

## Football in the Moldovan SSR (1944-1991)

Boris Boguş<sup>1</sup>, Octavian Țicu<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*State University of Moldova*

<sup>2</sup>*Free International University of Moldova*

### Abstract

The Moldavian football system was basically born during the Soviet Union period. This is an important fact to take into consideration when we talk about its evolution after Moldova achieved its independence. The Moldavian football clubs never succeeded in winning the Soviet championships or Cups. In the 1950s „Burevestnik” (Chişinău) was permanently among the best twelve football teams of the Soviet Union and in 1956 succeeded in achieving sixth place in the Soviet championship. Also, „Nistru” (Chişinău) succeeded twice to reach the first league of the Soviet football (in 1973 and 1981 – for only one year however). Those were the only notable results of the Moldavian teams during the Soviet period.

At the same time, the Moldavian football players rarely succeeded in playing for the national teams of the Soviet Union. The most remarkable exception in this sense was Igor Dobrovolski, the actual coach of the Moldavian national team, who succeeded in winning the gold medal at the Olympic Summer Games in Seoul (1988) as a member of the Soviet Olympic team. Moldova never had a national team during that time and never played an international match as a national team.

Nevertheless football continued to be the most popular sport in Moldova and brought hundreds of thousand people to the stadiums in an attempt to escape from the realities of communism. So the analysis of the evolution of football in Moldova is an interesting and useful attempt to understand its impact on the Moldavian society both during communism and after.

**Keywords:** communism, Soviet football, ideology and sport, football and politics, Moldavian Soviet football.