

Reycup 2017

Football and fun on the volcano



There I was again on the volcano island for a soccer tournament, the Reycup football and fun festival.

Now it was the 3rd time. And it looks like that it wasn't for the last time. In general I can only repeat what I have written in my report about Reycup 2016. It was the same nice experience like the year before.

So I could stop my report here ... No, I won't do so! We had such a good time that deserves more words. So this report is also a thank-you to the Reycup Organisation and the hosting club Trottur Reykjavik.



Like I said before, I've been there for the 3rd time. I can state that the tournament is improving each year. The quality of the games has increased. But as it is a tournament with a wide range from U13 to U16 boys and girls. So sometimes you have real ambitious games and sometimes it is an easy job as referee. The mixture is good. But whichever game I had to do, it was always a nice job. The teams show a good attitude. Fair behaviour, although on iceland soccer is more physical than we know it from home. But no one complains and no one tries to cheat. Great! Thanks to all the teams, players and coaches.

The REFEX-Team

We've been 3 referees at Reycup.

- Thomas Rziha (Germany, Emsland)

- Norbert Franke (Germany, Emsland)
- Jörg Irle (Germany, Dortmund)



See Norbert and Thomas on the pictures 😊

We understood each others very well and had lots of fun together. Thank you Norbert and Thomas for a great time!

Accomodation

Like in many other tournaments players and referees are accommodated in schools. But in contrast to other tournaments or the players we were accommodated in the teachers area. Each one of us had a teacher's office.



There we found a bed, cushion and duvet were also provided.



As you see, we had a good sleep there 😊

Food & Beverages

Breakfast is served in the school. There you find a white bread, cheese, ham, fruits or you can have conr flakes (or similar products). Simple but good.

Lunch: you have the possibility to have lunch hat Hilton hotel. But this depends on your schedule. I haven't used this option because I don't like to have too much in

my stomach when I have games afterwards. But you don't get hungry during the day because you always find something to eat in the referee area (pizza, sandwiches cake). So you can always have a small snack the whole day. There are always beverages (coffee, water, soft drinks) too.



Dinner: At the end of the day you can go to the Hilton to have dinner



... and maybe a bear at the bar afterwards. That was so good!

In total: very good supply with food and beverages.

Refereeing

At Reycup the use 2 referees per game. Not one as a single ref, not 3 with one head referee and 2 assistants on the line. No, 2 referees with equal authority on the field. I like that system very much. I had a good cooperation with each one that was my partner in my games. No matter if it was a licensed referee or a volunteer referee. It was great! Among those licensed referees there were some high class

referees, one was FIFA-Referee Gunnar Jonnson. I had had the honor to be referee with him in 2 games. Thank you Gunnar!



Like I wrote above, soccer is more physical on iceland but each one accepts it. SO theres no need to blow the whistle in situations where you usually would do at home. You have to find your line, where you say that was still OK or that was to much. A challenge if you are not used to it. But if you watch other games and see the beahviour of the players, what they accept, you will succeed. The bigger problem occurs when you get back home and grown up men cry when the get pushed a little bit ;-)

Tuesday - Arrival

We all came with the same flight from Düsseldorf to Keflavik. As the tournament provides bos tickets, you only have to entert he Flybus that brings you to Reykjavik in about 45 Minutes. Our station to leave the bus was the Hilton hotel. It is 200 meters away from the clubhouse of Trottur.



At Trottur we were received by Magnús Grétarsson (Chairman oft he tournament commitee, left) and Þórir (Thorir) Hákonarson (responsible for the referees, right).

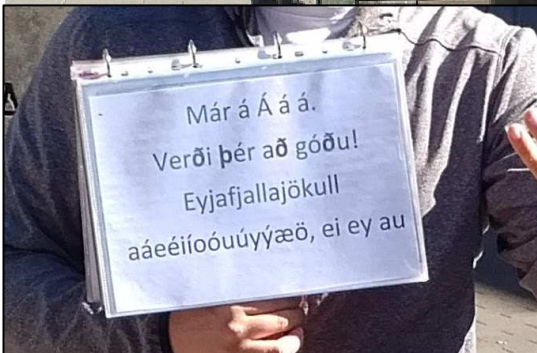


Magnus drove us to the school where we were accommodated (about 1km away) and also showed us a bar where we were able to watch the women Euro-game Russia vs. Germany (0:2).

Wednesday – Opening Ceremony

On wednesday there is the opening ceremony in the evening. So we had a day for our own. As the teams arrive on this day there is no breakfast at the school we went downtown into a nice cafe where we had our breakfast. We were lucky that the servant was a german student (Berit). She gave us some advice where to go in

Reykjavik. At 10 o'clock we booked a guided tour by citywalk.is. This tour is free, you pay what you like afterwards. They deserve a good tip. I can recommend it. We had a great guide for about 2 hours



He even taught us a little Icelandic: *Már á Á á á* [mau: au au au au]= *Mår lives on a farm and has sheep.*

Afterwards we had lunch in the harbor. There you find many fish restaurants. It is recommended to compare the prices, you will find big differences. Take *catch of the day*. (This was recommended by our guide). It tasted very good.



After our lunch we went back to our school to have a rest. In the evening we went back downtown. On a big screen on they showed the women-Euro game Iceland vs. Austria. So we found ourselves in the middle of Icelandic soccer-fans. Afterwards we want back to Trottur to attend the opening ceremony. Each team was welcomed

and there was also so music entertainment. A nice start for the upcoming days, giving all a good mood.

Thursday – 1st tournament day

After breakfast at the school we went to Trottur at about 7:30. Based on the plan that Thorir made, it should be an easy day. Norbert and Thomas should have 4 games, me only 2. Norbert and Thomas started their job together. My mission started at 11 o'clock. I should have had my 2 games in a row. When my second game was over the referee for the next 2 games came to me and asked me to stay for 2 more games, cause the other referee (his partner) didn't show up. So I had 4 games in a row (=200 minutes). That's a challenge, especially as it was noon and very sunny. I felt like a steak on a BBQ. When I came back to Trottur, Thorir smiled at me and said „I wanted to kill you“. I replied with a smile „Then you have to try harder“. I didn't really expect him to follow my words, but see below ;-)

After the games we went to Laugardalslaug, Reykjavik biggest pool. Besides the classic pool for swimming and fun there are also several tubs on different temperatures. A cold one (5-8 degrees Celsius) and others with 38, 40, 42 and 44 degrees Celsius. That's absolutely great to relax there, it is really good for your tired muscles. The entrance for tournament participants is free.

Friday – 2nd tournament day

At 7:30 we came to Trottur to meet Thorir with our schedule for the day. The schedule he set up the evening before was broken cause late a referee called and cancelled. So the art of improvisation was required. Therefore I started with 3 games in a row. Good warm up for the day ☺

In my first game I had the pleasure and the honor to be partner with FIFA referee Gunnar Jonsson. Although I have a long referee career up to highest amateur classes such an opportunity is still something special for me. I felt young again, remembering my first games at the side of Bundesliga referees ☺

This day was sunny and warm again. So my sunburn that I got the day before became more intense.

After a break for one hour, I had my next 2 games. Then I was able to rest again. After one hour Thorir came to me and asked if I would be able to do 2 more games. „Of course“ I replied. Of course, I already was a bit tired after 5 games (more than 4 hours in the sun). I saw that he really was in trouble, so there was no doubt that I liked to do him the favor. It was nice to see how he was relieved after my positive answer. So I did game 6 and 7. The seventh one (Trottur vs. The team from Chile) was again on the main field of Trottur, again with FIFA referee Gunnar Jonsson. Great!

But in this game, I guess I made the worst call of the tournament. After a foul at the striker of Trottur, I didn't recognize the great advantage position they had. I mixed up defense and offense so I blew the whistle. When I realized what I did, I felt ashamed and apologized. But you cannot revert a wrong call, so we had to continue with a free kick for Trottur. Such a stupid mistake, especially when I was together with a FIFA referee ☹ Afterwards I explained him the team my stupid mistake. But no one blamed me for it. I realized that I had to take care of my concentration.

Maybe I was a bit too tired so that I lost it. So I got my task for the next day: keep up your concentration!

After our games we went again to the pool to relax. So good!

In the evening we were invited at KSI (Icelandic football federation) to an event for all foreign teams. There a little buffet was served (drinks, sandwiches and cake).



After the speech of Magnus, the coach of Burnley and Kristianstad held a little speech about their development program. The last speech was by Harold Mayne-Nicholls, the head of the foundation „*ganamos todos*” (before he was head of the football association of Chile). The foundation helps young children by sport events to develop not only in sports but also as person and in society. One result of their work was the participation of the team from Chile „Pacto Andino School”. That was an absolute impressive presentation.

After this event, we went back to our school. On our way from KSI to the school there is cafe Flora. On this evening, the coaches of the teams were invited to get there for some smalltalk. When we came there, we were the first.



After a while, the first participants also showed up. I saluted an english coach of an icelandic team. He set down at our desk and we had a nice talk. Really great to get in contact with the coaches. This supports the relaxed atmosphere of the tournament and for us referees it is also nice not only to talk with other referees but also with other participants.

Saturday – 3rd tournament day

Wow, getting up was the 1st challenge of the day. 11 games in the sun showed left their marks. On this day I started with 2 games in a row. When I was moving it was OK, so I was lucky that there were 2 in a row. When I got back to Trottur I had a break that I spent on the sofa. It felt good to sit down there, but when I got up again, my muscles cried „No!“. So before doing the next game I had to persuade my legs that it was time for running although they hurt. Did I say „running“? I don't think that this is the right term to describe my efforts of moving. If you would see me in these games on a video, you would ask if the film was running in slow motion. Again Thorir had problems to send referees to the fields as there were unexpected cancellation. Although the legs hurt, we took each game that Thorir asked us for. That's the reason why are there: being referee. As they are such kind hosts, we didn't want to leave Thorir alone with his problem, we liked to help him. He deserved it.

At the end of the day it was again 6 games (= 5 hours). Again it was a sunny and warm day. On the one hand, of course, nice, but in the other hand, that costs more of your power than if it was not so warm or cloudy. Although I was tired, even more tired than the day before, this day I succeeded in keeping my concentration. I learned my lesson!

As our last games ended late, we decided to take a shower at the club, this day no relaxing in the pool. On Saturday evening there was a BBQ-Party in Fjölskyldugarðurinn, a fund and adventure park. It is located in the same area, on our way to our „residence“.



There we were among all the players, coaches and others that accompanied the teams at Reycup. Again a nice occasion to meet each other.



As we were tired we didn't stay very long. We were glad when we laid down in our beds.

Sunday – last tournament day

Ready and fit for the last games? My muscles told me that they wanted to be on strike. Even on the walk from our school to Trottur my moves looked strange. I knew that the last day would be hard after so many games. But we were there to serve the tournaments. So we pulled ourselves together and activated our last energy reserves. I guess, although muscles were tired and pace was low, we did quite well. No one complained. A very special experience were my last 2 games. I was looking for my partner but I found no one in a referee shirt. Then a guy with sport trousers and naked upper part of the body came to me. He was my partner. Strange! Can you imagine a half naked referee in a tournament game? Up to that moment my answer would have been „no“. I asked myself, how he wants to take notices or maybe show a card? To give the answer: he didn't need to. He had a good communication with the players, they showed much respect towards him. He really was a good referee. So you may have the most professional equipment, but in the end the personality matters. Great job!

The final day is shorter than the other days, cause in the afternoon there is the big winners ceremony in the stadium of Trottur. So I only had to do 5 games. Like I said before, it was a hard challenge for my body. But although being tired, I enjoyed each game.

On Sunday evening there's a party for all the workers at the tournament. The referees were also invited there. There were some speeches to honor some of those busy people. As they did a great job they really deserved it! There was a buffet and of course drinks. Sadly again there was no nonalcoholic beer ;-). We spent a nice evening there, had a lot of nice talks with several people. A nice end of a great tournament.

Monday – the day after

On Monday we stayed in bed very long. We didn't get up until 10 o'clock. Now it was the time to pack our luggage and leave. We went down to Trottur to meet

Magnus and Thorir again. Time to say goodbye. It was good to see Thorir relaxed again. He had the most stressful job arranging the referees for the games. We thanked them for their great hospitality and the great time we had at Reycup.

Finally we wanted to buy some of those merchandising products of Trottur to have a souvenir of the club. Thomas and Norbert wanted to have a scarf, I wanted to have a cap. Thorir went away and said he wanted to look for it. When he came back he gave me w whole set containing a jacket, a cap, a scarf and a collar. I asked him how much it costs. Nothing, he gave it to each of us as a gift! Incredible! Thank you, you're so great!



Summary

We had a great time at Reycup!

The only minus point on the list are the volunteer referees that don't show up and therefore increase the workload on the other referees. But, to see it positively: it is a good exercise for your stamina. If you calculate 4km each game you can say that in average we did about a half-marathonm each day.

Maybe we can solve this problem with more REFEX-referees next year, so planning will become more stable. For sure, Thorir will appreciate this ☺

Reycup is a nice tournament, that offers many good experiences. Good accomodation and supply with food & bevreages, fair behaviour by the teams, the interesting and fasincating system with 2 referees, the great hospitality of Trottur. This year we even had sun each day. You can enjoy each minute of the tournament from your arrival until the departure. Alhtough Reycup is not as big as other tournaments like Norway Cup or Brondby Cup, but concerning the quality they offer they can compete with the „big players“.

Reycup is right to name it „football and fun festival“ cause they give you lot of fun. This positive atmosphere is also an important factor to have such a good and fair atmosphere in the games and afterwards between all participants.

Thank you Trottur, thank you Reycup!

Jörg Irle