

UAB makes football fanatics' dreams come true

Fastest growing bank to fly 1000 winners to watch FC Barcelona matches live in Spain

Sharjah, UAE, October 7, 2013: More than 14 UAE residents recently won a lifetime opportunity to meet and watch some of the greatest legends of football at close quarters, thanks to an initiative launched by United Arab Bank (UAB), the fastest growing bank in the UAE, and FC Barcelona, one of the world's leading football club.

For the next three years, UAB will be flying winners on all-expenses-paid trips to Barcelona, where they can watch FC Barcelona play live at the famed Camp Nou stadium. To enter into the draw, participants can register at www.uab-football.com. In the first trip, 9 out of the 14 lucky winners, whose names were selected from a raffle draw, were flown to Barcelona to experience football action featuring some of the biggest names in football history, including Lionel Messi, Neymar Da Silva, Sergio Busquets and Marc Bartra.

In addition to VIP treatment throughout the trip and a chance to meet FCB officials, the winners were also treated to an exciting faceoff between two of the biggest European clubs – FC Barcelona and Real Sociedad, at the celebrated Camp Nou stadium. The match saw FCB maintaining their consecutive successful streak in their La Liga campaign as they clashed with UEFA Champions League qualifiers Real Sociedad. FCB eventually won the thriller 4-1.

"This has to be one of the most exciting moments of my life," said UAE resident Lee Copland, whose dream to watch FCB's star striker Lionel Messi in action came true. "It is a different experience to be able to watch the match at home and to watch them play at close quarters in Camp Nou's lively atmosphere, especially when Messi scored the second goal of the match. I am grateful for the rare opportunity that UAB gave me. It has been a wonderful experience."

In early September, United Arab Bank had announced its association with FC Barcelona, in a landmark alliance that confirmed UAB as FC Barcelona's "Official Partner in the UAE" and placed the bank as the first and exclusive financial partner of the football club in the UAE. The partnership will continue for a period of three years, ending July 2016. During the 3-year partnership, United Arab Bank will reward more than 1000 customers with tickets to watch the club play live in their home camp, Camp Nou.

Another UAE resident Rasheed Majed said that by being seated just behind the goal posts, they could watch the strategies of the teams closely. "It's nerve-wracking to see what goes on offside as well as to witness my favourite FCB stars penetrate Real Sociedad's strong defences. This will always remain a memorable experience," she added.

Paul Trowbridge, CEO of United Arab Bank, described the trip as a fulfilment of UAB's promise to the region's football enthusiasts. "The VIP visit to the home of FC Barcelona was the next step of our partnership with the club. By empowering the first batch of winners to experience football, we are underlining our continuous support to a prestigious club that shares our winning ideology. The next few months will see us introducing many new elements in the alliance to make it a win-win association for both of us as well as football lovers in the region," he said.

During the first visit to Camp Nou, FCB President Sandro Rosell presented the club's official jersey to Paul Trowbridge, CEO, United Arab Bank to officially mark the start of the 3-year partnership. Tony Graham, EVP, Retail Banking was also present.

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About UAB:

United Arab Bank (UAB) was established in 1975 as a joint venture between UAE investors and Societe Generale. By the end of 2013, the bank will be operating with a network of 30 branches and offices spread across the UAE with its headquarters in Sharjah. UAB offers a range of financial services in both Corporate and Retail and is acknowledged as a leading solutions provider to the growing commercial and industrial base across the seven emirates.

Through the provision of a comprehensive range of Corporate Banking, Retail Banking, Trade Finance, SME Banking and Treasury services, UAB is the Bank of choice among major corporate clientele segments in the UAE. With the launch of its 'Sadara' premium banking service, Islamic Banking Services and 'UAB Rewards' loyalty programme, the Bank has grown its retail customer base, aiming to expand further. All these initiatives and a consistent year on year performance has positioned UAB as one of the fastest growing banks in the region.

The bank is ranked 23rd amongst the top listed companies in the UAE and is one of the top 50 banks in the GCC in terms of market capitalization. UAB announced a record net profit of AED410m for the year ended 31 December 2012, an increase of 24% over 2011 and the highest annual net profit ever reported by UAB. For the first half of 2013, UAB announced its highest half yearly net profit of AED260m, an increase of 35% over the same period in 2012.

In December 2007, UAB became part of a GCC regional banking alliance upon the acquisition of 40% interest by The Commercial Bank of Qatar (CBQ), Qatar's largest private sector bank. United Arab Bank's strong financial performance in 2012 is also indicative of the benefits gleaned from its strategic alliance with the Qatari Bank.

The Commercial Bank of Qatar has a similar alliance with National Bank of Oman (NBO), which has positioned all three banks more strongly for future growth. UAB is not only the fastest growing local bank but also is one of the most profitable. The Bank has the strategic vision and momentum to continue on its growth trajectory, as its executive team seeks to create long term value for its shareholders.

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