



30th September 2016

XAVI, PUYOL AND OVERMARS AMONGST FOOTBALLING LEGENDS ATTENDING ASPIRE4SPORT AND THE ASPIRE ACADEMY GLOBAL SUMMIT ON FOOTBALL PERFORMANCE & SCIENCE

Experts from more than 50 international clubs and federations meet in Amsterdam on 3rd and 4th October to enhance the development of the game

Two-day event to create a wide range of networking opportunities for European and Qatari sport industry professionals

Greats of the game including **Andres Villas-Boas, Xavi Hernandez, Carles Puyol, Edwin van der Sar, Ruud van Nistelrooy and Marc Overmars** are in Amsterdam early next week to take part in Aspire Academy's two highest profile events, namely ASPIRE4SPORT and the Global Summit on Football Performance & Science.

These exceptional football legends and experts will join representatives from more than 50 of the world's leading clubs, federations and leagues during **ASPIRE4SPORT and the Global Summit on Football Performance & Science** which take place at the iconic Amsterdam Arena, home of AFC Ajax on 3rd and 4th October 2016.

ASPIRE4SPORT, a two-day event and networking session, brings European and Qatari sports industry professionals together to pave the way for future partnerships. In parallel, Aspire Academy will be hosting the "Global Summit" on 'Football Performance & Science' to share ideas and approaches and discuss how science, technology and cutting-edge coaching techniques positively influence the game.

More than 160 representatives from clubs including FC Barcelona, Manchester United, AC Milan and Juventus will take part in the Global Summit, making it one of the largest gatherings of its kind anywhere in the world. Together they will review and examine the latest training methods and approaches designed to nurture championship potential and support elite performance.

This group of experts – known as the "**Aspire in the World Fellows**" community – has developed rapidly since it was established in 2014. As well as regular gatherings in Doha and events in Europe to develop their ideas, members are supported by a cutting-edge online portal enabling the spread of best practice, trends and the latest thinking. Taken together, the various elements of the community's activity provide a powerful platform to support the broader development of football around the world.

Since it was launched, the community has continued to grow and develop, and for the first time this year the original members of the "Aspire in the World Fellows" were invited to extend invitations to affiliate clubs, meaning up to 80 football clubs are expected to attend the summit.

Also for the first time this year, the event will feature "**Master Classes**" delivered by renowned



global experts. Argentinian star manager **Marcelo Bielsa**, who led Argentina's national team to victory in the 2004 Olympics as well as Chile's national team and clubs like Athletic Bilbao, will lead one such "Master Class" on training methodology during both days.

ASPIRE4SPORT also features a business-to-business exhibition that will create a wide range of networking opportunities for European and Qatari sport industry professionals. A large number of Qatari and Middle Eastern government organisations and companies will attend the event to meet representatives from across Europe's leading sports business sectors including construction, sports medicine, logistics, event management, communication and technology. Last year's ASPIRE4SPORT resulted in face-to-face talks between 148 international suppliers and 19 exhibitors resulting in 988 scheduled business meetings.

Speaking ahead of the event, **Xavi Hernández** said: "I have trained many times at the Aspire Academy. The country and its people have a true passion for football and that is demonstrated not just by their hosting the World Cup in 2022, but by their commitment to youth development and sports science.

"ASPIRE4SPORT and the Global Summit on Football Performance & Science are further evidence of Qatar's pioneering work in this area and I'm looking forward to sharing a stage with some of the great names in football to talk about the importance of youth development."

Valter Di Salvo, Director of Football Performance & Science at Aspire Academy, said: "In previous years, these events have brought together world leaders in football performance and science to further improve how we all nurture and develop talent – and this year is no different.

It has always been one of our major goals to create a community like this and use the knowledge gained to further develop football worldwide. We're delighted to count on the support of some of football's top names to help make significant progress towards the broader development of the game. We look forward to welcoming all attendees to Amsterdam for what promises to be an incredible couple of days."

Founded in 2004 by the Father Emir, H.H. Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, Aspire Academy trains Qatari students in a state-of-the-art setting, enabling them to fulfil their sporting and educational potential. Aspire Academy is recognised around the world as one of the best centres for scouting and training young athletes. Some of the world's most successful clubs, including Paris Saint Germain and Bayern Munich, regularly hold training camps at the Academy.

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Notes to editors

About Aspire Academy:

Since opening its doors in 2004, Aspire Academy for Sports Excellence has become one of the



foremost national sports academies in the world. Working as part of the Aspire Zone Foundation - an international sport destination – Aspire Academy is at the heart of a sporting revolution currently taking place in Qatar and around the region. The Academy is conceiving, promoting and implementing game-changing excellence in sports training and elite athlete development that is enabling an entire generation of talented, disciplined and committed Qatari athletes to pursue their sporting dreams. Together with the other members of the Aspire Zone Foundation (Aspire Logistics and ASPETAR Qatar Orthopedic and Sports Medicine Hospital), Aspire Academy is developing sports champions, promoting healthy lifestyles and galvanizing the sports economy of today, and the future.

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About the events

The two-day event ASPIRE4SPORT networking session brings European and Qatari sports industry professionals together to pave the way for future partnerships. In parallel, Aspire Academy is hosting the “Global Summit” on ‘Football Performance & Science’ to share ideas and approaches and discuss how science, technology and cutting-edge coaching techniques positively influence the game.

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