

## Bernard Knezo Schönbrun In The FAK Michalovce Youth Soccer Club



In the picture you can see the FAK (Football Athletic Club) Michalovce youth soccer club. The photograph was taken before a game with HAC (Humenne Athletic Club) Humenne in 1937/38. The game ended in a 1:1 tie. I also later wrote this result on the photograph as well. In the photo I'm the second from the left. The second from the right, with the ball, was our goalkeeper Mondok. I don't remember much about the rest of the boys. I liked this soccer a lot. I favored this sport, because besides simple shoes you didn't need anything else to play it. But my cap used to bother me while heading the ball, so I turned it around backwards. It also bothered me on backwards, so I asked my mother, 'Mummy, why can't I play soccer without a cap, when my friends are playing without caps?' 'Zun mayner, dos torstu mikh nisht fregn, dos iz an aveyre.' 'Son of mine, you're not allowed to ask about that, it's a sin to ask.' [Jewish laws decree that from the age of 3 all boys cover their heads during the entire day]. That was my mother's outlook on the world and on life. In the 1937/38 season I battled my way onto the Michalovce 'A' team. Despite the fact that it was only for a tryout, as a juvenile, we played against UKMSC Uzhorod teams and against one team from Kosice. Those were large cities, where there were more teams. I even scored a goal against Uzhorod, and assisted in another for an excellent soccer player by the name of Blazejovsky. After the game with UKMSC I became a 'professional.' I got supper, a large beer and ten crowns. Suddenly the world was my oyster. Everything was coming up roses. When I arrived home in the evening to Auntie Ilonka's, I boasted that 'gyoztünk' [Hungarian for 'we won'], to which she said, 'Én is?' [Hungarian for 'me too?']. The poor thing, she was funny in that poverty of hers... In those years I also participated in the All-Sokol Slet [Rally] in Prague, which was something like later the Spartakiada.