



# SMALL NATION WITH A STRONG FOOTBALL CULTURE

Can Greenland learn from the Faroe Islands?

Nuuk, 18th August 2016



# Historical Milestones at a Glance

- 1892 First Club Established: Tvøroyar Bóltfelag (TB)
- 1930 First unofficial international home match: Faroe Islands vs Iceland played in Gundadalur
- 1942 Men's first league championship - Regional competition with a centralised play-off final stage.
- 1950 Premier league established with 5 teams participating playing home and away.
- **1973 First youth national team opponent Iceland**
- **1979 Faroese Football Association formed as independent body**
- **1983 Coach education established**
- 1984 First unofficial international home match vs Greenland played in Klaksvík
- 1985 Women's first championship
- 1986 First artificial pitch at Gundadalur
- 1988 Membership in UEFA
- **1989 All matches in premier league played on artificial turf**
- 1989 Membership in FIFA
- 1992 First World Cup qualifier home match: Faroe Islands vs Belgium on natural gras in Toftir.
- 2012 First World Cup qualifier home match played on artificial turf. Faroe Islands vs Sweden
- 2019 First national team match to be played on a fully completed Tórsvøllur Stadium. All seating, under roof, artificial turf, floodlights and a fully heated pitch. Opponent TBD



29 July 1930: First friendly team match vs Iceland. Played at Gundadalur venue.



5 August 1984: First friendly international home match vs Greenland. Played in Klaksvík.



12 October 2012: First World Cup qualifier to be played on artificial turf. Faroe Islands vs Sweden

# Football in Faroe Islands today

- Eflo deildin (Men's best league)
  - Running for 8 months from beginning of March to end of October early November.
  - All matches played outdoor on recent 3rd or 4th generation artificial turf pitches
  - Semi-profesional league with 10 clubs competing for Championship.
  - 4 clubs participate in European Club Competition each year
- Women, Youth & Grassroots
  - All football activity being played on approved pitches with artificial turf – remainder natural gras. No approved sand/clay pitch remaining. (In 1985 majority of pitches were sand/clay pitches)
  - Artificial turf a good match to climate which is relatively mild with a high level of precipitation
- Currently no indoor arena with full size pitch and no imminent plans to build such facility.



Most recent pitch in the municipality of Eiði.  
Partly funded by Hatrick programme

Clubs	18
Teams	405
Players	5.018
Women in % of total	28,8%
Players in % of population	10,3%
Average no. of teams per club	23
Average no. of players per club	279

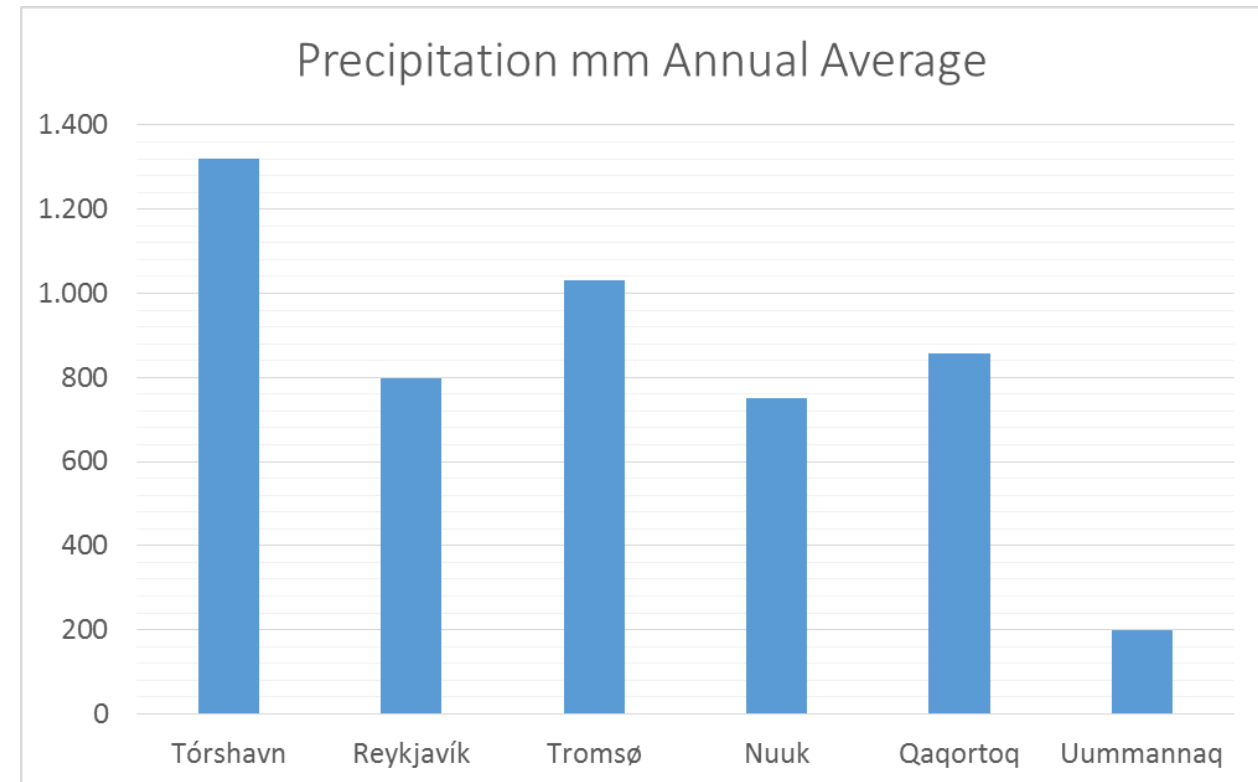
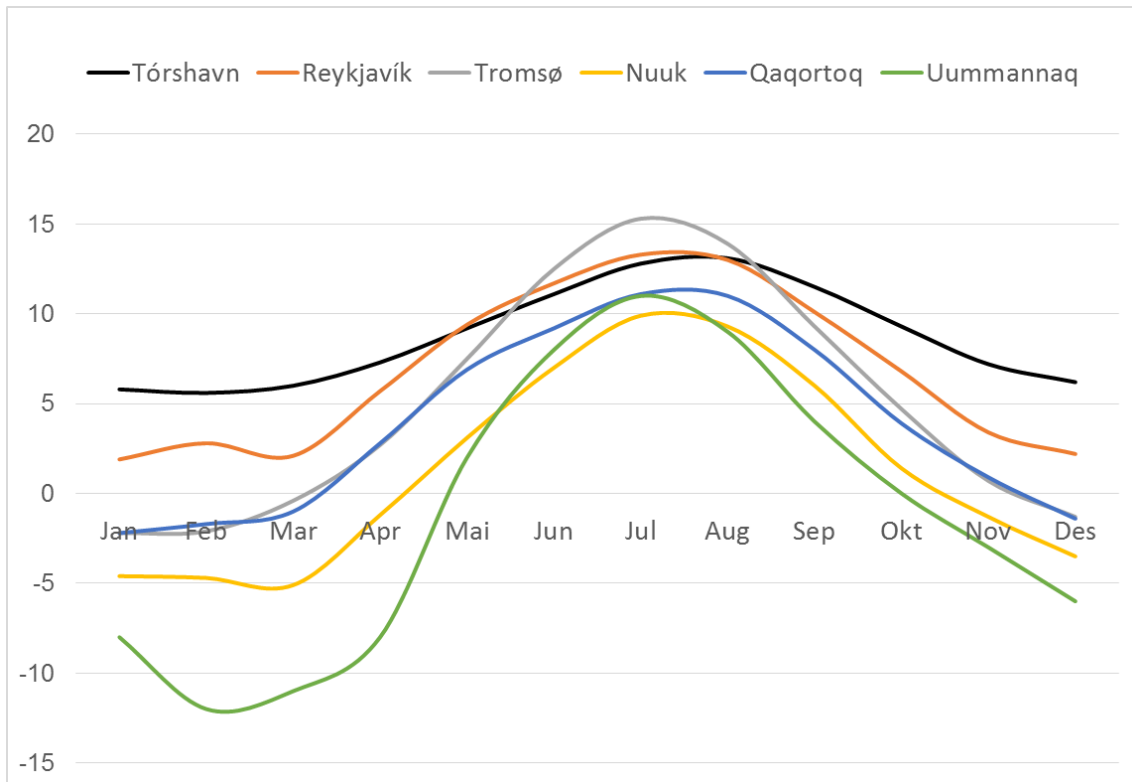
# Football in the Arctic Region- Obstacles and challenges

## Main challenges & obstacles: Greenland and Faroe Islands

- **Geography:**
  - Harsh environment and construction of facilities in general very costly.
  - Running costs such as heating very costly
  - Climate: Precipitation & Snow. Very challenging to play during winter months
  - Light: Limited hours to play without floodlights
  - Distance: Long/expensive and risky travel to domestic and international matches
  - Archipelago: Challenging and risky to by vessel, aircraft or other means of transportation during winter months
- **All the above except distance & precipitation shared by Greenland**
  - Distance: Significant in Greenland – limited in the Faroe Islands
  - Precipitation: High in the Faroe Islands – limited in Greenland

# Football in the Arctic Region- Obstacles and challenges

- Competitions in the Faroe Islands initially arranged as regional competitions with a centralised final stage: 1942 to 1949
- Generally improved infrastructure made possible from 1950 decentralised league structure with home/away matches.
- Compared to other cities in arctic region (Chart below) winters are mild due to Golf Current with high level of precipitation.
- Artificial turf as opposed to natural gras or sand/clay is excellent match to areas with high level of precipitation. Utility level of venue with artificial turf is high in Faroese climate also during winter.



# Development of Faroese Football – lessons learned

- Most important developments
  - Formation of footballing governing body (Faroese Football Association)
  - Coach development: Practical training and teoretical education of Coaches first courses held in 1983 and in 2016 a high number of courses being held.
  - Introduction of artificial turf and ability to upgrade to most recent generation of pitch. To limit risk of injuries and retainment of players to continue playing football.
  - Youth national activity: First match played in 1973 in 2016 youth national teams will play 39 matches in 7 different age groups.
  - Building of national stadium: to host domestic and international matches as showcase for kids to improve recruitment of new players.
  - National team activity on adult level. Since gaining UEFA/FIFA membership in 1988/1989 the Faroe Islands have played 170 official international matches against 46 different countries.



Youth national training in February 2016



Cup final 2015 on Tórsvøllur Stadium:  
Víkingur vs NSÍ Runavík

# Strategic Focus to 2020

- **Technological development: Player & Clubs**
  - General improvement & development of young players
  - Target to have educated coaches for all age levels and all 18 clubs
- **Grasroots: Recruitment & Retainment**
  - General improved effort to recruit kids to play football
  - Address dropout among teenagers and provide incentives to continue playing football.
  - Continue Health football to recruit & reain middle aged men & women
- **Infrastructure development: National Stadium & Regional Facilities**
  - National Stadium completion by 2019 (project has been approved by FSF & municipality)
  - Continue to subsidise regional stadium/venue development.
  - Domestic clubs: Target to
    - Ensure high quality artificial turf on pitches
    - Floodlights on stadia
    - Better stadium facilities for fans (seating + roof)
- **National team objectives:**
  - Process commenced to develop detailed strategic objectives and targets.
  - Focus on development and activity of youth national teams
  - Target to qualify for EURO 2020 (24 teams & League of Nations)

## Strategic focus to 2020

**Technical Development:** Player & Clubs

**Grassroots:** Recruitment & Retainment

**Infrastructure:** National Stadium & Regional Facilities

**National Team:** Improve Results & Qualify for EURO 2020