



Diane Mukasa (Uganda), Gladys Lengwe (Zambia) and Bernadettar Kwimbira (Malawi) already spread international flair in 2017 (from left). Photo: Paul Vogt

International flair

The Referee Cup 2019 of the SV Eintracht Lüneburg will be again a meeting of referees from all over the world

BY ULRICH POTT

Lueneburg. Names like Bernadettar Kwimbira or Doumouh Al Bakkar are no longer tongue-twisters for Oliver Vogt. Because the chief organizer of the International Referee Cup of SV Eintracht Lüneburg welcomes referees from all over the world at his tournaments year after year. So also at the 14th edition, which will be played on June, 22nd and 23rd on the Hasenburg. Motto as in the years before: celebrate together.

Vogts' "Thank you" to his referees

The meeting with the referees from all over the world means a lot of work for Vogt with each new tournament, because especially for the foreign colleagues

enormous logistical work is necessary - to organize accommodation and travel plus supporting program. It needs a lot of sponsors, because the entry fees of the 20 to 24 teams with which Vogt plans are not enough. But the SVE referee chairman likes to do this. And for a special reason: "I want to offer my referees something special," says the family man. The 17 referees, who are currently whistling for this Lueneburg football club, finally want to keep their spirits up. "Especially the boys and girls need a lot of attention, they are otherwise alone on the pitch." Measuring with other referee teams is a welcome distraction. There is also the opportunity to get to know FIFA Referees

from Africa or Asia. Who can say that, having sat down together with Bernadettar Kwimbira? But the referee from Malawi, who officiated many games at the 2017 tournament, can't be present at this year's edition because she is nominated at the same time for the Women's World Cup in France. Just like Gladys Lengwe from Zambia, also in 2017, also in France at the whistle. Vogt hopes that the tournament in the end still pays off some money to be able to drive with his SVE referees to a Bundesliga match or at least jumps out together for dinner. "Through such joint actions, we want to keep our referees longer," says Vogt. At the moment the Cup is in full focus.

Many teams that have been involved in the past few years have confirmed their

"All we need to do is switch on the light, they're already here."

Oliver Vogt to the colleagues from Duisburg who are present at every tournament

participation very quick. For example, the colleagues from Berlin, Hamburg and especially from Duisburg. "Here we only need to switch on the light, they are already here", says Vogt and laughs. Since 1991 the Finnish referees are always present, by the way, their referee association is called Erotuomarikerho. Vogt has been in contact with the

international referee scene via Instagram or Facebook for years, so he visited his colleagues in France, Slovenia and Kyrgyzstan - and always watches football matches on site. This led to contacts with eight referees from Turkmenistan, Pakistan, Senegal, Nigeria or Tahiti, all of whom have accepted the invitation for the June weekend in Lueneburg. Just like Doumouh Al Bakkar - by the way, she comes specially from Lebanon.