clinched the 3 places available and in Luxembourg the teams from Ireland, Wales and Scotland.

The 16 teams first of all played in 4 pools of 4 as follows:

Pool A NED GER HUN SRB matches played in Leeuwarden

Pool B BEL CAT POL SCO matches played in Tilburg

Pool C CZE POR WAL TUR matches played in Almelo

Pool D RUS ENG SVK IRL matches played in The Hague

The pools matches in each of the 4 cities proved to be a success with many thousands of spectators. The site events in each of the cities attracted thousands of youngsters and grown ups as well.

After the pool matches all 16 teams moved to Rotterdam where the numbers 1 and 2 of each pool played for the places 1 - 8 (Pools E and F) and the numbers 3 and 4 for the places 9 -16 (Pools G and H) in the IKF European Korfball Championship.

The quarter final pools:

Pool E NED GER RUS ENG

Pool F BEL CAT CZE POR

Pool G HUN SRB SVK IRL

Pool H WAL TUR POL SCO

The results of all matches can be seen in the enclosure to this document.

In the quarter finals in the pools G and H there were the last tickets to earn for the IKF World Championship 2011 in China. After a lot of close matches and excitement Poland and Hungary earned these tickets. The teams made a huge celebration of their definitive win. The tournament director, Mr. Johan Wiegerink, presented the winners flowers to underline the importance with this major performance.

The quarter and semi finals showed a number of close matches. Excitement, tension, beautiful goals, missed penaltyshots were aspects in many matches. The level of play increases all over. The differences between the numbers 3 till 9 in the ranking are small and that is a guarantee for unpredictable results.

The Netherlands managed to prolong its European reign in Rotterdam, by beating Belgium 25-21 in a highly contested final match. This game was an exciting encounter filled with athleticism, passion and thrills and it certainly delivered all of these and more. The Dutch women were the difference in the game as not only did Tims, Brandsma and Struik contribute 9 valuable goals at crucial times, but their enduring work rate under the post in assisting the Dutch men provided many opportunities for the Dutch men to score. Lenaerts and Cleyman were Belgium's stars and with more support from the female players the game could have gone the other way. The game was exciting until the end and when Leon Simons, the Dutch captain, left the field in the last minute the crowd (8,000 in a nearby full AHOY) erupted in appreciation for his many years of service in the national team. Leon had contributed 7 goals and an intimidating presence in his final match of his career. For many years he will be the Dutch record international with close to 100 international matches.

The Czech Republic deservedly gained the bronze medal by a clear victory over Germany (18-11). Czech Republic opened the game in an explosive manner surging 3 goals ahead in the opening minutes and in this time a penalty shot was also missed. At half time Czech Republic were still 3 goals clear but Germany were in trouble as their normal avenues of scoring had been closed down and the Czechs had done their homework. Three goals scored after the rest immediately by Czech Republic took them out to a 6 goal lead which the Germans were never going to close. The Czechs won the bronze medal in an excellent overall team performance.

Over 35,000 spectators visited the 64 matches in the 4th IKF European Championship. Two semi-finals, the bronze medal match and the Championship final were live on Tv in the Netherlands and in 46 other countries in the world thru Eurosport 2.

Korfball had a lot of attention in the media; in newspapers, magazines, Tv, Internet, YouTube Korfballchannel, Twitter, Hyves. This was the first time organisers (KNKV) and the IKF used the various modern media to this extent. It was a huge success and set new standards.

In this IKF event 2 more developments made their first appearance.

1. The new MIKASA Korfball; K5-IKF

This brand new korfball with improved grip, better visibility is the new International Match Standard Korfball. It is a real unique korfball.

2. The LED Clock post

The shotclock is part of each of the IKF events since a number of years. The LED Clock post has 25 leds built in the post and has added value for Tv, Internet Tv and the spectators in the hall.

Appendix

Results of the IKF European Championships

1st IKF European Championship in Estoril (POR) from 16-19 April 1998

16 April

Pool A	Germany – Slovakia	17-13
	Netherlands – Czech Republic	27-7
Pool B	Belgium – Poland	36-14
	Portugal – Great Britain	24-20

17 April

Pool A	Czech Republic – Slovakia	19-11
	Netherlands – Czech Republic	30-7
Pool B	Poland – Great Britain	13-19
	Belgium – Portugal	20-15

18 April

Pool A	Netherlands – Slovakia	30-11
	Germany – Czech Republic	18-25
Pool B	Portugal – Poland	28-13
	Belgium – Great Britain	23-11

19 April

Finals	Poland – Slovakia	18-13 (7th/8th place)
	Great Britain – Germany	23-17 (5th/6th place)
	Czech Republic – Portugal	13-16 (3rd/4th place)
	Netherlands – Belgium	26-13 (1st/2nd place)

2nd IKF European Championship in Catalonia (ESP) from 31 March-7 April 2002

31 March (Terrassa)

Pool P	Czech Republic – Slovakia	23-13
	Portugal – Poland	17-16
Pool Q	Germany – Hungary	19- 7
	Catalonia – Great Britain	6 -14

1 April (Terrassa)

Pool P	Poland – Slovakia	12-13
	Portugal – Czech Republic	13-20
Pool Q	Great Britain – Germany	14-17
	Catalonia – Hungary	16-15 (after Golden Goal)

2 April (Terrassa)

Pool P	Portugal – Slovakia	26-15
	Czech Republic – Poland	19- 8
Pool Q	Great Britain – Hungary	13-10
	Catalonia – Germany	7- 14

3 April (Badalona)

Pool P	Belgium – Czech Republic	19-20
	Great Britain – Slovakia	16-10
Pool Q	Germany – Netherlands	14-26
	Catalonia – Portugal	16-19

4 April (Sant Boi)

Pool P	Germany- Czech Republic	11-21
	Hungary – Poland	15-14 (after Golden Goal)
Pool Q	Netherlands – Belgium	24-15

5 April (Mataró)

Pool P	Portugal – Czech Republic	12-25
	Hungary- Slovakia	15- 9
Pool Q	Great Britain – Netherlands	8-30
	Catalonia – Poland	10-7

6 April (Terrassa)

Pool P	Portugal – Germany	13-14
	Slovakia – Poland	15-14
Pool Q	Great Britain – Belgium	8-22
	Catalonia – Hungary	20-13

7 April (Terrassa)

Finals	Catalonia – Slovakia	14-12
	Great Britain – Portugal	18-17 (5th/6th place)
	Belgium – Germany	29- 9 (3rd/4th place)
	Netherlands – Czech Republic	15- 9 (1st/2nd place)

3rd IKF European Championship in Budapest (HUN) from 16–22 April 2006

16 April

Pool A	Czech Republic – Catalonia	10-9
	Hungary – Belgium	8-24
Pool B	Germany – Russia	10-12
	Netherlands – Great Britain	19-6

17 April

Pool A	Belgium – Czech Republic	23-16
	Hungary – Catalonia	17-13
Pool B	Great Britain – Russia	15-12
	Netherlands – Germany	27- 6

18 April

Pool A	Belgium – Catalonia	18-7
	Hungary – Czech Republic	15-19
Pool B	Netherlands – Russia	26-11
	Germany – Great Britain	14- 7

19 April

Cross Finals	Catalonia – Russia	17-14
	Belgium – Germany	17-10
	Hungary – Great Britain	6- 9
	Czech Republic – Netherlands	10-28

20 April

Finals	Russia – Hungary	21-13	(7th/8th place)
	Catalonia – Great Britain	13-14	(5th/6th place)
	Czech Republic – Germany	16-15	(after Golden Goal) (3rd/4th place)
	Netherlands – Belgium	25-14	(1st/2nd place)

4th IKF European Championship in Rotterdam, Leeuwarden, Tilburg, Almelo, The Hague (NED) from 22 - 31 October 2010

1st Round: 22 – 24 October 2010

Pool A - HALL in Leeuwarden: NED - GER - HUN - SRB
Pool B - HALL in Tilburg: BEL - CAT - POL - SCO
Pool C - HALL in Almelo: CZE - POR - WAL - TUR
Pool D - HALL in The Hague: RUS - ENG - SVK - IRL

22 October

Pool A	Hungary - Serbia	22 - 16
	Netherlands - Germany	36 - 8
Pool B	Catalonia - Scotland	35 - 7
	Belgium - Poland	38 - 10
Pool C	Portugal - Turkey	20 - 9
	Czech Republic - Wales	32 - 7
Pool D	England - Ireland	24 - 6
	Russia - Slovakia	23 - 14

23 October

Pool A	Germany - Serbia	36 - 13
	Netherlands - Hungary	41 - 8
Pool B	Poland - Scotland	16 - 11
	Belgium - Catalonia	29 - 12
Pool C	Portugal - Wales	30 - 9
	Czech Republic - Turkey	33 - 9
Pool D	England - Slovakia	27 - 6
	Russia - Ireland	16 - 12

24 October

Pool A	Germany - Hungary	21 - 11
	Netherlands - Serbia	45 - 8
Pool B	Catalonia - Poland	23 - 5
	Belgium - Scotland	35 - 9
Pool C	Wales - Turkey	17 - 13
	Czech Republic - Portugal	20 - 17
Pool D	Slovakia - Ireland	13 - 14 (after Golden Goal)
	Russia - England	26 - 24

Quarter Final Pools: 26 – 27 October 2010
The matches were held in Topsportcentre Rotterdam

Pool E: NED - GER - RUS - ENG
Pool F: BEL - CAT - CZE - POR
Pool G: HUN - SVK - SRB - IRL
Pool H: POL - TUR - SCO - WAL

26 October

Pool G	Hungary - Slovakia	17 - 8
Pool F	Catalonia - Czech Republic	17 - 18 (after Golden Goal)
Pool G	Serbia - Ireland	10 - 16
Pool E	Germany - Russia	26 - 25
Pool H	Poland - Turkey	23 - 7
Pool F	Belgium - Portugal	32 - 16
Pool H	Scotland - Wales	15 - 18
Pool E	Netherlands - England	34 - 6

27 October

Pool G	Hungary - Ireland	14 - 13
Pool F	Catalonia - Portugal	12 - 25
Pool G	Serbia - Slovakia	13 - 15
Pool E	Germany - England	15 - 11
Pool H	Poland - Wales	17 - 12
Pool F	Belgium - Czech Republic	35 - 15
Pool H	Scotland - Turkey	12 - 15
Pool E	Netherlands - Russia	39 - 12

Semi Finals: 28 – 29 October 2010

The matches were held in Topsportcentre Rotterdam

28 October

Slovakia - Scotland	20 - 15
Serbia - Turkey	23 - 12
Hungary - Wales	18 - 14
Ireland - Poland	18 - 21

29 October

Russia - Catalonia	15 - 19
England - Portugal	17 - 15
Germany - Belgium	11 - 34
Czech Republic - Netherlands	11 - 36

Finals for places 9 till 16: 30 October 2010

The matches were held in Topsportcentre Rotterdam

30 October

Scotland - Turkey	16 - 12
Slovakia - Serbia	21 - 14
Ireland - Wales	10 - 11
Poland - Hungary	20 - 19

Finals for places 1 till 8: 31 October 2010

The matches were held in AHOY, Rotterdam

31 October

Russia - Portugal	15 - 23
Catalonia - England	21 - 16
Germany - Czech Republic	11 - 18
Belgium - Netherlands	21 - 25

Final Ranking 2010

Team	Rank	Games	Points in games	Goals +	Goals -	Diff.
Netherlands	1	7	21	256	74	182
Belgium	2	7	18	224	98	126
Czech Republic	3	7	14	147	132	15
Germany	4	7	12	128	148	-20
Catalonia	5	7	13	139	115	24
England	6	7	9	125	123	2
Portugal	7	7	6	146	114	32
Russia	8	7	9	132	157	-25
Poland	9	7	14	112	128	-16
Hungary	10	7	13	109	133	-24
Wales	11	7	9	88	135	-47
Ireland	12	7	5	89	109	-20
Slovakia	13	7	10	97	123	-26
Serbia	14	7	3	97	167	-70
Scotland	15	7	3	85	151	-66
Turkey	16	7	3	77	144	-67