

Yearly match witnesses banker win

After four years of losing, Germany's shipping bankers won this year's "Shipowners vs Bankers" football match three-nil.

The challenge, which dates back to 1974, saw a tough match held in sunny Hamburg in front of more than 200 spectators.

Referee Marc Richter from HSH Nordbank had to keep a tight rein on the hard-fought game, which saw the owners' team, spearheaded by previous match-winner Christian Kockentiedt of Intersee, unable to unlock the bankers' defence, marshalled by their captain, Hypovereinsbank's Oliver Trennt.

As the official match report said: "Had the banks only been as solid in securitising loans."

The longer the game went on, the more the bankers' 15-year age advantage became a factor, with Dutchman Erwin "Usain" Keller from Commerzbank breaking the



BANKERS: Victorious after four years of defeat Photo: www.bankers-vs-shipowners.com

deadlock just before half-time.

After the break, the owners strengthened their attack by throwing on Dirk Rossler from NSC, Rafael Ben-Ari of Zim and Peter Oltmann of Schiffahrtsgesellschaft Oltmann.

Everyone at the HSV stadium expected a draw. But it was Keller who proved that the Dutch have learned from Bernd Holzenbein's notorious dive in the 1974 World Cup final.

"He threw himself against Albrecht Gundermann of Salomon Invest and referee Marc Richter decided to give a penalty," the match report wryly said. Aykut Ekici left no chance for the owners' brilliant goalkeeper, Heiner Thormalen of NSB.

The owners came back as only shipowners know how, lead by Andreas Schulte-Westhof of Dohle and Holger Strack of Rickmers.

After hitting the bankers' goalpost five times, a last killer goal was finally scored by the bankers' team, with Marine Money's Mike McCleery heading home.

Ekici was awarded the "Man of the Match", while Christian Rongstock and Ingo Nebendahl won tickets for a Europa League match as the best fans.

A total of EUR 2,000 (\$2,933) was raised for the seamen's club, Duckdalben.