



Poland's national team has been drawn with the Czech Republic, Greece and Russia at Euro 2012

# The eagle has landed ... again

Poland's soccer players and fans alike must be wondering what the PZPN is playing at. The video-tape scandal broke just weeks after the crowned white eagle, Poland's national emblem, was removed from the national team's shirts by the PZPN, before eventually being reinstated following widespread public outrage.

The removal of the eagle and its replacement with the PZPN's own emblem caused a

wave of protests from Polish soccer fans, thousands of whom boycotted a recent friendly match against Hungary in Poznań by way of protest. Even Polish President Bronisław Komorowski was bemused as to why Poland's "well-known, well-liked and loved symbol" had vanished from the national team's shirts.

The eagle affair was yet another public relations deba-

cle for the PZPN, which cited marketing rights as the reason behind the emblem change. But both PZPN and kit makers Nike underestimated the scale of discontent that would follow. "Someone was thinking in a strictly business sense," Piotr Żelazny, soccer journalist at *Przegląd Sportowy* told *WBJ*.

Following two weeks of intense criticism from fans, politicians and the media,

PZPN made a U-turn. "We made a mistake. The national emblem should not disappear from the Polish national team's shirts," a humbled Mr Lato, the body's president, told reporters.

And to ensure such an incident never occurs again, President Komorowski last week signed a bill which requires all Polish national sports teams to display the eagle on their kits ●