

Eye On Soccer is the
Queensland Soccer Federation
Official Magazine

Eye On STRIKERS

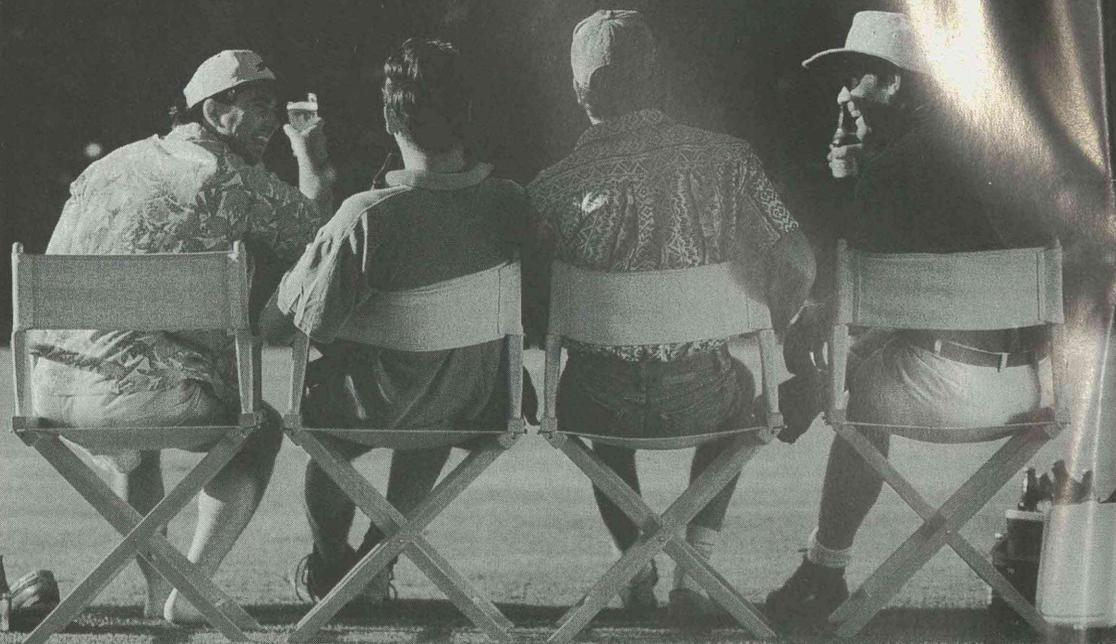
v SOUTH MELBOURNE *Round 1*

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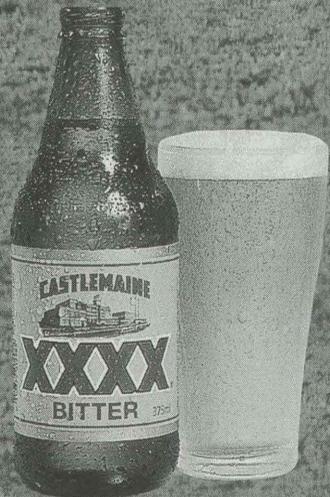
Farina's pick
page 5



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The beer for here.



XXXXX
BITTER

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**COVER: Strikers Directors,
Frank Speare (Left), Ian
Brusasco and Clem Jones
(Right) look rather pleased at
the Strikers' Grand Final win.**

MAJOR SPONSOR



Coach's Comment

The time since May 25 has gone so quickly, and here we are again with the kick-off for another new season of summer soccer with the Strikers.

We're certainly as ready as we can be and the boys are looking forward to the next seven months as national champions.

I've said many times that not every one has the opportunity in their footballing careers to be the national champions, so we should enjoy this time and also continue to play as a champion team.

Of course, our first game of the season tonight will really test us.

If anyone is entitled to be the 'favourites' for the 1997-98 season, then it's our opponents tonight - South Melbourne.

Coach, Ange Postecoglou, has assembled an impressive array of talent and skills with his squad.

Players such as Goran Lozanovski and Jon Anastasiadis join the team along with the likes of Socceroo, Paul Trimboli, New Zealand international, Vaughan Coveney and Michael Curcija - all of whom add up, in my mind, to a very potent strike force.

The Strikers also play attacking football, and with the likes of Brownie, the Cranney brothers, Nick Meredith and newcomer Andy Harper and Steve Laybutt lining up in the feared yellow strip of the Strikers, tonight should be an entertaining and attractive game.

Our home support is very important to us.

It not only gives us a boost as we hear your roar, but it reminds our opposition just who's side you're on! So don't be backward in cheering us on.

We're looking forward to a big season. If you're with us, every kick along the way, it will be an important contributing factor to our on-field performance. I hope you can join us not only tonight, but for our 12 other home games at Suncorp Stadium in our season as national champions.

GO THE STRIKERS!

E-mail: farina@brisbanestrikers.com

South Melb - Farina's pick

As reigning Ericsson Cup Champions the Brisbane Strikers will be the side every team wants to beat this season and their first up opponents South Melbourne will definitely be no exception.

Every time the Strikers take to the field they can expect opposing sides to put in that extra bit of effort, endeavouring to be able to say they have defeated the champions.

South Melbourne were one of the standout sides in the league last season and are sure to once again be among the front runners for the title.

They have bought well, in particular picking up several of the standout performers from the now defunct Collingwood Warriors.

Indeed Frank Farina has said he believes given the depth of the squad South Melbourne now have, they should once again be one of the Strikers main threats for the title.

In season 1996/97 they finished in third place on the ladder, just one spot adrift of the Strikers, after perhaps being the form team of the final round of fixtures.

Then in the finals, they made light work of the previous season's champions the Melbourne Knights, thumping them 4-1 in the first leg of their semifinal and then backing up to win the second match 3-0.

Recording a 7-1 aggregate victory over the then reigning champions illustrated for opposing coaches, what tremendous form they were in and there was little surprise when they defeated big guns Adelaide City in the knockout phase.

Meanwhile the Strikers had defeated Sydney United on aggregate meaning South Melbourne would have one last hurdle to get over if they were to make the trip to Brisbane's Suncorp Stadium for the Ericsson Cup Grand Final.



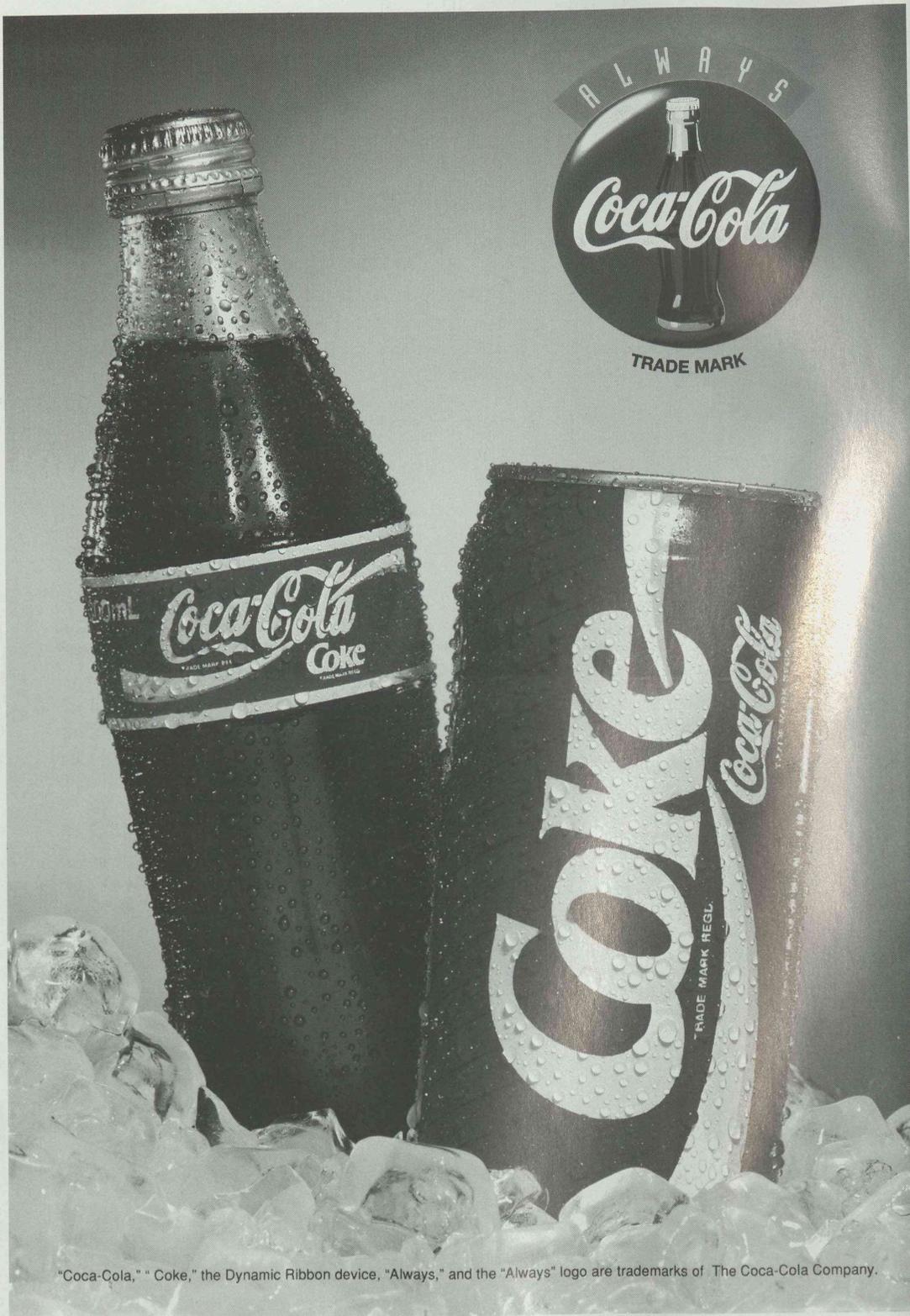
South Melbourne's captain, Paul Trimboli loses out to former Strikers' stalwart, Danny Wright during the home fixture at Suncorp Stadium last season. Trimboli will again be their man to watch this season.

Of course history tells us that Sydney United won that match before losing to the Strikers the following week in the Grand Final in front of a record crowd in Brisbane.

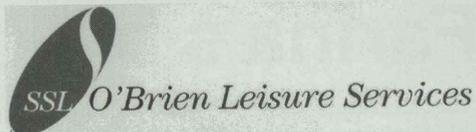
South Melbourne will come to Brisbane determined to start their season on the right foot as they bid to go that step further this season to reach the Grand Final.

They have a similar blend of youth and experience to the Strikers, combining several players who featured in Australia's World Youth team who played in Malaysia with a number of the biggest name's in the domestic game.

In Paul Trimboli they have a playmaker extraordinaire, a man capable of single handedly changing the shape of any match. "Trimmers" had a fine season last year which saw him recalled to the national squad and if the Strikers are to start the season on a winning note, then he is the one player they will need to keep under tight rein.



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New Brisbane Strikers' defender Stephen Laybutt is looking forward to waxing up his surfboard and hitting the coast.

And the Lithgow-born stopper should have no shortage of surfing partners, with fellow Strikers Mark Battistin and Chay Hews among those who like to hit the surf at every opportunity.

"I'm going to have the surfboard sent up here soon," Laybutt said with a sense of anticipation in his voice.

Laybutt, 20, joined the Strikers from the Wollongong Wolves, helping the club fill the void left when Alan Hunter headed to Carlton in the off-season.

After spending just over one season with the Wolves, Laybutt was in the market for a new club when Strikers assistant coach Peter Tokesi heard the defender was available.



Stephen **LAYBUTT**
by Brent Read

"I was looking for a move to get out of Wollongong," he said. "I was offered a 10-day trial (with the Strikers) and on the eighth day they said they were keen to sign me."

Sydney United had also expressed an interest in the young defender but the lure of playing in Brisbane under Strikers legend Frank Farina was too good to turn down.

On a player profile supplied by all the players, Laybutt unashamedly listed Farina as his favourite local player.

"He's a legend," Laybutt said of the Strikers player-coach. "You can have a lot of respect for him."

"He's been there and done that. He's a good bloke as well. He's really down to earth."

With his future secure for at least the next two years, Laybutt can concentrate his energies on securing a place in the Olyroo squad alongside fellow Striker Kasey Wehrman.

A former member of the AIS, Laybutt was part of the Olyroo squad until damaging the

medial ligament in his knee at the beginning of last season.

Ironically, Laybutt was selected in the Olyroos squad as a striker but was moved back to the defence at Wollongong when he returned from the knee injury.

Like fellow Strikers' defender Battistin, who also started his NSL career as a forward, Laybutt has found a home at the back.

"I did my medial ligament after the first game and I didn't get called back into the squad after that," he said.

"It was a bit disappointing. The big goal now is the Sydney Olympics."

Nicknamed 'Headbutt', Laybutt realises he has pretty big shoes to fill in replacing Hunter, but the level-headed youngster is yet to feel any pressure.

"I think the pressure will start coming once the season starts," he said.

"Hopefully we'll be able to play to expectations and do well."

Queensland's frontline

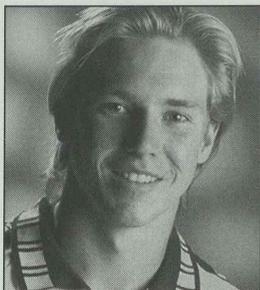
Season 1996/97 was the crowning glory in the short but impressive history of the Brisbane Strikers. The majority of last season's premiership winning side have returned to the club with only Gary Phillips and Danny Wright (retired) and Alan Hunter (transferred to Carlton) missing from the squad.

The following is a brief biography of each of the players assembled by Frank Farina as the Strikers prepare to defend their title as champions of Australia:

Clint Bolton - fine performances during the finals series and on his day amongst the very best custodians in the league.

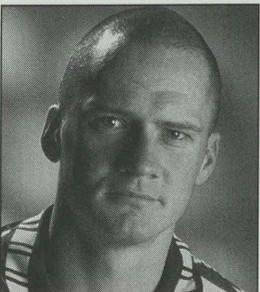
Glen Gwynne - had a fine season last year and was rated by more than one astute judge as the best sweeper in the country.

Matt Bell - performed admirably when given the chance but will be looking for greater playing time this season.



Chris Zoricich - a foundation member of the Strikers, the New Zealand international spent last season trialing in England before returning to Brisbane.

Craig Williams - slid comfortably back into the fold last year after playing the previous season in Malaysia.

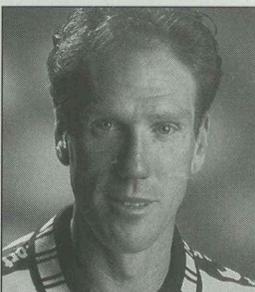


Nick Meredith - his determination and experience were a driving force behind the Strikers charge to the finals.

Frank Farina - the class was there for all to see but perhaps more satisfying for Frankie was taking Australian soccer's greatest prize in his inaugural season as a coach.

Sean Cranney - one half of the "Flying Cranney Brothers" if he can stay injury free he is the most exciting wideman in the country.

Rod Brown - his goal in the Grand Final was typical of a player who will break the league's all time goal scoring record in the opening weeks of the season.



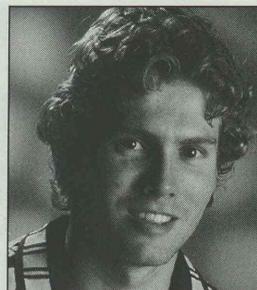
Kasey Wehrman - The Rookie of the Year and an international star in the making but he will miss the opening of the season after a horrendous leg injury which saw him miss the entire World Youth Cup.

Troy Cranney - the workhorse of the team and the type of player every coach dreams of having in their squad.

Mark Battistin - performed well in defence last year but will be expected to take a more physical role in the absence of Alan Hunter.



Reece Tollenare - didn't make many appearances last year but will make the most of his chance when it comes.



Wayne Knipe - the nippy little striker was the unluckiest player in the team after playing brilliantly in the semis only to miss the Grand Final with a shoulder injury.

Andy Brayshaw - didn't get much time on the field last season but his aggressive streak may be needed without the intimidation of Alan Hunter this time around.

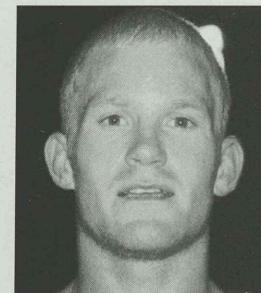
Chay Hews - in the Grand Final he marked himself as a star but diehard Strikers fans knew he always had the talent and just needed the chance to show it. Will go from

strength to strength with more playing time this year.

Jeremy Harris - a valuable speedster who scored a couple of important goals.

Steve Laybutt - 20 year old recruit from Wollongong Wolves.

Brad Ditton - returns to the squad after an outstanding season in the XXXX Premier League with Taringa.



Graham Ross - an excellent foil for Bolton and played some fine games in goal last season.

Andy Harper - after Farina, Andy is the biggest signing in the club's history. Captaining Marconi last year he will bring experience and lethal finishing prowess to the club.

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- AROUND THE GROUND -

The Strikers new signing Andy Harper and his wife Rebecca celebrated their wedding anniversary last week but it appears they are unlikely to see all that much of each other in the coming weeks. With the season started and Andy also working as the Queensland Soccer Schools Development Officer, he is fully committed in Brisbane but Rebecca won't be making the move from Sydney to Brisbane until the new year. Glad I'm not paying his mobile phone bill!

Speaking of new signings both Andy and former Woollongong defender Steve Laybutt have settled in well within the Strikers setup. In fact, it seems Steve has settled in "extremely well" with a fan club of young female admirers already well established before he has even kicked a ball in anger for his new club.

In more serious news it seems last season's injury woes have already returned with a number of the squad unavailable for the commencement of the Ericsson Cup season. Kasey Wehrman continues his lengthy recovery from a serious leg injury incurred in a warm up game before the World Youth Cup in Malaysia several months ago. Chris Zorocich will miss the first month of the season with an ankle injury and Troy Cranney, the man long believed to be bulletproof due to his two season long run without an injury is also recovering from an ankle complaint. However you should see the Superman take the field tonight. Finally the injury woes remain for Wayne Knipe, the player who missed the Grand Final due to a training mishap last season appears certain to miss the first few matches after undergoing a knee operation.

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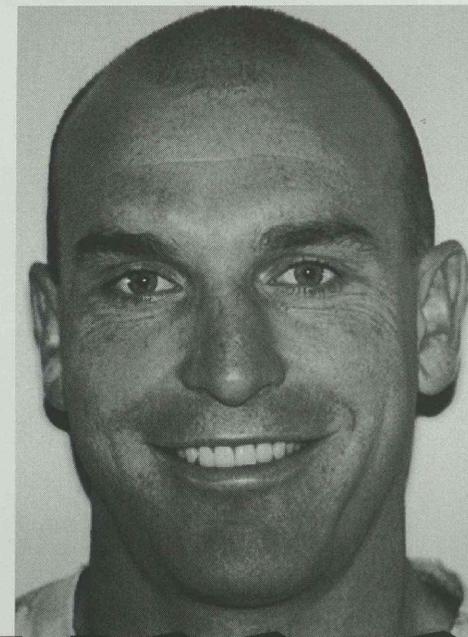
With an army of NSL clubs chasing prize signing Andy Harper in the off-season, it was opportunity that drew the former Marconi striker to Brisbane.

The opportunity to play with a young, ambitious club. The opportunity to play with last year's grand final winners. The opportunity to become more involved in the media. And the opportunity to be coached and play alongside former team-mate Frank Farina.

Despite overtures from Perth Glory and UTS Olympic, Harper signed a two year contract with the Strikers and declines to rule out extending his stay beyond that period.

"It depends on how things go," the 200-game NSL veteran admits. "I've signed for two years. That will take me to 32 and there's still time after that."

Harper has been impressed with the Strikers set-up, regarding the club as the "market leaders" as far as off-field exploits are concerned.



Andrew HARPER

by Brent Read

On the field, Harper will be locked in a battle with Farina, last year's equal leading scorer Rod Brown, the aggressive Andy Brayshaw and young Wayne Knipe for a starting position up front.

Having recently returned from a playing stint in the Chinese second division, Harper's believes his fitness will be "no problem".

"I think Frank will rotate things," Harper, 30, said. "Wayne Knipe will be back on deck (soon) and Andy Brayshaw has been playing the pre-season games.

"It might be a week-to-week competition."

Harper was contacted by his Chinese club while at Marconi last year and with his future undecided, took the opportunity to play an eight-week guest stint in the fully professional Chinese competition.

With his Chinese club fighting for

promotion to division one, the ageless striker hasn't given up hope of returning to China and helping the club towards the end of the season.

After spending the last six years with Marconi and taking his goal tally to 88, Harper will be hoping to rack up the century in his first year in Brisbane.

He will continue his media work with SBS and is hoping to extend that involvement while in Brisbane.

"Hopefully Brisbane will provide a few opportunities to be involved in the media. At this stage I'd like to explore those avenues," he said.

There's that word again. Opportunity. While Brisbane provides Harper with plenty of off-field opportunities, all Brisbane Strikers supporters will be hoping 1998 provides Harper the opportunity to sample an NSL title.

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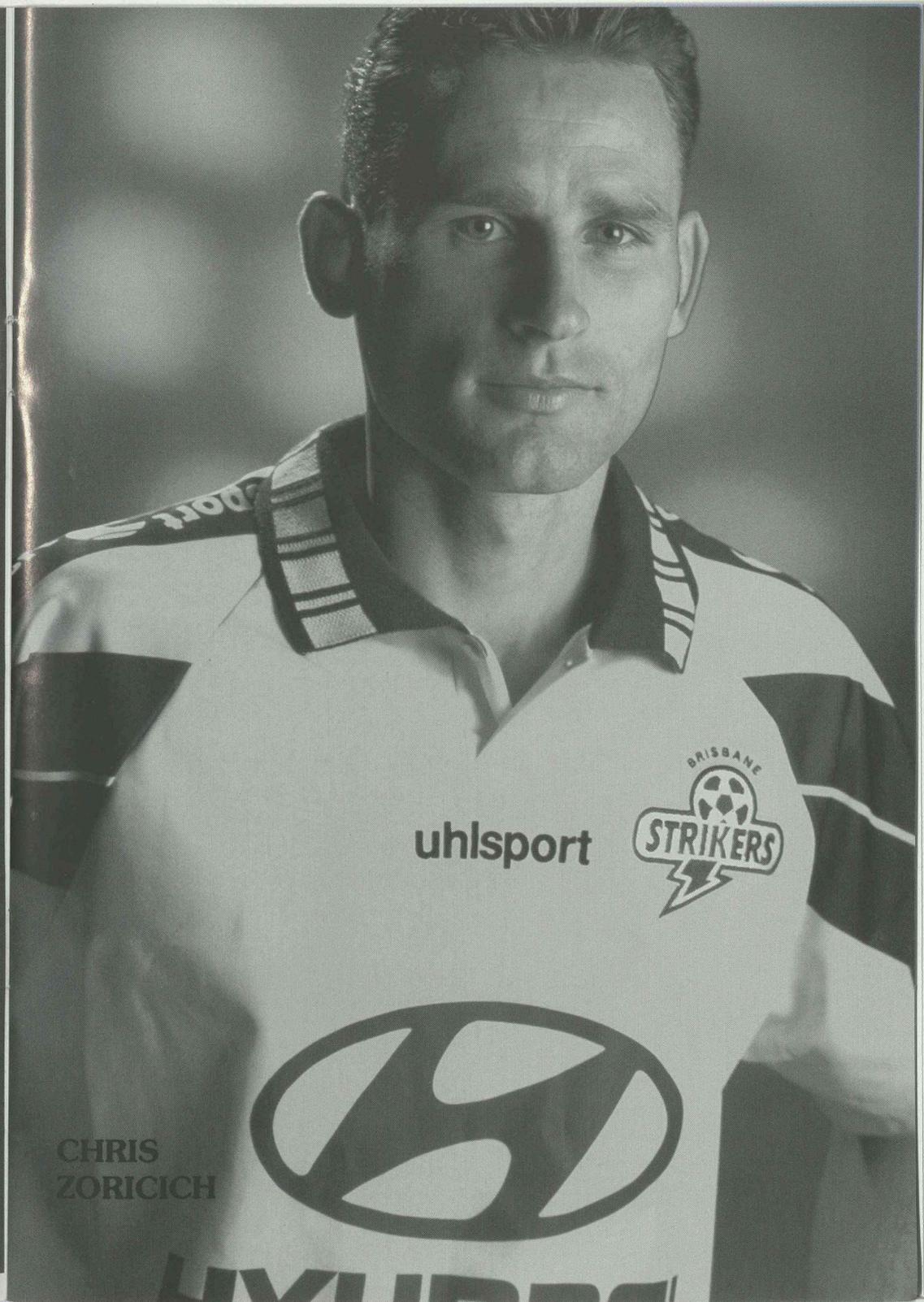
So how does this work?

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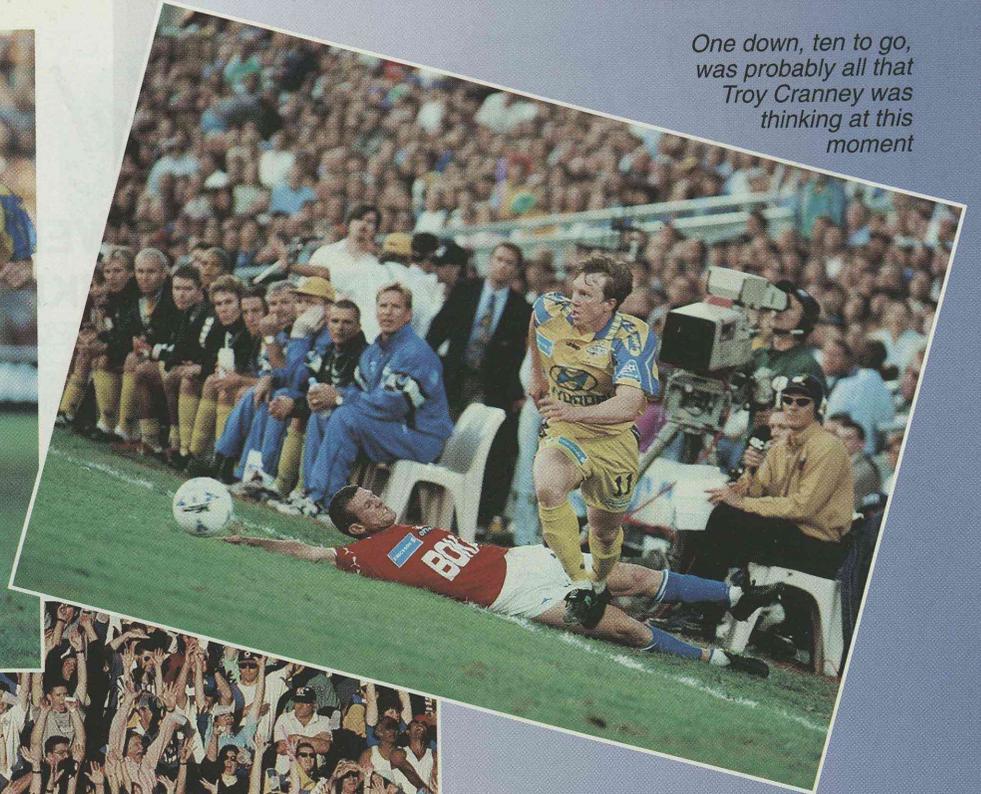
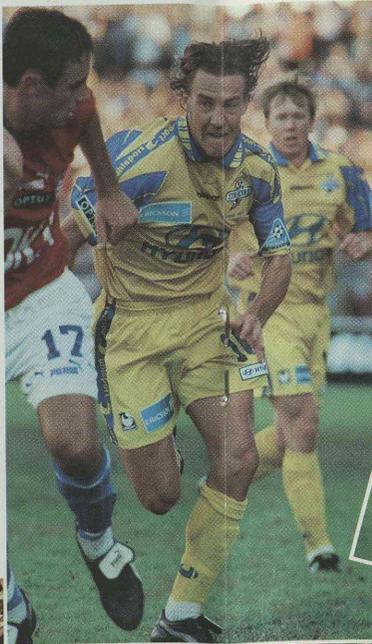


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FREEZE FRAME

Chay Hews was hot on the day.... Rod Brown boiled over when he scored the second goal of the match



One down, ten to go, was probably all that Troy Cranney was thinking at this moment

Concern at one point during the match, changed to sheer joy at the end



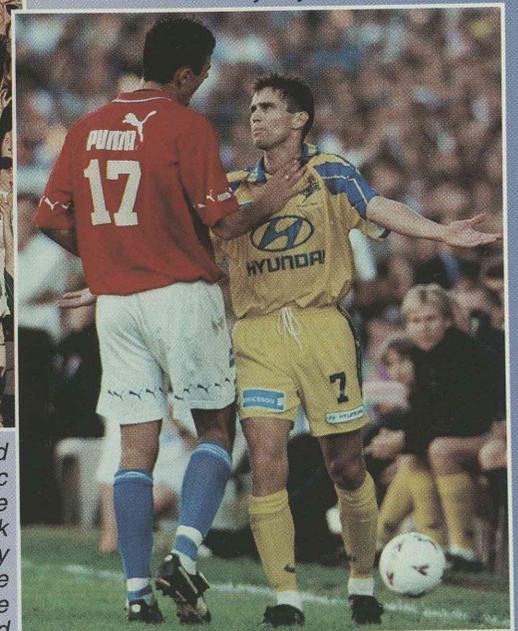
This is only a small part of a 40,000 plus Mexican Wave



What did Frank really say??



Perth Glory wanted him... UTS Olympic wanted him, but we signed him.... Frank Speare and Andy Harper smile at the press conference that announced Andy's decision





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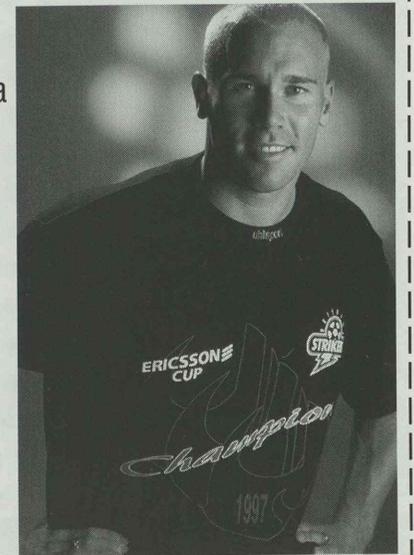
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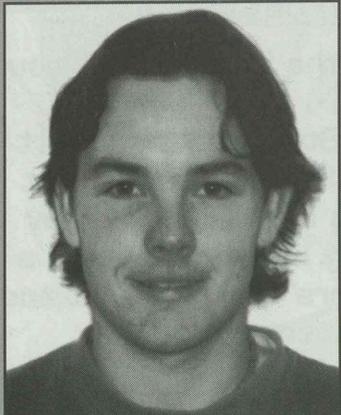
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CRAIG BARNES

Q.A.S

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Where: Brisbane
Previous Club: Brisbane Lions
Position: Midfield
Nickname: "Jimmy"
Hobbies: Fishing, Girlfriend
If you had only \$20 how would you spend it? A good feed
Who would you most like to meet? Robbie Fowler (Liverpool FC)
Favourite Clothing: Bonds Undies
Bad Habits: Eating with mouth open
On rainy days? I watch TV
School: Shailer Park
Most Memorable Game: Played against Chile with 45,000 spectators
Career Ambitions: To play for the Strikers, Australia Seniors & OS
Favourite Car: Porsche
Favourite Babe: Lisa
Favourite Band: Live
Sporting Heros: Jane Flemming & Kieran Perkins

Curtain Raiser

with Gary Phillips

I am absolutely thrilled to have been offered a Coaching Position at the Queensland Academy of Sport.

I have no reservations about the importance of the job at hand and I can assure you I will pursue excellence in every aspect the program offers.

My introduction to the position meant a trip to Townsville and Bundaberg to identify talent available in the U/15 and U/16 State Titles. Never an easy task selecting players as all you coaches out there will know. With such an enormous wealth of talent available, leaving someone out of a squad can come back and haunt you. Last years U/14 and U/15's state teams finished 1st and 2nd respectively at the Nationals. It will be interesting to see the outcome at this years championships.

With XXXX League games finishing so close to the start of the National League and the National U/15 and U/16's finishing yesterday it has been difficult to get all players targeted at the same time. Within the next couple of weeks a QAS squad should be finalised, however, the door will always be open for those that may impress later on or for those that do not.

With the World Cups (U/17 and U/20), 2 years away and the Olympics in 2000 demands on Athletes will be high, as will be expectations, but achievable if so desired. Parents and Supporters, we know the demands on you will also be at a premium. I know all the coaches and players would like to thank you for that.

On a lighter note, the Academy of Sport offers a variety of educational services, with a recent one on self massage. One of my players, who will remain nameless, was quoted as saying, "Is that were you massage yourself."

13 13 00

(flies you anywhere in Australia)



ANSETT AUSTRALIA

QAS SQUAD NEWS

Welcome to the 1997/98 National Youth League. It promises to be a very exciting season after the drama here on May 25, 1997.

They need to update the Thesaurus, so I could find the adjectives to describe the emotions one experienced throughout, because of the tension it starts with a headache, the rest? My only wish is that some of the QAS athletes playing today experience a similar occasion every player should now want to be a part of the next success. My goal, is to give these athletes some direction. I can help them with some experiences they will go through, the Academy will have enormous resources from Sports Science to Performance Enhancing Centres, Athlete Career Education and elite competition - the rest is up to the individual.

This year's QAS squad will have a lot of new faces as we build around a nucleus of previous scholarship holders, with the likes of Chris Day, Daniel Invincible and Shane Stefanutto leading the way. As mentioned earlier, we may take some time to get organised to my satisfaction, but the enthusiasm and commitment already displayed at training has been commendable and if that attitude remains we will be troublesome to many opposing teams.

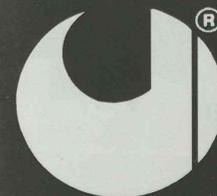
Today's game against UTS Olympic Colts will also display some of the best talent NSW

has to offer. A win is obviously a part of our endeavour, but if each individual plays to the best of their ability it is all we can ask.

I wish the boys the best of luck throughout the 1997/98 season. Make Frank Farina stand up and take notice and I will gladly give you a night off training to go and train with the Strikers.

OUR QAS FRONTLINE

- * Wade Baldwin
- * Craig Barnes
- * Stephen Bland
- * Royce Brownlie
- * Allan Cameron
- * Francis Cosson
- * Andrew Davidson
- * Christopher Day
- * Grant Dickens
- * Duncan Easton
- * Christopher Field
- * Daniel Invincible
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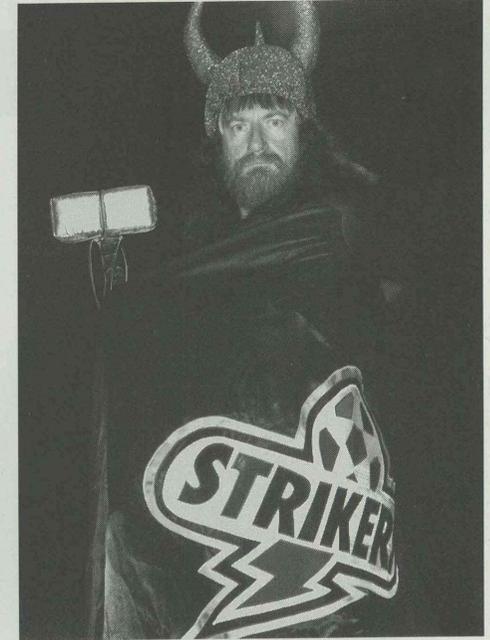
Rivers CafÈ Bar Penalty Strike

Each week, three contestants will have a chance to win prizes in our Rivers CafÈ Bar Penalty Strike.

Just read The Courier Mail and fill out the Strikers coupon appearing each home game, place it in the barrel at each entrance gate and three contestants will be drawn early in the first half to compete.

Contestants, with the aid of Thor (pictured in his new clobber), will kick at a prize board which includes dinner for 2 at Rivers CafÈ Bar, dinner for 6 at Rivers CafÈ Bar, dinner for 2 at Marco's Restaurant and Strikers merchandise.

In addition, each contestant in the half-time competition will receive a Hyundai Strikers Lucky Key with a chance to win a Hyundai Excel Sprint, courtesy of the Hyundai Metro Dealers, at the last home game of the season on 4 April.



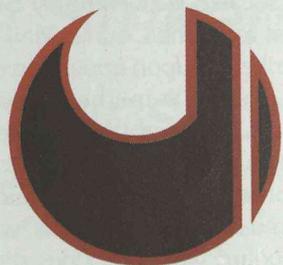
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'STRIKE SQUAD NEWS'

with Thor

Welcome Back

Here we are again starting a new Ericsson Cup season at Suncorp Stadium. Who would have thought that it would be as Australian Champions.

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to tonight's game against the South Melbourne Lakers and hope everyone has lots of energy to support the Strikers to the maximum.

As most of you will have heard or read in the newspapers, Frank Farina has been telling his players that every team in the league will be out to beat the Strikers this year and that it is very important not to lose sight of the fact that we are all starting on equal footing.

This is also true of the support we need for the players to feel that their efforts throughout this year are appreciated.

The hard work really does begin tonight and does not finish until we host another Grand Final at our great stadium.

So, please, let us all really get behind the team and start the season with a win.

I look forward to seeing everyone during the season and having another successful year.

New Threads

It has been a pleasure to have been involved with the greatest team in the country for the last four seasons but the original costume made for me way back then was beginning to show its age (as I am).

So, it was decided that I needed a new look to take us into the 21st Century. I hope all of the people who have been so supportive and kind to me in the past will also see the great improvement in my threads this year.

Quite a few of you had a sneak preview

last Saturday at the quiz night and many commented on the great new costume.

Maybe the fact that I have sparkly new bits will inspire many of you to outdo me with added colour and pizzazz during the coming season. Please try to wear the club colours to every game and really add to the already fantastic atmosphere.

New Signings

With two new signings and one prodigal son returning we need to come up with some new chants and songs to welcome the guys to Brisbane in the best possible way.

I of course am referring to Andrew Harper, Steve Laybutt and our old mate Chris Zoricich.

It really is great to see the players here and I ask everyone to get your thinking caps on and let's make their time here at the Strikers the best period of their careers.

Strike Squad Mark II

Some of the longer serving members of our now famous Strike Squad have moved to a more central position in the grand stand. We feel that this should help to spread the atmosphere out and encourage many of the quieter supporters to join in.

Look and listen for the songs and chants coming from the centre and let's try and coordinate ourselves for the best possible support.



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STRIKERS' SOCIAL CLUB NEWS

If you haven't already done so, you should join the Brisbane Strikers Social Club!

All Social Club members have access to the Centreline Club after the games, with an opportunity to meet players at the after-match function.

Every home game, we'll be giving away a one-month Silver membership to a Healthworks Fitness Centre to a lucky Social Club member.

You also receive complimentary membership to the Perry Park licensed club. It's a great venue for small, large or corporate functions with audiovisual facilities and professional staff on-hand to cater for every function requirement. Social Club members are entitled to 10% discount on all function catering at Perry Park.

When Strikers' away games are telecast on Optus Vision, you will be able to see them LIVE at Perry Park with a big screen, courtesy of our friends at SANYO.

All adult Social Club members also receive a Hyundai Strikers Lucky Key towards the end of the season, with a chance to win a Hyundai Excel Sprint, courtesy of the Hyundai metropolitan dealers.

Other Social Club benefits include...

early offer on tickets for finals and internationals held at Suncorp Stadium for which we are responsible.

☆ free copy of all editions of our new Magazine, Thunderstruck.

☆ 40% discount on any 3 or 6 month normal membership rate at any Healthworks Fitness Centre.

☆ 10% discount at Il Mondo, Kangaroo Point, on accommodation and meals (except for dinner on Friday and Saturday).

☆ 10% discount at Rivers CafÈ Bar, Riverside Centre.

☆ 10% discount at La Dolce Vita, Milton.

☆ 10% discount on any catering by Oyster Blue Catering at Perry Park.

Social Club members also vote in the Social Club's Most Valuable Player Award at the end of the season.

Benefits for interstate members include...

tickets to away matches and a home match; and for members outside southeast Queensland, a ticket to a home match.

Just give us a call in sufficient time so we can make the arrangements.

New members are welcome at any time, for details contact Strikers Marketing on 3236 1888.

.....
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HOW THEY FINISHED LAST YEAR

1996/1997 ERICSSON CUP FINAL TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
SYDNEY UNITED	26	17	5	4	67	33	56
BRISBANE STRIKERS	26	15	2	9	55	40	47
SOUTH MELBOURNE	26	14	4	8	39	25	46
ADELAIDE CITY	26	11	10	5	32	22	43
MARCONI FAIRFIELD	26	12	4	10	41	37	40
MELBOURNE KNIGHTS	26	11	6	9	36	32	39
PERTH GLORY	26	11	5	10	48	41	38
WEST ADELAIDE	26	10	3	13	39	51	33
UTS OLYMPIC	26	8	8	10	41	46	32
WOLLONGONG CITY	26	8	8	10	42	48	32
NEWCASTLE BREAKERS	26	7	9	10	40	46	30
GIPPSLAND FALCONS	26	8	6	12	33	41	30
COLLINGWOOD	26	6	9	11	32	44	27
CANBERRA COSMOS	26	2	5	19	30	69	11

1996/1997 NATIONAL YOUTH LEAGUE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
AUST. INST. SPORT	22	13	6	3	53	23	45
SYDNEY UNITED	22	13	6	3	54	25	45
MARCONI FAIRFIELD	22	13	5	4	40	20	44
NEWCASTLE BREAKERS	22	14	1	7	53	29	43
UTS OLYMPIC	22	12	2	8	56	42	38
WOLLONGONG CITY	22	8	6	8	44	49	30
NSW INST. SPORT	22	9	2	11	29	42	29
QAS	22	6	5	11	43	42	23
SYDNEY UNITED COLTS	22	7	2	13	32	49	23
MARCONI FFIELD COLTS	22	7	2	13	25	46	23
ACT ACAD. SPORT	21	5	3	13	28	50	18
UTS OLYMPIC COLTS	21	3	2	16	22	62	11

THIS WEEKS OTHER ERICSSON CUP MATCHES

FRI 3 OCT	Newcastle V West Adelaide
SAT 4 OCT	Canberra Cosmos V Sydney Utd
SAT 4 OCT	Carlton SC V Perth Glory
SUN 5 OCT	Melb Knights V Gippsland Falcons
SUN 5 OCT	UTS Olympic V Marconi
SUN 5 OCT	Adelaide V Wollongong City

NEXT WEEKS ERICSSON CUP MATCHES

FRI 10 OCT	Sydney United V Carlton
FRI 10 OCT	Wollongong City V STRIKERS
SAT 11 OCT	Marconi V Canberra Cosmos
SUN 12 OCT	Sth Melbourne V Melb Knights
SUN 12 OCT	Perth Glory V Adelaide City
SUN 12 OCT	Gippsland Falcons V Newcastle
SUN 12 OCT	West Adelaide V UTS Olympic

LAST YEARS TOP 3 HOT SHOTS

David Zdrilic	Syd Utd	21
Ante Milicic	Syd Utd	18
Bobby Despotovski	Perth	16
Rod Brown	Strikers	12
Frank Farina	Strikers	12

STRIKERS' WEEKEND AWAY

Join us for the Newcastle V. Strikers match at Topper Stadium, Newcastle, on Friday 28 November and then watch the SOCCEROOS V our Asian opponent on 29 November in Melbourne.

Prices include air fare (Brisbane - Newcastle - Melbourne - Brisbane), accommodation for two nights, ground transfers and entry tickets to both games.

SOCIAL CLUB MEMBERS who book a place also have the chance to watch the Socceroos game with Frank in a corporate box at the MCG!

For further details, contact Strikers Marketing on 3236 1888.

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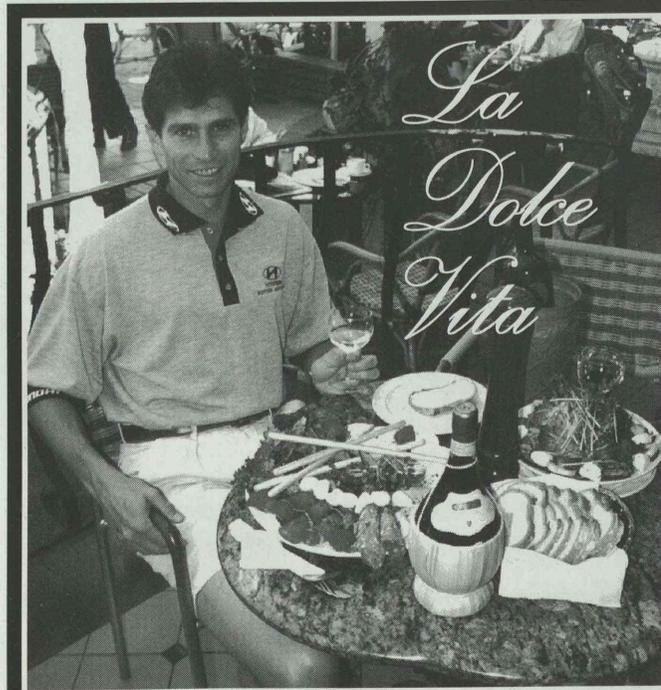
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UP FRONT

with Andy Harper



From the outset let me highlight that this column's title is the brainchild of editor-in-chief Morris McGiffin. Thankfully, this alternative was adopted in favour of the initial label which was to be 'Harping On'. 'Up Front' seems to carry with it far more noble connotations, or at least it is far less derogatory - after all, none of us, even our esteemed polities, like to think that our carefully considered ruminations may seem to others as mere harping on. A change in title will not necessarily alter a message's content, but it can still set a particular tone.

It has been a real pleasure linking up with the Strikers. A long path has been trekked since coach Farina (pictured) first canvassed me about a move north to the National Champions. It is hugely flattering to have a man of Frank's standing, pedigree and experience to be interested in procuring one's services. Whilst circumstances contrived to delay the final arrangements, I feel absolutely positive about my move to Brisbane.

And why not the Brisbane Strikers have shown themselves to be one of the more progressive NSL organisations. They, along with Perth Glory, move on the cutting edge of Australian soccer. Everyone involved in soccer is still aglow with the events of May 25, 1997 and it is certainly hoped that Brisbane in general is as excited. The Grand Final success was the culmination of progress achieved by an organisation blessed with vision, commitment and genuine hope for the good of the game. Casting an eye over the recent history, the club readily reveals these processions.

The move to Suncorp Stadium in various eyes moved Brisbane soccer onto a new level. It was a bold move which brought immediate success. Having such a stadium as this provides



the platform for, what we hope to be, dramatic, mainstream and widespread support. Similarly, the appointment of Frank as coach last year proved to be inspired. Moreover, it is another example of the club's dynamism because by installing Frank, a coaching rookie in every sense, the Strikers shed the frustratingly conservative penchant of NSL clubs in matters such as coaching appointments. We all eagerly wait to see which benchmark the Strikers next set. And while on this, people should realise that they can encourage administrative boldness by enthusiastic and committed support. With such, risks involved with innovations are lessened. After all, if there is something we all want, it is for soccer to be vibrant, prosperous and, as it were, happening. It is difficult to imagine this scenario without further innovation. Simply, we need it, and we are all responsible for this occurring or not!

Welcome to all then, and I think I speak for all Strikers players in proclaiming collective hope that you'll return to our next game (along with more friends!!). Good luck to both teams whose members are probably reading this whilst simultaneously relaxing on the throne. Without wishing any vindictive sentiments, let's hope the Lakers' hopes for tonight's game go down the s-bend along with their pre-match meal.

HYUNDAI BRISBANE STRIKERS 1997/1998 Ericsson Cup Draw

Rnd 1	Sat 04/10/97	Strikers V South Melbourne	SUNCORP STADIUM	7.00pm
Rnd 2	Fri 10/10/97	Wollongong City V Strikers	Brandon Park	7.30pm
Rnd 3	Sat 18/10/97	Strikers V Perth Glory	SUNCORP STADIUM	7.00pm
Rnd 4	Fri 24/10/97	Sydney United V Strikers	Parramatta Stadium	7.30pm
Rnd 5	Sat 01/11/97	Strikers V Carlton	SUNCORP STADIUM	7.00pm
Rnd 6	Sun 09/11/97	Adelaide City V Strikers	Hindmarsh Stadium	7.30pm
Rnd 7	Sat 15/11/97	Canberra Cosmos V Strikers	Seiffert Oval	7.00pm
Rnd 8	Sat 22/11/97	Strikers V Melbourne Knights	SUNCORP STADIUM	7.00pm
Rnd 9	Fri 28/11/97	Newcastle Breakers V Strikers	Topper Stadium	7.30pm
Rnd 10	Sat 06/12/97	Strikers V UTS Olympic	SUNCORP STADIUM	7.00pm
Rnd 11	Sat 13/12/97	Marconi Fairfield V Strikers	Marconi Stadium	7.00pm
Rnd 12	Sat 20/12/97	Strikers V West Adelaide	SUNCORP STADIUM	7.00pm
Rnd 13	Sun 28/12/97	Gippsland Falcons V Strikers	Falcons Park	6.00pm
Rnd 14	Sat 03/01/98	Strikers V Gippsland Falcons	SUNCORP STADIUM	7.00pm
Rnd 15	Sun 11/01/98	South Melbourne V Strikers	Bob Jane Stadium	6.00pm
Rnd 16	Sat 17/01/98	Strikers V Wollongong City	SUNCORP STADIUM	7.00pm
Rnd 17	Sun 25/01/98	Perth Glory V Strikers	Perth Oval	5.00pm
Rnd 18	Sat 31/01/98	Strikers V Sydney United	SUNCORP STADIUM	7.00pm
Rnd 19	Sat 21/02/98	Carlton SC V Strikers	Optus Oval	5.00pm
Rnd 20	Sat 28/02/98	Strikers V Adelaide City	SUNCORP STADIUM	7.00pm
Rnd 21	Sat 07/03/98	Strikers V Newcastle Breakers	SUNCORP STADIUM	7.00pm
Rnd 22	Sun 15/03/98	Melbourne Knights V Strikers	Knights Stadium	6.00pm
Rnd 23	Sat 21/03/98	Strikers V Canberra Cosmos	SUNCORP STADIUM	7.00pm
Rnd 24	Sun 29/03/98	UTS Olympic V Strikers	Belmore Sport Ground	6.30pm
Rnd 25	Sat 04/04/98	Strikers V Marconi Fairfield	SUNCORP STADIUM	7.00pm
Rnd 26	Sun 12/04/97	West Adelaide V Strikers	Hindmarsh Stadium	6.30pm

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ERICSSON CUP

1997 - 1998

BRISBANE STRIKERS	SOUTH MELBOURNE
1 Clint Bolton - FO	1 Michael Petkovic - FYS
2 Glenn Gwynne	2 Steve Iosifidis
3 Matthew Bell	3 Fausto De Amicis - FS
4 Chris Zoricich - OI	4 Nick Orlic
5 Craig Williams	5 Con Blatsis - o
6 Nick Meredith	6 David Clarkson
7 Frank Farina - FS	7 Steve Panopoulos
8 Sean Cranney - FS	8 Vaughan Coveny - OI
9 Rod Brown - FS	9 Paul Trimboli - S (C)
10 Kasey Wehrman - YS	10 Michael Curcija - o
11 Troy Cranney	11 Bill Damianos - o
12 Mark Battistin	12 Con Boutsianis
13 Reece Tollenaere	13 Jason Polak - FS
14 Wayne Knipe	14 (Not Allocated)
15 Andrew Brayshaw	15 Goran Lozanovski - FS
16 Chay Hews	16 Tansell Baser - o
17 Jeromy Harris	17 John Anastasiadis - FYS
18 Stephen Laybutt	18 Robert Liparoti
19 Brad Ditton	19 George Goutzioulis
20 Graham Ross	Coach - Ange Postecoglou
22 Andy Harper	
Coach - Frank Farina	

Legend: S - Socceroo, FS - Former Socceroo, O - Olyroo, FO - Former Olyroo, YS - Young Socceroo, FYS - Former Young Socceroo, OI - Other International



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