

Azerbaijan hopes to welcome 'The Red Wall' back to Baku

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BAKU, AZERBAIJAN, June 23, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Today, the Association of Football Federations of Azerbaijan ([AFFA](#)), reflects on hosting the Group A fixtures and Wales's stay in Baku, following their 2-0 win over Turkey last Wednesday evening in front of a roaring, 20,000 strong crowd.

A touch of magic from Aaron Ramsey opened the scoring in the first half. Turkey stayed in contention right until the last minute of the game when the Welsh talisman, Gareth Bale, delivered a crucial pass to seal a win for the team. Bale galvanized an excellent performance to all but secure qualification for the Round of 16.

Despite losing their final group match, Wales' passage to the next round was secured this weekend after another thriller in Baku, with Switzerland defeating Turkey in a decisive 3-1 victory, stunning the legions of Turkish fans who had crammed into the Olympic Stadium.

Welsh, Swiss and Turkish fans flocking to [Euro 2020](#) have raised the profile of football in Azerbaijan, helping the country to consolidate its status as a major player within UEFA. Football is a game that relies on everyone's participation. AFFA is proud to have witnessed the sense of community amongst locals and travelling Welsh fans, strengthening ties between the two countries. Welsh fans have seemed at home in the sunshine of the South Caucasus, singing in loud voice across Baku in the last week.

This vocal Welsh contingent has brilliantly complemented the equally terrific carnival atmosphere of the other national fans, with all the different nations bringing their own unique brand of passionate support to create a true festival of football.

For all those who attended games in Baku, the support for home favourites Turkey, bolstered by thousands of local fans, has been a particular highlight. The sight and sound of this fervent Turkish support, roaring their team on, was a truly unique occasion and reminded many who saw it what is great about international football.

AFFA Executive Vice President Elkhan Mammadov met with President of the Wales Football

Association Kieran O'Connor on 11 June, against the backdrop of Baku Olympic Stadium. Mr. Mammadov greeted the Welsh national team and wished them success, whilst Mr. O'Connor spoke highly of the facilities allocated for the Welsh training base at Tofiq Bahramov Stadium.

As part of a multi-nation format devised by UEFA to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the tournament, Baku has played host to Wales vs Switzerland (Saturday 12 June, 15:00) and Turkey vs Wales (Wednesday 16 June, 18:00) and Switzerland vs Turkey (Sunday 20 June, 18:00) so far. Still to come, Baku will also host Quarter Final 3 (Saturday 3 July, 18:00).

Elkhan Mammadov, Executive Vice President, AFFA, said:

"The Welsh, the Swiss, and the Turkish traveling fans including Turkey's local fans in Azerbaijan have added a welcome splash of colour and character across Baku during the matches here. Baku is ready and pleased to welcome teams qualifying for the quarter final."

On Welsh travelling fans:

"The atmosphere in Baku has been upbeat with an electricity that only The Red Wall can bring to international football. I hope that fans have enjoyed their stay and felt an affinity with Azerbaijan. There is every chance that this team can reach the Quarter Finals in Baku on July 3rd. If they make it through a tough match in the Round of 16 then we would be delighted to welcome them back soon!"

"The citizens of Azerbaijan have been delighted to host an event of this size – first with the Formula 1 and now with the European Championships – it is an excellent advert for our nation. We love that the Wales fans enjoy coming to Baku not only to see the football, but to witness Baku's culture, our history and our city's blend between modern and ancient architecture. Not to mention the pubs, which have been exceedingly popular amongst travelling fans from Wales and the UK. Baku can remain a second home on the Caspian Sea for Gareth Bale, Robert Page and The Red Wall for years to come."

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