

PRESS RELEASE

The Confederation of North, Central America
and Caribbean Association Football.



Positive Development for Women's Soccer in Canada, Says CONCACAF President

Praises Canadian Soccer for its development and improvement

MONTREAL, Canada (Sunday, March 2, 2014) - Speaking after the Official Draw for the FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup Canada 2014 today, FIFA Vice President and CONCACAF President, Jeffrey Webb, congratulated the Canadian Soccer Association for successfully raising the profile of women's soccer in Canada.

"It has been 12 years since the inaugural FIFA Women's Under-20 World Cup finals were hosted in Canada," said Webb. "We have seen tremendous progress in Canadian soccer during this time, with solid implementation of grassroots programmes and technical training for coaches and referees in the women's game. Match viewership has also increased in Canada, setting new regional records and producing great results for this sport."

Webb highlighted that Canada has an astonishing 17,000 qualified coaches and nearly 6,000 referees – of whom women comprise a combined total of 4,000 -- dedicated to youth football. Additionally, in 2012, Canada hosted the CONCACAF Women's Olympic Qualifying tournament, which set an overall attendance record in excess of 168,000 fans.

"With an average television viewership of almost 200,000 for each women's game, we can really see the growth of soccer in Canada, and in our region," he added.

Recognizing the development of the women's game since the U-20 tournament was created in 2002, originally as a U-19 competition, Webb mentioned that many CONCACAF teams and players have made a huge impact. They have won a total of five FIFA World Cup tournaments, consisting of two Women's World Cups and three Women's Under-20 World Cups. The National Team also won a bronze medal at the 2012 Olympics.

CONCACAF's four representatives were drawn into separate groups. Host Canada is in Group A with Ghana, Finland and Korea DPR. The confederation champion United States will face solid opposition in Group B from Germany, China and Brazil. In Group C, Mexico will square off against England, Korea Republic and Nigeria. Costa Rica will be challenged in Group D by New Zealand, Paraguay and France.

Following the Official Draw, a Banquet was held that was attended by official representatives from the province of Quebec, FIFA, the Canadian Soccer Association and other guests. The tournament will take place from August 5-24, 2014, and will be played in Toronto, Edmonton, Montreal and Moncton.

