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64 COUNTRIES WILL PARTICIPATE IN 2013 HOMELESS WORLD CUP IN POZNAN, POLAND

Teams representing 64 countries will participate in the 11th annual Homeless World Cup which will take place in Poznan, Poland from 10th to 18th August 2013 at the Malta Regatta Course.

48 countries will participate in the men’s competition and 16 in the women’s competition.

The Homeless World Cup appoints one partner organisation per country to coordinate all year-round football activities amongst homeless and marginalised people in 70 countries. The lives of homeless people are changed substantially as a result of being involved in football.

“I was on the street and then I started playing football and thankfully I was lucky enough to be selected to represent my country,” said James Horsburgh, a former player. “It completely changed my way of thinking and now I have a house and a job.”

Players are selected to represent their country in the fast and furious street soccer format which is really exciting to watch with winning goals being scored with seconds to go. Chile is the holder of the Homeless World Cup after their stunning victory last year while Mexico won the Women’s Homeless World Cup. But the event is always transformational and every player is a winner.

Last year’s event which was held in the famous Zocalo Square in the centre of Mexico City was a huge success with 168,000 spectators turning up to watch the grit and glory of the Homeless World Cup. The excitement should be no different this year.

Ryszard Grobelny, the Mayor of Poznan said: “For years, Poznan has been an important location on the sports map of the world, which is reflected in the fact that some of the most important sports events are held here. We are delighted to have won the bid to host the event in Poznan and we guarantee that Poznan will give a very special welcome to the teams and spectators from all over the world. Like other countries we are determined to tackle extreme poverty and recognise the power of football to change lives.”

Maciej Gudra, the President of Polish Homeless National Street Soccer Team Association added: “We have participated in all of the Homeless World Cups to date and we are thrilled to host this significant global event in Poznan. It will help us in our efforts to tackle homelessness here in Poland and hopefully expand our reach but it will also be a brilliant footballing event.”

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NOTES TO EDITORS

About the Homeless World Cup

The Homeless World Cup Foundation uses the power of football to energise homeless people so they can change their own lives. It supports grass-roots football programmes and social enterprise development via a network of 70 National Partners and celebrates its work by organising an annual tournament. In 2012, the Homeless World Cup and its partners engaged with over 100,000 homeless people. Over 70% of participants experience a significant life change - they come off drugs, alcohol, get jobs, homes, education, training, become football players, coaches and social entrepreneurs.

The following 48 countries will participate in the Homeless World Cup:

Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, England, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Hong Kong, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Kenya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Mexico, Namibia, Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Norway, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Scotland, Slovenia, South Africa, South Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, USA, Wales.

The following 16 countries will participate in the Women's Homeless World Cup:

Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, Colombia, Denmark, England, Haiti, Hungary, Kyrgyz Republic, Mexico, Netherlands, Poland, Sweden, Uganda, USA, Wales.