



Press release

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## Football tournament kicks off at 3<sup>rd</sup> European Street Football Festival Belgrade 2011

14 May 2011 – Lots of sunshine accompanied the over 200 participants at the 3rd European Street Football Festival during the first three days of the event. Today the official tournament kicked off with a match between German participant KICKFAIR and the host organisation Football Friends Belgrade.

„We had an amazing first two days at the European Street Football Festival”, summarizes **Zoran Avramović**, President and Founder of the host organisation Football Friends. “We are very proud to host this festival for the first time in the Serbian capital Belgrade. In the past years, Football Friends has worked hard to bring together young people from different cultural backgrounds from the Balkan region and we are excited that through this festival we can unite kids from all over Europe and promote dialogue and cultural exchange through football.”

During the weekend 40 football matches will be played with mixed-gender teams according to football3 rules – with no referees, teams will negotiate their own rules for each game in order to promote dialogue, understanding and fairness. football3 incorporates three ‘halves’: a pre-game discussion, a football match, and a post-game discussion. A sanctioned space is set aside for dialogue, which is a part of the game itself and not an add-on.

Young Leaders act like mediators before, during and after the matches. They are trained to conduct, facilitate and mediate in discussions in order to empower players to come to mutually satisfactory and fair conclusions.

The Young Leader Team has prepared for the tournament over the past months. They have worked out the rules and trained strategies for conflict resolution. „We are the direct connection between the event organisation and the kids,” describes Sergio Blanco, Young Leader for the Spanish delegation of Red Deporte y Cooperación: “I really like this role of the middle man. As a mediator you can directly transmit important values to the players and immediately see their reaction. Even without speaking their

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### Provided by

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language! I hope the kids will have a lot of fun in the next days and that we will get to see a fair tournament.”

When the finals will be played on Sunday evening, spectators may see the emotional ending of an amazing festival but more than that, new friendships among young Europeans and deepened relationships between organisations that use football to overcome social challenges.

The European Street Football Festival was organised by streetfootballworld and Football Friends (Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro), with support from the European Commission, Directorate General for Enlargement, and UEFA.

**When?**

May 14th - 15th European Street Football Festival - Tournament  
10:00 UTC+2 - 17:00 UTC+2

**Where?**

Stari DIF (Old DIF)  
Deligradska 27  
1000 Belgrade

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**streetfootballworld: it takes a team to win a game**

Through the love of football, streetfootballworld brings individuals and organisations together behind a common goal: empowering young people to rise above their circumstances. The streetfootballworld network unites over 80 organisations that use football to tackle social challenges like HIV/AIDS, crime and homelessness. streetfootballworld drives an international coalition of private and public sector bodies to strengthen network members through capacity development programmes, opportunities to share expertise, partnerships, and advocacy work—because stronger network members mean better opportunities for the young people who need them most. streetfootballworld, its partners and the streetfootballworld network aim to reach out to 2,000,000 young people worldwide every year by 2015.