

Gothia Cup opens up to more participating teams in Kim Kallstrom Trophy 2012

After last year's great interest in Kim Kallstrom Trophy, the class of football playing youth with an intellectual disability, the Gothia Cup has decided to extend the class in this year's tournament. Last year, 21 teams from 7 different nations participated. This year it is planned for 30 teams from 14 different nations. – Gothia Cup is basically about creating encounters where football is the common interest that creates understanding between young people with different conditions. This applies particularly to the understanding of young people living with an intellectual disability. Therefore, it feels just right to let the class Kim Kallstrom Trophy grow and take even more space in the Gothia Cup 2012, says Gothia Cup General Secretary Dennis Anderson.

The Swedish national team player Kim Kallstrom, in the French top club Olympique Lyonnais, himself took the initiative to the class of 2011 to provide young people with an intellectual disability the opportunity to be part of the experience for the world's largest youth football tournament, the Gothia Cup.

– It's great that the class is allowed to grow this year. I have personally played the tournament and I know what a feeling it is to play against teams from other countries and experience the amazing atmosphere during the Gothia Cup. Last year a team from my own club Olympique Lyonnais participated and the players still talk about that experience. For many of them it was the first time abroad on their own so I know that the tournament has meant a lot to them for several reasons, says Kim Kallstrom.

Olympique Lyonnais participates with a team in Kim Kallstrom Trophy even during the Gothia Cup 2012. Kim Kallstrom hope to be there again this year and lead the march at the Ullevi Stadium before more than 50 000 spectators during the grand opening.

– My expectations are that it will come a lot of spectators to the games. The teams offer real entertaining football with genuine sports enjoyment and deserve the attention of a big audience. For the players' sake, I am happy that so many different nations are represented this year. That means a possibility of getting to know new friends from other countries and cultures. The fact that even young people with intellectual disabilities should be involved in tournaments like the Gothia Cup feels important and is a way to actually increase respect and understanding of these great young people, says Kim Kallstrom.

Kim Kallstrom Trophy is organized by the Gothia Cup in cooperation with Special Olympics Sweden and Special Olympics Europe.

For more information, please contact:

Dennis Andersson, General Secretary Gothia Cup. Phone: +46-31-50 67 81. E-mail: dennis@gothiacup.se

Par Karlsson, Press Officer Gothia Cup. Phone: +46-708-12 27 30. E-mail: par.karlsson@gothiacup.se

www.gothiacup.se

Gothia Cup is the world's largest and most international youth football tournament that is being played every year in Gothenburg, Sweden. Gothia Cup was first held in 1975 and today over 35 000 players in 1570 teams from 70 different nations from around the world participates in the tournament. In 2007 Gothia Cup was named by FIFA as The World Youth Cup and in 2010 the tournament was appointed one of the 12 largest Swedish leadership achievements of modern times by the Swedish Centre of Commerce. SKF is the main partner of the Gothia Cup.