



Elite competition is now called "Liga Sport Zone Futsal" until 2015/2016

## **Sport Zone is the new main sponsor behind the Portuguese futsal championship**

Sport Zone and the Portuguese Football Federation have signed a 3-year sponsoring agreement today for the next three seasons of the national futsal. Sport Zone is now the official main sponsor of the sports national championship, which is now called "Liga Sport Zone Futsal".

Establishing the "Liga Sport Zone Futsal" is part of Sport Zone strategy of promoting sports in Portugal, a concern shared by the Portuguese Football Federation. Portugal's main sports brand has been investing in developing sports and promoting a healthy lifestyle throughout its more than 15 years of existence, a priority that is ever so present in the support, sponsoring and partnerships celebrated within the the most practised sports in Portugal.

Accordingly, the agreement between Sport Zone and the Portuguese Football Federation is likewise planning the creation of specific actions dedicated to federate athletes, with special advantages in products and services provided by Sport Zone.



Paulo Simões, Sport Zone CEO, says: *"Our association with the national futsal elite puts into practise Sport Zone investment in one of the most practised sports in Portugal while also fulfilling the brand's mission of actively promoting sports. Football is one of our strategy's key sports and Sport Zone recognizes the unmatched potential and dimension of futsal. This sport has grown exponentially in the last two decades in Portugal, to the point when it is already the most practised sport in sports halls, considering the number of athletes enrolled in the federation, the young athletes practising at schools and all the amateurs celebrating their passion for football on a regular basis. Sport Zone shares the values and vision pursued by the Portuguese Football Federation to the utmost, by promoting futsal as one of the main sports in Portugal, which consequently led to the creation of 'Liga Sport Zone Futsal'."*

In this context, and in order to communicate the efforts endeavoured by the new main sponsor, Sport Zone publicity will be put up at every sports hall in every round of the competition, which assures the annual presence of the brand in all matches of the 14 teams playing in the 1<sup>st</sup> Division of the Futsal Championship. Sport Zone will also participate in the flash interview pannels of every game broadcasted on television.

## **Futsal on the rise**

Over the last 15 years futsal has more than doubled its number of practising federate athletes: in 1997/1998 there were 11,058 federate players whereas at the end of last season, the Portuguese Football Federation had 27,954 enrolled federate athletes. This increasing number of federate players has had a corresponding increase in clubs and other sports agents, like coaches and referees.

The Portuguese Football Federation predicts this sport will continue to gather more federate players, expecting a 12% growth in the number of futsal players in Portugal by 2016.

Additionally, this growth in the number of players has been followed up close by an increase in the number of readers and viewers tuning in for futsal news. In terms of television ratings, futsal is the second sport in the country, only exceeded by football. The live broadcast of the last 2012/2013 Futsal National Championship, between Sport Lisboa e Benfica and Sporting Clube de Portugal, at Pavilhão da Luz, got an average rating of 7.2%, with around 684 thousand viewers and 22.8% share, according with GfK data.

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