

Brisbane's Football Magazine

Extra Time

including

Issue 19 March 2006
\$3.00 (inc GST)

The Full Monty
Monty's odds for the season

Playing their cards wrong
A-League refs up against it from start - Kibbler

Back From the Dead
defying the odds

plus!

Sharks sack Herdle

The Silver Boot



news ♦ articles ♦ features ♦ fixtures ♦ and much more...

Brisbane's Football Magazine
ExtraTime

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Cover Pic: Action from the Silver Boot - Palm Beach v Brisbane City

comment

Rather than the usual rant, this month I have to open with an apology to all our readers.

We failed, or to be more accurate, I failed, to meet our print deadline this month and that is why delivery of ExtraTime has been somewhat tardy this issue.

I have a litany of excuses (I prefer to call them reasons, but being the forebearing individual I am...), but the main one is that I was recently fortunate to accompany the Queensland Roar party to Korea to cover their participation in the four-team Tongyeong Cup... more on that shortly.

The week away was a week lost on the layout of ExtraTime, so for that please accept my humblest, etc. It is the first time in three years that we have missed a deadline so I guess we're not doing too badly. Every effort was made to get us to the printers on time (and at this point I must thank Print Approach for their sterling work and understanding), but jetlag (inevitable), a virus (humanoid) and work commitments (hey, I have to eat!) meant that we just fell a little short of time.

Self admonishment has been rife and there has even been talk of a public flogging, but hopefully this brief and sincere explanation will suffice this time. It's all you're getting anyway!

So to Korea.... What a place it is. Full of kind, honourable people in a country that is bearing the fruits of its own industrial revolution of the last 20-odd years.

Roar's base in the southern city of Tongyeong was also the temporary home to the other three competing teams, Incheon United, DaeGu FC (both Korean K-League sides) and Chinese powerhouse Beijing Hyundai.

The word amongst the organisers prior to the tournament was that Queensland would be the easy beats of the Tongyeong Cup, but how wrong they were. Australian football was deemed to be too weak to make a fist of it against these top sides, but Roar gave a great account of themselves in this esteemed company, winning their first outing and drawing the other two, to remain unbeaten in the competition.

It may sound alien to some that we are looking upwards in standard to the Koreans and the Chinese, but make no mistake about it, these teams can play. Physically strong, technically excellent and tactically astute, not to mention the healthy bank accounts, they have sturdy domestic leagues and will prove to be weighty opposition when it comes to the Asian Champions League.

In Tongyeong the stadium and facilities for the tournament were modest, but I was struck by the professional organisation and outstanding presentation of the games. It was virtually faultless and therein lies the lesson for us here. Whilst our facilities at local level may not have all the trappings of Suncorp Stadium, we can still ensure that game presentation meets the standards of other games around the world. It's cheap but effective and presents a good image for the code.

The Koreans are proud people and they have much to be proud of. Are we not equally as proud of our own local product? ☺

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SHARKS AXE HERDLE ON EVE OF SEASON

Just one week out from their opening fixture of 2006, Palm Beach sensationally sacked their premiership winning Coach Karl Herdle.

Herdle (pictured) was called to a meeting with club President Brett Biddlecombe the day after the Sharks' Silver Boot clash against Brisbane Wolves and given the news that his services were no longer required.

Understandably shattered, Herdle said he was at a loss to understand the decision.

"The President phoned me and asked me to attend a short meeting at the club. We were taking a walk on the field then went to the clubhouse where he told me that there was a petition from the players and some written complaints from club directors. He then went on to say that my contract would have to be terminated."

"I was shocked and I had no idea that the meeting was called for this reason," Herdle said.

"I was never given the chance to present my side (of the story) or give an explanation on anything that might have occurred, and then I was asked if I would resign. I declined (the offer to resign) because from my point of view I never did anything wrong. The only thing I did was win football games," he added.

Club President, Brett Biddlecombe, denied that there had been a player petition, saying: "There has been a lot of innuendo regarding the players causing this, but that is not true, it was purely a board decision."

Biddlecombe, who has been President of the club for four years, said the club would issue an official statement but ExtraTime was not privy to its contents having gone to print prior to its release.

The Sharks' boss went on to say that the decision was

"made in the best interests of the club as a whole" and that "the decision was unanimous", but refused to elaborate further.

Hired to bring success to the Gold Coast club, Herdle introduced a policy of developing young players and it was a policy that bore fruit last season.

"I knew that if we worked patiently with talented youngsters then the policy would work, and it did. Continuity was the key and now this happens. This hammered me, it really did."

"Maybe this was a little bit personal between some of the club's board members and me; it's hard to say. I'm a straight talking guy and if I've got something to say I don't beat around the bush. We had a successful team last year and I think I contributed as much as anyone else to that success, so I can't see a reason to sack me. If I'm hard or harsh with the players then that should be fine because I got results. I wasn't harsh with every player because with some players you can be like that and with some players you can't. I'm extremely disappointed about this."

With Herdle's credentials and pedigree it seems only a matter of time before another coaching offer comes his way, but stung by the timing of his demise at Palm Beach, Herdle says he would hate to see another coach go through what he has just endured without being given a fair crack of the whip.

"At the moment I will sit back and wait for an offer to



come in. I think it would be wrong for a club to approach another coach 5 or 6 weeks into the season so I don't want to buy into that because every coach deserves a decent go at it. There are some very good coaches in this league and some of the football is brilliant. I'm sure sooner or later someone will want a hand and then I will sit down with them and have a chat. However, you can't sack a coach to bring another one in before the season has got going," he said.

Club Captain Adam Evans, 27, who has been at the club for 22 years said he was equally disappointed with the news of Herdle's departure from the Sharks.

"I've got all the respect in the world for Karl as a coach. He's probably one of the best coaches I've ever played under and what he did last year with the team was fantastic. He'll definitely be missed. I've been at the club for 22 years and I was close to walking away, but after having a good think about it I wanted to stay to try and keep the team together and move forward. There is still some disappointment and a certain amount of disgust from my end though. If the club was going to do this with Karl then it should have been done in the off-season, not a week away from the start of a new season," said Evans.

He added: "We have to concentrate on regrouping and getting back together because we still want to have a successful year. A few of us are upset with what happened with the coaching staff, but we have to work together and make the best of the season."

BINNEY DENIES EASY-BEATS TAG FOR TIGERS

Eastern Suburbs Coach, Graeme Binney, has hit back at claims that his Heath Park side are certainties for the drop this season.

"I'm not surprised that people are saying that we are likely candidates for relegation because we were in that situation last season. In some of our pre-season games so far this year we've been hammered because I've basically had to field an under 17 team. The senior players we've signed have only arrived recently and I'm sure they will help us," Binney said.

The Tigers have recruited former captain Richard Nicol and Kiwi 'keeper Robbie Barraclough to their ranks, along with veteran Damian Harris, who will add steel to the side.

One of Easts' top performers in recent seasons, Joachim Klein, is another who arrived late in pre-season and when recovered from injury can expect to play another important role in the relegation fight.

"With the late arrivals we could probably do with another month of pre-season to be honest. It's been very frustrating so far because certain players have said they will come to the club and then they don't bother to turn up, or get offered another few dollars somewhere else. It's fair to say that we are a bit light

up front and could do with a centre-forward, but we're no different to most teams on that score."

Despite the predictions of doom from local pundits, the ever colourful Binney remains confident that his troops can rally for the cause.

"I think we'll be alright. If we can bring in a couple more players along the way we'll do ok. We've got some good spirit down here and that counts for a lot. We know that we have a tough season ahead of us but the boys are up for it. Keeping a strong defence is vital to us and once we have our full compliment of players I'm sure we can hold our own," said Binney.

KNIGHTS LOOK FOR BIG START

New Ipswich Knights Coach, Joe Fenech, insists his side must hit the ground running if they are to challenge for automatic promotion to the Premier League.

Based in a traditionally strong football region, the Knights fell from the top tier of the local scene but Fenech feels he has the cattle this season to get the Knights back where many feel they belong.

"A strong start is very important because you don't want to get into a position where three or four games into the season you are already chasing teams above you. That would make it very difficult," said Fenech.

The Knights boss is happy with his squad so far and knows that having enough numbers to cover for injuries and suspensions could prove the difference come the business end of the season.

"We've got a bit of depth this year and we've brought in a couple of players that I think will further enhance what was left over from last season. Ian Keen, a quick striker who has already found the net several times and Stuart Drinkeld, who will give us direction in midfield, are both set to be great acquisitions. I also believe we have a midfield of Premier League standard that is full of experienced players who are complimented by some very talented youngsters," he explained.

"All in all I'm very pleased with the squad we have and the work ethic of the players. I'm quietly confident that we can give it a good shake," he added.

Division One has been tight in recent years with several sides challenging for promotion honours. Fenech doesn't expect this year to be any different.

"It's always hard to make a judgement on pre-season games as I tend to think that pre-season is more for coaches," he joked.

"Beenleigh are always tough. Brisbane Olympic, with Juan Cutillas at the helm will be a tough proposition as well. Brisbane Force and Uni of Qld are expected to be up there too, so really there could be 6 or 7 sides who end up battling it out for top spot." ❖

www.brisbanemensfootball.com.au

PANTHERS ON THE PROWL FOR SWIFT METRO 1 RETURN

PARK RIDGE President, Mick Griffin, says his club is looking to make last year's relegation from Metro 1 a distant memory by bouncing straight back this season.

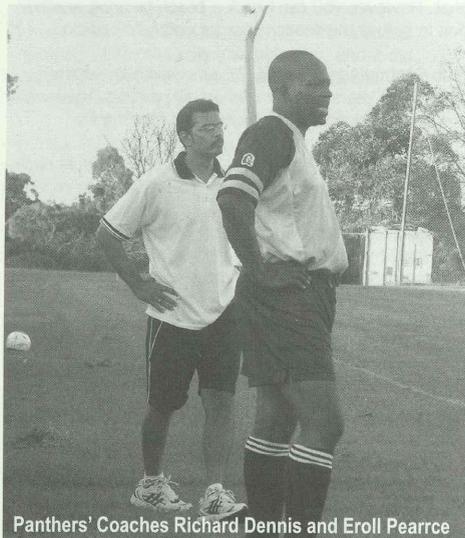
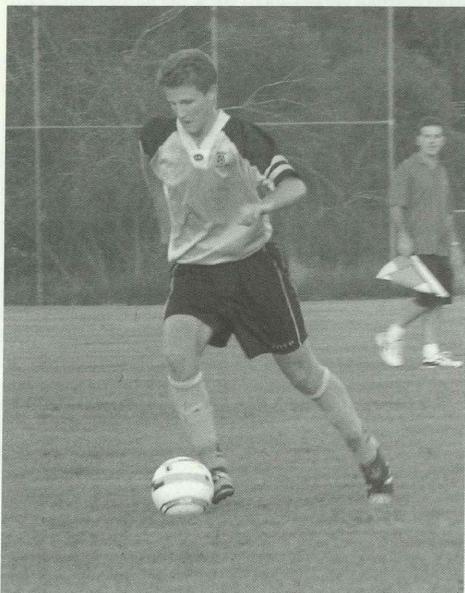
Under the guidance of new coaches Richard Dennis and Eroll Pearce, they have shown early season promise with some positive pre-season results, among them wins over much more fancied opposition.

If the Panthers are to challenge for promotion much of the responsibility will fall on the shoulders of 21-year-old Craig Kennedy (pictured below), who has been at the club since starting with the Under 7's. Kennedy, a strong defensive player, came through the junior ranks at the club and has been voted Player of the Year for the last two seasons.

"He puts in every year and has been very loyal to the club," said Griffin.

"He is still a young player who will be within a group of other young players this season and we are expecting big things from him again. He will be able to help the other youngsters who will be playing their first year of senior football," he added.

As all coaches will tell you, youth needs a sprinkling of experience in order for it to blossom, and for Park Ridge that experience comes in the shape of former National League player Roddy Vasquez.



Panthers' Coaches Richard Dennis and Eroll Pearce

Rejuvenated Vasquez hopes to inject an element of class into the Panthers' side and likes what he has seen so far.

"The balance in the squad between youth and experience is very impressive, and we are all looking forward to what will hopefully be a very successful season for us," he said.

Ridge are a small club driven almost solely by memberships and subscriptions. From its humble beginnings in 1976 they started with one team playing on the oval at the local primary school. Over the years the club has gradually expanded to the point where, in their 30th year, they have developed into a thriving football club boasting 5 full sized fields with an additional 3 rooball fields, along with senior and junior clubhouses.

Times are tough for most clubs these days, and Griffin admits that income from a new sponsor for the club would be like manna from heaven for the Panthers.

"We are moving along ok but because we came from a Church League club we will probably never have a licensed bar and we don't run raffles as such. Sponsorship is hard to find and we survive the best we can. We'd love a sponsor to come on board and help us out as we are a genuine member-based, grass-roots club," he said. ☘

NEW LOGO AND NEW ERA FOR LOCAL FOOTBALL

Brisbane Mens Football launched the new 2006 season with a new name and a new logo at the Premier League season launch held last month.

Michael Bailey, President of Brisbane Mens Football, commented on the changes that faced the game this season during his address to the gathered sponsors, club officials and players at Royal on the Park. These included building on the numerous positives from 2005 and taking the game in Brisbane to a wider audience. He then outlined the rationale behind the new image.

"These changes are a reflection of where we are going, a new era in football. Our direction is to be on the move and go forward, hence the move to a modern name and logo. The new logo is that....modern and directional. The name Brisbane is going forward through the goals, a symbol synonymous with our game."

The evening also saw the teams in both the Premier League and Division 1 showcase their playing strips for the season. Bruce Dinsdale, General Manager of Brisbane Mens Football, highlighted the extent of the competition when he summarised the number involved in the senior mens competition in Brisbane.



"The 2006 season kicks off this weekend for all our divisions. This season promises to be another eventful and exciting year for the 54 clubs, 192 teams (up 8 from last season which was up by 10 over the previous year), over 3100 registered players and the countless club officials, referees and volunteers.

"The combined efforts of all this means that BMF can bring 96 games of football in 16 divisions every weekend to the local area." ☘



made in

Queensland Roar may have returned from South Korea without the Tongyeong Cup, but they blazed a trail for Australian football with their first appearance at an international tournament

A 1-0 opening round win against the highly fancied K-League outfit, Incheon United, followed by 0-0 draws against Chinese side Beijing Hyundai and eventual winners DaeGu FC (Korea), made it a highly successful trip to Asia for Queensland Roar.

Although reduced to nine men in their final game against DaeGu FC, Roar almost pinched it in the closing moments when local hero Hyuk-Su Seo blasted a free-kick towards the top corner of the goal, only to see his blistering drive tipped over by the DaeGu 'keeper Baek.



Hyuk-Su Seo's free kick almost won it for Roar

Despite having to leave the trophy in Korea, Roar Coach Miron Bleiberg said he was proud of his team's efforts.

"We finished with one win and two draws which is a bit disappointing because we felt after the first game that we could win this cup. However, we finished second and we should be proud that we went to Asia, played three top teams and have not lost a match. That in itself is an achievement. I think we have represented Australian football with honour and given a good account of ourselves, which was very important to us."

"We were competitive, have made a lot of new friends and there is no doubt in my mind that we will be invited there again," he said.

"The boys have to take a lot of credit for what we did there. It was an unusual environment and we played against teams that were unknown to us. We were a little shell-shocked by the referees decisions, but if we are to go to these places and play then we have to learn to adjust. To perform the way they did after such a difficult journey is a testimony to the commitment of the players to the club and shows how much they want to win," Bleiberg added.

Many local critics were sceptical on Roar's ability to compete with some of the top Asian sides, Bleiberg believes it has been a good introduction to the standard of the Hyundai A-League for Korean media and supporters alike.

"According to the agents and local people who were

looking after our affairs there we have had a lot of phone calls from media and other prominent people saying how impressed they were with us. The games were televised so everyone was able to see how we play. I'm sure we have done much to open the doors for other Australian teams to go there and do well."

With a plethora of talent on display, Bleiberg admitted that several players caught his eye but says the club is somewhat hamstrung when it comes to signing top Asian talent.

"I saw quite a few players I like, but unfortunately we are restricted by the salary cap. I think we have proved that the standard of football in the K-League or the Chinese league is not that much higher than ours, but because of the kind of financial backing they enjoy it would be almost impossible for us to compete with the wages on offer there. These sides have been established for a while, as has the league itself, so we just have to be patient and let our league grow to that level."

"Perhaps there will be an opportunity to being players in on loan during the overlap of the Asian and Australian seasons, but time will tell as to whether that is viable or not."

Given that many K-League sides are unknown quantities to Australian fans, what did the Roar boss learn about them on this trip?

"They are a lot tougher than people think. We think there are some tough sides in the A-League but these teams can mix it with the best of them. They can kick you hard and don't back out of any tackles so it won't be easy for any future Australian teams to go there, especially if they think they can intimidate the opposition because they can certainly take it and dish it out. You will only beat them by playing with more quality." ☺



BLEIBERG: PROFESSIONALISM IS THE KEY

Roar Coach warns clubs over big money promises

INSPIRED by Kieran Cooper's 'Opinion' piece in last month's ExtraTime, Roar coach Miron Bleiberg has responded to the oft-used allegations that Queensland Lions 'bought the league' during their dominant period on the local scene.

Virtually unbeatable in a trophy-laden 3-year spell, Lions suffered the wrath of local pundits coupled with the inevitable tall poppy syndrome. Now removed from the Brisbane Premier League, Bleiberg took the opportunity to set the record straight and offered a few tips to boot.

"First of all I would like to thank Coops for his supportive article. At the time when he wrote it I was in need of all the support I could get," he joked.

"I don't think that the old Queensland Lions need to apologise for anything they achieved in the local competition. I think we have a right to be very proud of what we accomplished; however there are a few things that I would like to clear up and hopefully some coaches or administrators might find this useful information. That is the main purpose for saying this and I hope it is taken in the right way.

"You don't always win trophies even when you have the best players in the world - look at Real Madrid for example. In three seasons I think we only lost one game and drew a couple so that in itself is an achievement. Some people say that we bought the league and although time has taken its toll and some things are a little vague, I can safely say that this was not the case.

"The bulk of the squad I inherited were from the John Ogden days. I brought a few in from other clubs, some of whom were not playing first team football. Of course we did bring in a few 'names' in order to steady the ship, but most of those didn't stay for more than one season. I guess the moral of the story is that you should not be afraid to bring in young players and give them a go. It also doesn't matter where you get them from; good players can be found in the most unlikely places.

"One of the most important things we did at Lions was to give the players a good sense of professionalism. Perhaps it is better to have one or two fewer 'superstars' and put money or resources into making the players feel like they are being treated like professional footballers. If the training equipment is



Bleiberg turns up the heat in the dressing room - good job there's a fan handy

good and the players have training shirts instead of turning up in Liverpool, Man Utd or AC Milan strips, then that all adds to the sense and feeling of professionalism. It looks and feels so much better if everyone has club training shirts on and it doesn't cost big money.

"The best 'advice' I could give coaches in the Brisbane semi-pro leagues is this. Everyone likes to play, but not everyone likes to train. The difference between a good team and a bad team can often be measured by the amount of players who turn up for training on a Tuesday night. At some clubs it's five and at others it's twenty-five. Smart clubs should pay the bulk of their player wages for training and not for games. That's what we did at Lions and because we always had a good turn-out for training we managed to get more time to work with the players.

"You won't find many players who will train all week and then not turn up for the game! However, it happens quite often the other way around.

"Lots of people say that we 'bought the league'. I can tell you that when I was the coach of the club the average wage for games was about \$100 a week with a \$50 win bonus. I am a little vague on it now to be honest, but I cannot recall a player who earned more than \$200 a week from us. Of course I'm not denying that we had the advantage of selling the dream that we would one day play in a national competition and everyone wants to play for a big club. We sold the professionalism and the dream and I don't think we

Don't promise big money and drive your club into a financial hole

have to apologise for that, but as for big money, certainly not."

The Roar coach was assertive with his final point, urging clubs not to be held to ransom by dollar-chasing players that could point the club's finances south.

"Don't promise big money and drive your club into a financial hole because you don't need to do that. Make sure that the club is well organised and has good equipment and good coaches for training, etc. If you can make the players feel like footballers you can attract some good ones to your club. Most importantly, change the structure of your player payments and have the emphasis put on a training fee rather than a match fee."

"Another important consideration is the quality of the team physios and fitness staff. I think that this is as important as the quality of the coaches. You need to look after your players and this is something that they will be very appreciative of." ☺

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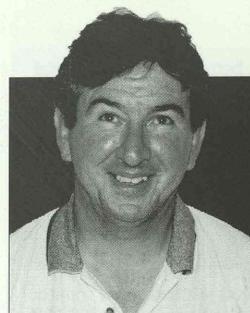


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Opinion

with kieran cooper

At this time of year, it always interests me when parents question the sign on fees at their local club. I heard the other day that we had some discussion about it on some radio show.

From what I believe, some parents were ringing in and complaining about the escalating fees they had to dig deep for year in, year out.

Let's have a look this time at some of the fees involved. First of all we should probably set the record straight with the governing bodies. All of the Junior (and senior) governing bodies issue the same fees to all clubs and this usually covers all the relevant costs. It is then up to each club to decide what their club's fees will be. They do this by working out the expenses for the season.

Without using exact figures, let me use the following example to try and break it down a little.

Let's say for arguments sake it costs a club \$60.00 to register a player with the association. Say this same club decides to charge \$200.00 in registration fees to the player. This looks like it is a profit of \$140.00 per child to the club. So where does the \$140.00 go? Well in most clubs cases, you have playing strips to buy, soccer balls, cones, maybe bibs, training equipment, nets and line-marking paint.

Some clubs may have a full or part time groundsman and administrator. Ground maintenance costs a fair bit these days and nothing gets any cheaper. Water rates, lighting, portable goals, nets etc, etc. The list is really endless.

Suddenly that \$140.00 doesn't seem to go very far. I understand the parents and I wish we could make

Ground maintenance costs a fair bit these days and nothing gets any cheaper. Water rates, lighting, portable goals, nets etc, etc. The list is really endless



Abramovic: Not likely to pump money into Brisbane clubs just yet!

playing football as cheap as we could, but until somebody in an ivory tower decides to dig deep into their pockets and subsidise this great sport then we are always going to have this same situation.

Now the argument about different fees at different clubs is another matter. Like I said, each club sets their own fees. It is simply a case of maths and basic economics. The club charge what the club believes is a fair price for them. They may not be in the same position as some of their competitors who may have sponsors or a sugar-daddy.

At the end of the day all clubs do the best they can to make playing football as enjoyable for the kids as possible. What price do you really put on having your child participate in a team sport whilst staying out of trouble?

Moving on to the seniors...

What is it with clubs these days? Do they really want to see the game progress or are they willing to try and win at all costs. Now before you all take my head off and say, "He has written this before," or, "He wasn't saying this when he played," think again.

I have been an administrator long enough now to understand what goes on. I hear the same things every year. Do you know how many people I talk to that tell me, "Hey, I can't understand how such and such pay such high wages," or, "Oh my club has its own salary cap and we won't budge for anybody." Well these same people who look me in the eye and tell me this, are the very people who do it. I have said it before, and I'm sorry but I will continue to say it until people take note.

If we are ever going to see this game improve, then we all need to take a long hard look at how we are doing things, and in particular, how we are spending our money. It may only take a few years of stepping backwards in order to prosper in the long run.

I was speaking to a guy last week about this subject. His argument to me was that "If you can afford it then pay it".

This is a fair comment, but if you dig deep at the clubs who may feel they can afford it and look around at the facilities they have it makes you wonder if they really

can afford it. Would they be better off improving what they have? The same man also stressed that in Europe the big clubs with money do the same thing.

They buy all the best players to win. Chelsea, Man Utd, Real Madrid etc, etc. This of course is also correct. But the difference is that they are gambling big to win big. They spend millions on players to win leagues, cups and most importantly, make the Champions League.

If BMS said tomorrow they had just secured a sponsor and the winner of the league was to receive \$100,000 then you may be inclined to spend big to have a go. Unfortunately we are not at this stage yet. Do the maths. A club must budget to win all 22 games.

Let's be very, very conservative here. Say you paid all your players \$150.00 a win. That's 14 players per week @ \$2,100.00. Multiply this by 22 wins. That's \$46,200.

Now ask yourself, "How much can I win?" I won't even tell you. Phone BMS and ask. I know most of you might think you won't win all 22 games. But can you be sure? Can you honestly sit back and justify this amount. If you can then good luck to you.

Having written on these two topics, I wonder how many clubs rely on one to pay the other. Is this right? Is this the way to go? Do we have our priorities wrong?

As always, I will leave all this for you to decide. ☺



Why should we listen to Aime Jacquet? Er, because he's won a World Cup; that's why

mikebailey

I have often heard the term 'Football Community' used in a variety of contexts throughout our game. Yet I often wonder is there really a true sense of community which guides and informs our planning and which underpins the relationships between the many sides of soccer.

Or do we merely pay lip service to the notion of community and is it, in the words of well-known football commentator, Bill Shakespeare, a custom more honoured in the breach than the observance.

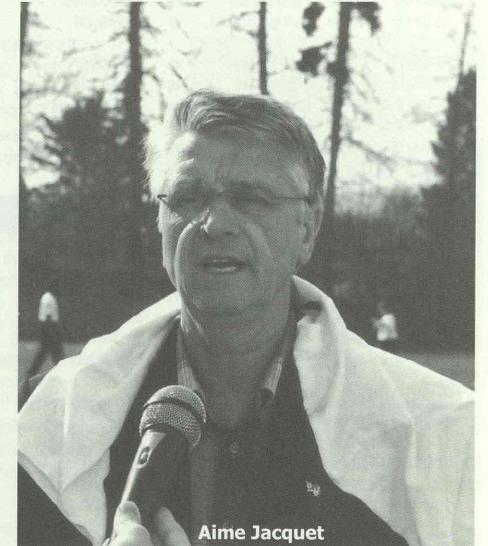
My thoughts were turned to thinking about community during my attendance at a recent 3 day conference on youth development. It was run by Aime Jacquet, the World Cup winning coach and current technical director of French Football. It was a truly remarkable experience.

Some 170 delegates, coaches, players, administrators, media representatives and friends of football gathered together at the University of Sydney to learn from a master and to share football fellowship. It was a vibrant reminder of the power of football to do great good when we can overcome the petty politics and silly squabbles that at times beset us. It was also a demonstration of the many faces of football. A snapshot of the football family gathered together to share ideas that will advance football in all its forms.

At heart of course, we all know that we depend on each other. We understand deep down that each part of the game needs the other. If the A-League is successful then we will all benefit from a flow down effect. The A-League needs the rooballers of 2006 for its players of the future and as we abuse young referees do we contemplate where the referees of the future will come from? I could go on to quote many more examples.

Each of us has a part to play and all our roles are equally important. We must never let ego and petty jealousies

It is the first small step to us seeing ourselves as football players not senior men, senior women or juniors



Aime Jacquet

blind us to our mutual interdependence. This is not to say that debate about directions should not be allowed. Of course it should. For out of these discussions will come new understandings and solutions to problems.

The recent restructuring of Football in Australia by the FFA is on balance a positive step and we can iron out those issues that still need to be resolved. It is the first small step to us seeing ourselves as football players not senior men, senior women, juniors, not BSD, BMF, BWS, BND, but simply Football Brisbane. All of us are part of the one structure. As an administrator I took some ideas from Jacquet about structure to heart. I believe that by translating these ideas into a Brisbane context that our own organisation, the BMF can benefit. In particular the separation of the amateur from the professional, whilst remaining one organization has I believe important lessons for us in Brisbane.

Anyway, enough of my philosophizing, its almost time for the real reason we're here, its time for the game to begin. Season 2006 is upon us and from what I've seen in the pre-season games this years competition is going to be keenly and closely fought out at both ends of the table. So good luck to you all. Enjoy it. ☺



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FIXTURES

Premier League

1 04-03-06 7:00pm Pine Rivers vs Mitchelton	4 25-03-06 7:00pm Rochedale vs Pine Rivers
1 04-03-06 7:00pm Souths Utd vs Easts	4 25-03-06 6:00pm Easts vs Mitchelton
1 04-03-06 4:00pm Brisbane Wolves vs North Star	4 25-03-06 7:00pm Mt Gravatt vs Palm Beach
1 04-03-06 7:00pm Mt Gravatt vs Rochedale	4 25-03-06 6:00pm Toowoomba vs Brisbane Wolves
1 04-03-06 6:00pm Toowoomba vs Taringa Rovers	4 25-03-06 8:00pm Taringa Rovers vs Souths Utd
1 05-03-06 3:00pm Brisbane City vs Palm Beach	4 26-03-06 4:00pm North Star vs Brisbane City
2 11-03-06 7:00pm Rochedale vs Brisbane Wolves	5 01-04-06 7:00pm Pine Rivers vs Taringa Rovers
2 11-03-06 7:00pm North Star vs Souths Utd	5 01-04-06 7:00pm Souths Utd vs Toowoomba
2 11-03-06 6:00pm Easts vs Pine Rivers	5 01-04-06 4:00pm Brisbane Wolves vs Mt Gravatt
2 11-03-06 6:30pm Mitchelton vs Brisbane City	5 01-04-06 6:30pm Mitchelton vs North Star
2 11-03-06 5:00pm Palm Beach vs Toowoomba	5 01-04-06 5:00pm Palm Beach vs Easts
2 12-03-06 4:00pm Taringa Rovers vs Mt Gravatt	5 02-04-06 3:00pm Brisbane City vs Rochedale
3 18-03-06 7:00pm Pine Rivers vs North Star	6 08-04-06 7:00pm Rochedale vs Mitchelton
3 18-03-06 7:00pm Souths Utd vs Rochedale	6 08-04-06 7:00pm North Star vs Easts
3 18-03-06 4:00pm Brisbane Wolves vs Taringa Rovers	6 08-04-06 4:00pm Brisbane Wolves vs Palm Beach
3 18-03-06 7:00pm Mt Gravatt vs Toowoomba	6 08-04-06 6:00pm Toowoomba vs Pine Rivers
3 18-03-06 5:00pm Palm Beach vs Mitchelton	6 08-04-06 8:00pm Taringa Rovers vs Brisbane City
3 19-03-06 3:00pm Brisbane City vs Easts	6 09-04-06 6:00pm Mt Gravatt vs Souths Utd

Premier Division 1

1 04-03-06 7:00pm Ipswich Knights vs Uni of Qld	4 25-03-06 7:00pm Bethania Rams vs Beenleigh
1 05-03-06 5:00pm Beenleigh vs Rocklea	4 25-03-06 7:00pm Capalaba vs Rocklea
1 04-03-06 5:00pm Peninsula vs Brisbane Olympic	4 25-03-06 6:00pm Albany Creek vs Western Spirit
1 04-03-06 6:00pm Albany Creek vs Bethania Rams	4 25-03-06 7:00pm Ipswich Knights vs Peninsula Power
1 04-03-05 7:00pm Redlands Utd vs Western Spirit	4 26-03-06 5:00pm Brisbane Olympic vs Redlands Utd
1 05-03-06 3:00pm Brisbane Force vs Capalaba	4 26-03-06 3:00pm Uni of Qld vs Brisbane Force
2 11-03-06 7:00pm Bethania Rams vs Peninsula Power	5 31-03-06 8:30pm Western Spirit vs Capalaba
2 11-03-06 7:00pm Capalaba vs Beenleigh	5 01-04-06 7:00pm Beenleigh vs Uni of Qld
2 11-03-06 7:00pm Rocklea Utd vs Redlands Utd	5 01-04-06 5:00pm Peninsula vs Albany Creek
2 11-03-06 7:00pm Western Spirit vs Ipswich Knights	5 01-04-06 7:00pm Rocklea Utd vs Brisbane Olympic
2 12-03-06 5:00pm Brisbane Olympic vs Brisbane Force	5 01-04-06 7:00pm Redlands Utd vs Bethania Rams
2 12-03-06 3:00pm Uni of Qld vs Albany Creek	5 02-04-06 3:00pm Brisbane Force vs Ipswich Knights
3 17-03-06 8:30pm Western Spirit vs Rocklea	6 08-04-06 7:00pm Ipswich Knights vs Beenleigh
3 18-03-06 7:00pm Beenleigh vs Brisbane Olympic	6 08-04-06 7:00pm Bethania Rams vs Rocklea
3 18-03-06 5:00pm Peninsula vs Uni of Qld	6 08-04-06 5:00pm Peninsula vs Western Spirit
3 19-03-06 4:00pm Albany Creek vs Ipswich Knights	6 08-04-06 6:00pm Albany Creek vs Brisbane Force
3 19-03-06 5:00pm Redlands Utd vs Capalaba	6 09-04-06 5:00pm Brisbane Olympic vs Capalaba
3 19-03-06 3:00pm Brisbane Force vs Bethania Rams	6 09-04-06 3:00pm Uni of Qld vs Redlands Utd

Premier Division 2

1 03-03-06 8:30pm Newmarket vs Pine Hills	4 24-03-05 8:30pm Pine Hills vs Annerley
1 03-03-06 8:30pm The Gap vs North Pine	4 25-03-06 7:00pm North Pine vs Acacia Ridge
1 04-03-06 6:00pm Ipswich City vs Slacks Creek	4 25-03-06 7:00pm The Gap vs Moggill Utd
1 04-03-06 6:00pm Acacia Ridge vs Samford	4 25-03-06 6:00pm Ipswich City vs Newmarket
1 04-03-05 5:30pm Annerley vs Moggill Utd	4 25-03-06 7:00pm Slacks Creek vs Grange Thistle
1 04-03-05 6:00pm Grange Thistle vs Southside Eagles	4 26-03-06 4:00pm Southside Eagles vs Samford
2 11-03-06 8:30pm Pine Hills vs Grange Thistle	5 31-03-06 8:30pm Acacia Ridge vs Slacks Creek
2 11-03-06 7:00pm North Pine vs Newmarket	5 31-03-06 8:30pm Newmarket vs The Gap
2 11-03-06 7:00pm Southside Eagles vs Acacia Ridge	5 31-03-06 8:30pm Samford vs Pine Hills
2 11-03-06 6:00pm Samford vs Annerley	5 01-04-06 5:30pm Annerley vs North Pine
2 11-03-06 7:00pm Slacks Creek vs The Gap	5 01-04-06 6:00pm Grange Thistle vs Ipswich City
2 12-03-06 4:00pm Moggill Utd vs Ipswich City	5 01-04-06 6:00pm Moggill Utd vs Southside Eagles
3 17-03-06 8:30pm Newmarket vs Slacks Creek	6 07-04-06 8:30pm Pine Hills vs Southside Eagles
3 18-03-06 6:00pm Moggill Utd vs Samford	6 07-04-06 8:30pm Slacks Creek vs Annerley
3 18-03-06 6:00pm Acacia Ridge vs Pine Hills	6 08-04-06 6:00pm Ipswich City vs Acacia Ridge
3 18-03-06 7:00pm The Gap vs Ipswich City	6 08-04-06 7:00pm North Pine vs Samford
3 18-03-06 5:30pm Annerley vs Southside Eagles	6 08-04-06 6:00pm Newmarket vs Moggill Utd
3 18-03-06 6:00pm Grange Thistle vs North Pine	6 08-04-06 7:00pm The Gap vs Grange Thistle

BACK FROM THE DEAD

Victory is sweet at the best of times, but when you beat the odds and come back from a seemingly hopeless and desperate deficit, it tastes all the more sugary. **Chris Paine** explains

At 1-0 ahead in the 90th minute of the Champions League Final, you'd be forgiven for heralding Bayern Munich as the European Club Champions for 1999. But, as the saying goes, you should never write off a champion, and in English Premier League stalwarts Manchester United, you find nothing but a champion team.

UEFA President Lennart Johansson had made his way into the elevator to arrive at ground level in time for the final whistle to present the winners' trophy to Bayern Munich. In fact he'd already disposed of the Manchester United coloured ribbons, thinking he would be decorating the trophy in Bayern's bunting.

By the time he opened the doors, Johansson would have been shocked to discover a 1-all score line; Manchester United had done the unthinkable, and equalised. A corner won in the 90th minute saw a beautifully crafted David Beckham special find Teddy Sheringham in the middle who made light work of the cross and put his side on level terms for the first time since the 5th minute of the match.

Needing the exercise anyway, Johansson trudged back upstairs to watch the commencement of extra-time. Barely before their fans had

time to stop celebrating the equaliser, United won another corner. Amazingly they capitalised through Ole Gunnar Solskjaer and pulled off an dramatic 2-1 victory against all the odds in stoppage time.

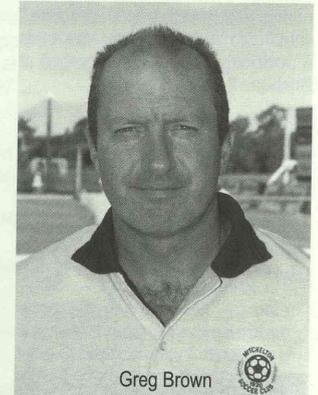
Whenever the word 'comeback' is mentioned in the context of football, people immediately think of the European Champions League or FA Cup.

In 1999, one of sport's greatest every comebacks was accomplished by Manchester United, then in 2005 it was almost upstaged by Liverpool's incredible comeback to win on penalties after trailing 3-0 at the break to a much-favoured AC Milan.

And really, is there any greater feeling for a player, coach, or a fan than scoring, or witnessing that last-minute equaliser or winner to steal victory, or engage extra time?

These moments are the perfect advertisement for the beautiful game, the type of moment where you say, "See! THAT, is why I love football!"

It can also be the type of moment any player, coach, or fan dreads, and is a living hell to experience. But a win, causes players to unleash raw emotion and spirit, exhilarates managers with relief and delight,



Greg Brown

and sees fans erupt into raptures of hysteria, passion and pandemonium.

But it's not just the bright lights of European Football that falls on comeback stories. Sure Man Utd and Liverpool will be remembered as pulling off possibly the most famous and dramatic comebacks in the game's recent history, but locals in competitions all around Australia could tell you similar stories of triumph and defeat, no doubt spinning the yarn and celebrating or commiserating all over again over a few quiet beers.

For Mitchelton coach, and former Paramatta striker Greg Brown, it's his tales of both glory and heartbreak in the very same season that highlights the breathtaking highs and agonising lows of comeback football.

For one team, it's a fairytale, but for the other it's a gut-wrenching nightmare. At one end of the pitch, there are scenes of bear-hug celebrations amongst players, spirited cries in jubilation from

Is there any greater feeling for a player, coach, or a fan than scoring, or witnessing that last-minute equaliser or winner to steal victory?

elated fans, and tears of joy all round. Pan to the other end however, and you will see tears of a different kind. Lost and forlorn faces consume players who sit and lie on the ground casting an empty gaze over what-might-have-been, or pondering the never-answered question, what-the-hell-just-happened? At the end of the day, for whatever reason, the beautiful game invariably reduces even the toughest grown men to tears.

"Seeing men, all over the field crying, it's just hard to describe," said Brown, who currently also holds a position as Director of Football at Brisbane Boys College.

However it's not Brown's last-minute winner against Preston in the League Cup final for Parramatta that he remembers as the standout moment of his career, but rather his side's first round playoff against a much favoured Marconi-side a week later.

"Being the new boys in the comp [Parramatta], we weren't favoured to do much but we managed to get a good side together and make the top six playoffs, for the first ever time."

And just 30 minutes into the match at Parramatta Stadium, Brown slotted one past the Marconi keeper to put his fledgling side in front and set them on the path to prove to everyone what they were about. By half time, still with a 1-nil advantage and Parramatta continue to dominate, until Marconi equalise. Parramatta weren't too set on forgoing its lead and before too long delivered a 2-1 score-line with time running out on the clock.

However a frantic final six minutes of play saw Marconi snatch another and equalise. Somehow they had done the unimaginable and forced the game into extra time.

Early in the extra time period, the game looked all but won when Parramatta yet again took the lead 3-2. Brown remembers the players

feeling that this was it, they had won it. How wrong they were.

"We had a minute to go in extra-time, the game was ours and Marconi has equalised - absolutely unbelievable that they just kept coming back and snatched a goal right at the death and we went into penalties."

With both teams scoring three times from the first five attempts, the shoot-out was at sudden death, until the 7th shot from Parramatta was saved by Marconi.

"Our guy has his shot saved, and when they stood up and took it we knew it was over and sure enough they scored. After all that and seven penalties, they took it from us."

"But the most exhilarating part of playing the game is heading into a match and feeling confident, knowing you have the ability to play well and produce a result that's why you play the game."

So why does he rank this memory as his best?

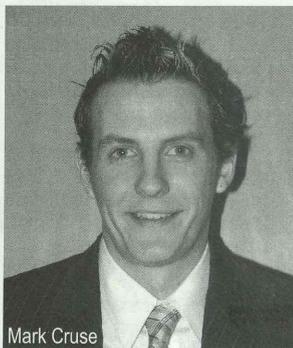
"It was just an unbelievable game of football, the best I have ever played in. It had everything and was such a high quality and high intensity match that I feel privileged to have taken part. Back then John Kosmina was commentating the game and described it as the best he'd seen. Scoring the League Cup winner was pretty special when I was mobbed by the fans, but as a game and an experience, and a great comeback, that loss to Marconi was unforgettable."

Brown's career took him far and wide to many clubs and competitions, and he recalls a story from when he played in the Adelaide derby, to describe just how much a special moment like a great comeback can mean to the fans.

"I'd just won the derby between Adelaide City and West Adelaide and I got into a taxi, and this guy thanked me from the bottom of his

heart for winning such an important match and restoring pride to his side of town. It was incredible to see yourself, your team, and the game having such an effect on people who obviously follow it with such passion."

21-year-old Beenleigh striker Mark Cruse describes scoring goals in crucial moments as pure ecstasy, a feeling in football comparable to none.



Mark Cruse

"Comebacks are one of the greatest things to happen in football, especially for the fans. To see a team that you support come back in an amazing way like Liverpool did last year in the Champions League and show a bit of heart, is just brilliant. Particularly in this country where the sport is growing, games like that really sell the sport for what it is for prospective fans and hopefully will generate more interest in the game."

It's difficult for any player or fan to see a team 3-0 down and still maintain hope. Especially in the final of the most prestigious club football competition in the world. But patience, faith, and an unwavering commitment to fight for victory every second until the final whistle, is a recipe that more often than not serves up heartbreak, but, on a rare occasion, delivers emphatic victory with a most memorable and euphoric aftertaste.

And as for Mr. Johansson in 1999 and the droves of Liverpool supporters in 2005 who abandoned their team at half-time and left the stadium in Istanbul there is a lesson to be learnt. Never believe in a score-line unless it's written next to the words, "Full Time". ☼

CORICA STRIKE SINKS MARINERS IN A-LEAGUE THRILLER



STEVE Corica proved that class really does tell in the end when he linked up with Dwight Yorke to conjure the winning goal for Sydney FC in the inaugural Hyundai A-League Grand Final.

defenders before sliding a perfect pass to the incoming Corica who made no mistake from the edge of the box.

In front of almost 42,000 fans at Aussie Stadium, Yorke shook off a lack-lustre first half performance to finally prove his worth when his team-mates needed it most.

"I've had a long career but this has got to be my favourite moment in 15, 16 years," an ecstatic Corica said after the final whistle.

Just after the hour mark Yorke held off two Mariners



Lawrie McKinna's Mariners side were left to rue a string of missed opportunities in the first half, with Andre Gumprecht and Stewart Petrie both guilty of profligate finishing.

Team Line-ups:

Sydney FC: Bolton (gk), Packer, Rudan, Timpano, Ceccoli, Carney, Yorke (c), Bingley, McFlynn, Corica, Petrovski.

Subs: Zadkovich, Middleby, Fyfe, Ozbey, Pasfield (gk).

Central Coast Mariners: Vukovic (gk), Wilkinson, Beauchamp, Clark, Heffernan, O'Sullivan, Spencer (c), Gumprecht, Brown, Pondeljajk, Petrie.

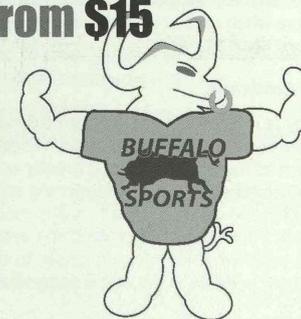
Subs: O'Grady, Osman, Kwasnik, McMaster, Trott (gk).

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"It was just an unbelievable game of football, the best I have ever played in" Greg Brown



mickybrock



Lights, Camera, crowd-shot. Micky Brock brings football TV coverage into sharper focus

It has to be said that the coverage of the A-League football on television is somewhat disappointing at times. Although far better than that which has preceded it, so much depends on not only the presentation but the commentary too.

The governing body, I hear through the grapevine rumour mill, doesn't want any institution, print nor electronic media outlets, to say or print anything derogatory about the Fox coverage, but surely if this is true they are simply burying their heads in the sand?

Hero Creation

First brought about, when I was with the old Soccer Australia to primarily promote the game in Australia to the latent support that obviously existed, they introduced the 'All Stars Series' which lasted a mere two matches, one in Sydney and the other played in Melbourne. It was an unmitigated flop to be blunt but it was an idea along the right lines, sadly, at the wrong time.

To help with this 'Hero Creation' policy it was incumbent upon those commentating to actually mention player's names when they were on the ball and to chat about the play as it unfolded? Within the offering we now have it is rare that a players name is mentioned, which leads to the question of; How do those watching at home get to know who is who on the pitch?

How does one get excited about the visit of these unknown players to their backyard when their local team plays against them? How does this help to generate the terrace excitement and clubs with revenue? Indeed, how does any 'new supporter' get to learn the intricacies of the game when no-one is talking about the play on the pitch in any great detail?

TV Coverage

Why is it when the cameras are following the play, they often have the first 30-50 rows of seats in the picture? Much as the home support is greatly warranted, are they really integral to what is happening on the pitch? If you want a crowd shot, by all means have one...during a break in play. Instead of watching ants running around the park, why not zoom in closer to the action so it is actually possible to see who is doing what.

Another big no-no is going to a replay whilst the game has actually re-started! This I find incredible. Very poor showing by the broadcaster for mine and many others I have spoken with. Again, this can be done when there is a break in play NOT during the live action.

Admittedly, working for a statistics company we need to use the Fox coverage in order to do this and this is where the poor quality of the broadcast really shows up.

It's rumoured the guys who work on the football are doing so because the RL season has finished and this is their normal sport. If this is true then someone needs to explain that coverage standards of one sport are not the same as for others and they need to get their act together.

I do not single anyone in particular out in this rant but the ones I speak of know who they are and need to take a good hard look at themselves and the product they are promoting (sic).

For real football to become the number one sport in Australia, which it will in the coming years, it needs the number one sports coverage team at the helm, those who have a real passion for the code and know what they are talking about, and that may take time to sort out. Even simple things like the terminology of the game are often glaringly incorrect.

if you want a crowd shot, by all means have one... during a break in play

We all appreciate that commentating, editing, camera operation and directing are not simple jobs. If they were we would all be doing them for sure and certain, and probably the hardest job of all is to concentrate totally on the pitch for 45+ minutes each half and keep the viewing public enthralled by your words and on the edge of their seats.

Martin Tyler, for me, is far and away the best at this and I love his commentary, knowledge and trivia notes. Then again, Martin lives, breaths, eats and sleeps football. That is why he is the best. Several others spring to mind from Europe that come close in this category.

Hopefully, some will see this not merely as a rant but also as a means of constructive criticism. Simple solutions to simple errors but perhaps I am too harsh in what is, after all, their first year of staging matches for this code?

Perhaps.....perhaps not? ☺

NATIONAL NEWS

SBS TELEVISION ANNOUNCES WORLD CUP LINE-UP

As the Official Australian Broadcaster of the 18th FIFA World Cup (June 9 to July 9, 2006), SBS Television, has officially announced its nine-person presentation team.

Based both in the World Cup host nation of Germany and SBS's Sydney studios, the SBS broadcast will be led by Les Murray. Les, who will be presenting his fifth World Cup for the network, will also share the nation's excitement as the Socceroos make their first appearance in 32 years.

Assisting Les from the Berlin base will be Chief Analyst, and former Socceroo, Craig Foster; Commentator and Reporter, Simon Hill; Commentator, Martin Tyler and Reporters, Tracey Holmes and Emma Simkin.

The German-based team will be backed in Sydney by Andrew Orsatti, Mike Tomalaris, and Stephanie Brantz with a special line-up of recognised football experts to provide detailed analysis throughout the tournament.

Having presented the coverage, colour, expert analysis and all the news from four previous World Cups (Italia '90, USA '94, France'98 and Korea/Japan '02), SBS has the expertise and experience to again capture all the magic of football's greatest prize.

Building on this experience, the nine-person presentation team for 2006 is the largest SBS has ever assembled for a World Cup.

"There's an unprecedented sense of excitement about the 2006 FIFA World Cup, especially as the Socceroos are participating for the first time in over thirty years," said Shaun Brown, Managing Director, SBS.

"SBS is committed to bringing its audiences the very best of world sport and that commitment extends to providing the highest standards of presentation. The team we have assembled has an extraordinary blend of experience and enthusiasm.

"Together with our partner, Football Federation Australia, we are working to ensure the World Cup gets Australians behind football as never before," he continued.

As one of the globe's greatest sporting occasions, the World Cup provides an opportunity to unite the world; across race, religion, age and gender. SBS say their team reflects this diversity and, backed by a talented technical and support crew, the SBS coverage of the FIFA World Cup, Germany 2006 will again be one of Australia's most anticipated and watched sporting events.

HYUNDAI A-LEAGUE CROWD INFORMATION



Team	Games	Average	Lowest	Highest	Total
Sydney	12	17,811	9,132	30,377	213,732
Queensland	11	14,785	8,607	23,142	162,636
Melbourne	10	14,158	10,078	18,206	141,578
Adelaide	11	11,325	7,013	15,104	124,577
Perth	11	9,734	5,033	13,157	107,075
Newcastle	12	9,022	5,868	13,160	108,263
Central Coast	11	8,765	5,194	17,429	96,418
New Zealand	10	3,909	1,922	9,827	39,086
TOTAL	88	11,288	1,922	30,377	993,365

SOCCEROOS SEE DOUBLE AT AUSTRALIAN SPORTS AWARDS

If World Cup qualification on its own wasn't enough, the Socceroos have been recognised for their achievements by taking out the Australian Sporting Moment of the Year, a new Award decided by the Australian public.

Their World Cup Qualifier won over nine other memorable Australian sporting moments of 2005 in a landslide victory with over 90% of the votes.

"It is a tremendous privilege for the Qantas Socceroos to be honoured at the Australian Sport Awards and is something in which the players, the FFA, and indeed all Australian sports fans can take great pride," said Football Federation Australia Chief Executive John O'Neill.

"The Socceroos are truly representative of Australian society and have proven themselves to be wonderful ambassadors both on and off the field."

The Australian Sport Awards are conducted by the nation's peak body for sport, the Confederation of Australian Sport, and are the premier Awards for sport in Australia.

"I think the key to the Australian Sport Awards is that it recognises all individuals regardless of which sport they come from", said Michael Sparks, President of the Confederation of Australian Sport.

"Whether they are from major individual and team sports or the lower profile sports, everyone has the opportunity to be recognised for their performance."

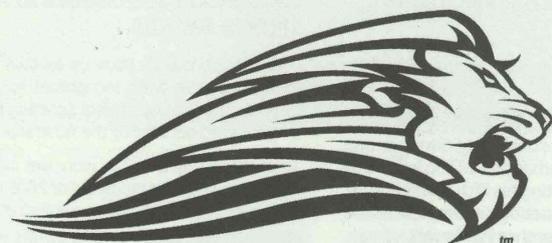
A-LEAGUE REGISTERS ONE-MILLIONTH FAN

On Sunday 26th of February the one-millionth Hyundai A-League fan passed through the turnstiles at Hindmarsh Stadium (Adelaide) for the Hyundai A-League 2006 Preliminary Final between Adelaide United FC and the Central Coast Mariners.

Prior to the game, 993,365 supporters had been in attendance for the 88 fixtures of the inaugural Hyundai A-League season to date (21 Rounds and 4 Hyundai A-League 2006 Finals Series Matches) with an average of 11,288 supporters per match.

Queensland Roar finished second on the attendance ladder with a more than healthy average of 14,785.

New Zealand Knights finished dead last again with a paltry total of only 39,000 fans through the gates all season. ☹



QUEENSLAND
ROAR FC

thanks to you....
the fans

The Board of Directors, Management, Players and Staff of Queensland Roar FC would like to thank the people of Queensland for making our debut season one to remember.

The support for the team and the league is a credit to the football community and we look forward to more successful times ahead in the 2006-07 season.



HYUNDAI
A-LEAGUE



HYUNDAI
Future Driven



QANTAS



Telstra



Powerade



FOX
SPORTS

OVER THE PHONE WITH... GREG THOMAS

CLUB: Rochedale POSITION: Striker

Michelle Fowler gives bludger-hating workaholic and Rochedale forward Greg Thomas a page in print. He's already done TV and radio.

Born: 20/4/1976

Age: 29

Current Club: Rochedale Rovers

Previous Clubs: Capalaba, Penrith in Sydney, Bundaberg and I played in Hong Kong.

Position: Midfield/Striker

Strengths? Passing

Weaknesses? My size definitely

Hobbies? Golf and waterskiing

Career Highlights? Playing in Hong Kong and winning the Golden Boot last year.

Career Lowlight? Having a knee injury and having to come home from Hong Kong.

Best player played with? Peter Bennett

Toughest opponent? Adam Webber from Brisbane Strikers

Biggest joker in your side? Probably Nick Maas

One to watch out for in your team next season? Cody Lovell, he plays midfield.

If you could change one rule in football what would it be? One rule...you've got me here. I can't think of anything, everything is good how it is.

If you could change one thing about Brisbane football what would it be? Extend it a bit more.

Best advice you've ever been given? Train hard

Most embarrassing moment? Missing the penalty in the 1999 grand final at Coffs Harbour.

Describe your club in one sentence: They look after us pretty well.

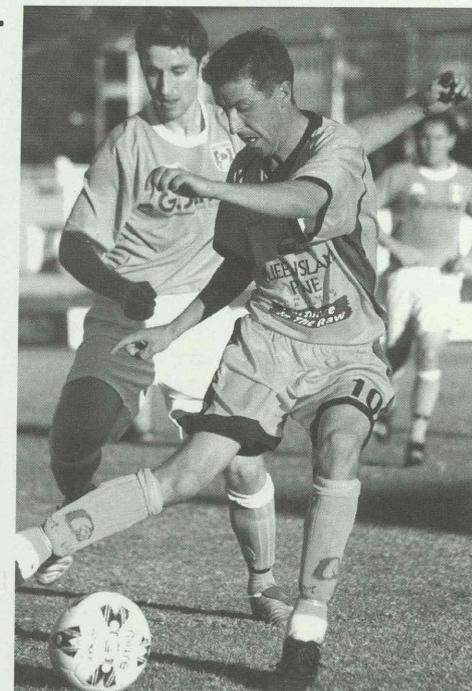
Did you model your game on anyone? No not really

Ambitions for the season? To win the league

How will Australia do in the World Cup Finals? They'll do really well and I think qualify in second position.

Who will win the World Cup? Brazil

Dislikes? Bludgers and people that don't train hard



Any superstitions? No

Any pets? Yes, I have two dogs Max and Tucker

What do you think of the A-League? I think it's great, it's doing really well

Have you ever been on TV? Only in Hong Kong, playing soccer

What about radio? Yes, I was on the Soccer Show last year

Musical taste? Pearl Jam is my favourite band.

Favourite food? Roast beef

Any ambitions to coach once you finish playing? I'd say yes

Do you have a favourite saying? I don't think I really have one

What's your coach's favourite saying? Nothing you could put in a magazine

Funniest thing you have seen on the football field? A mate of mine lost his shorts in Coffs Harbour.

Best hangover cure? I'm not a drinker

How much is two litres of milk? \$2.80

What about a loaf of bread? About \$2.50

Describe yourself in three words: Will to win

Sharon Jackson sets the blades on the lawnmower to 'hack', gives the line-marker a boot and hoes into the pleasantries of pre-season.

Pre-Season Panic

Jeez, we're good; and I mean really good. We're not only whingers we're organized whingers.

Never mind about thinking ahead, that's far too sensible and anyway we don't need it. We don't even need ESP. At this club we have the PSP. For the old hands you will be well acquainted with this. For those new hoodwinked volunteers, this is the Pre-Season Panic.

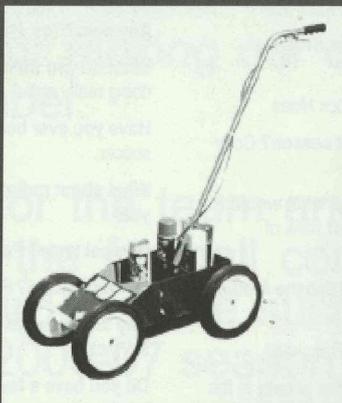
It's just like Christmas in that you know it's coming and you've known for 12 months but you still haven't organized the fertilizer to be dropped off, fixed the leaky tap and the lawnmower is looking at you accusingly with it's still flat tyre. The chequebook can't be found and you realize the wily treasurer has ran off with it to the Whitsundays because you're not writing any cheques while he's away!

We've had 3 months to organize grounds maintenance and a clubhouse tidy up and guess what, the paint arrives just in time for pre-season training. Never mind your boots lads, get a paintbrush in your hand. The sprinkler system never works from year to year but it never seems to occur to us to check it over just in case and you know the BMF inspection is five minutes away when you see the groundsman kicking the line marking machine.

This is unique to community football and just like

Christmas, we're collectively whingeing the season is here before we know it. Tempers are fraying, rosters are torn up and then the gent's toilet gets in on the act and blocks up. Yes, it's February again.

Ask your club registrar for example about signing the kids on. As every Dad says, he'd rather be at work and he works at the abattoir. It's bedlam as half of Brisbane's littlies have arrived at the clubhouse and are spinning about the place on carousels visible only to the under 9's. "Sign here please," says the deafened registrar. "What?" says Dad. Then, "How much!?"



The line-marking machine. Don't kick it - it might come in handy

There has to be an easier way we say to each other every year. But by the time this year has rolled around, have we done anything? Of course not except maybe we've got better at whingeing about it.

Coaches & registrars are all working overtime trying to work out who's signed on, who's not and how much money do they owe. It's a funny thing that footballers all have plenty of money after the match on Saturday arvo's but it mysteriously disappears every time the fees are due. We've got it worked out now though, pick the shortest list as this will be the paid up one.

Lots of deals are done with the President so that an absolutely definite, positive, no exceptions committee resolution that the club will

only sponsor two players has now elastically stretched to six and half to get a scratch eleven for the friendlies.

Friendlies, there's a mini-comp in itself. The coach is smiling at the impressive sign-on list but soon falls in to bewilderment as the available player list dwindles away to single figures with, "Ah no coach, going to a 21st..." "Er, um, taking my girlfriend to a movie," and "Would you believe it, my boots are at the menders." Well, yes, I do believe it!

How about your new overseas star signing? I'm beginning to have my doubts about these guys as they may be a brilliant addition to the team but it hasn't occurred to any of us that the visitor from colder climes may not be suited to local conditions. For example a big centre forward signing that wouldn't look out of place in an AFL side threw away an open goal as he could see "a whopping great spider" hanging from the post.

At first this is astonishing then amusing (yer great jessie) and then a problem as he genuinely is terrified of them. Thinking of heat as your major obstacle, you never imagine creepies are going to be a problem for someone towering over you. There is a positive side though as he puts on a burst of impressive speed and wins the ball to fire off a fine goal. "Well done," we all say 'til he relates, "But didn't you see that - a wasp as big as a house. I wasn't hanging about." I'll hang him if I could just catch him, I'm thinking.

We've had a few spectacular storms of late and it has been something of a talking point. Well, we would talk to him if we could get him out from under the massage table! God help us! We've really done it this time!

"Never mind about thinking ahead, that's far too sensible and anyway we don't need it"

All of this has served to put him at a big disadvantage with his teammates and he'll now have to be good just to be on a par. To try to get him to settle, instead of whingeing, we have an inspiration and take him along to the local 5-a-side comp where it's indoors, there's no bugs and there's action to be had. At last, we have found a niche for him as he shows us some form. Then we realize that it's a mixed side and of course he's showing some form. Hmm, funny how he's not scared of the most dangerous form of local fauna.

Luckily for us, if there was a comp for PSP we'd be league champions by now and guess what we love it. We run about like Benny Hill extras to be ready for the grand opening in record time. Every year is it the same and if someone dares gets organized we'll fix him up and roster him on washing strips quick smart.

The Preso digs deep in his pocket and drags in the local park incumbents to spread the fertilizer. The colts have got more paint on themselves than on the walls and the lawnmower is giving me a cheeky grin. Tired, paint splattered and proud we open the doors just as the away side begin to saunter to the dressing shed.

The 'Bar Open' sign lights up, we're ready for a new season and for the fun to start. Jeez, we're good! ☺

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PLAYING THEIR CARDS WRONG

WITH the inaugural season of the Hyundai A-League now behind us, journalists everywhere have been scurrying to compile their in-depth analysis of year one in football's new dawn.

Top of many people's list when the A-League is overhauled is the standard of refereeing exhibited so far. Not that we think the overall standard has been, well, substandard; but there have been a number of game-changing moments that have either gone unpunished, or have been wrongly punished, resulting in unwanted sprays from coaches and less than favourable media exposure.

Now it's easy to point the finger and that is what most of us do. However, if there is truly a problem then it can't just be on the surface given that most problems in professional sport tend to run a bit deeper than that.

To just criticise referees is at best, counter-productive. Firstly, they don't deserve it as 90% of referees do an excellent job 90% of the time, and secondly, the system we as a football community have provided as a development program or career pathway is hopelessly inadequate. What's more, we are set to pay the price in the not too distant future.

Football Queensland's Referee Development Officer, Alan Kibbler, who when we phoned was about to go through a compilation DVD of A-League incidents provided by FFA for analysis, says referees deserve the same support mechanisms and systems afforded to players.

"I think we are paying the price for the lack of preparation provided to the referees by FFA for this first season (of the A-League). I think the referees were a yard behind the players in terms of readiness for the whole process," Kibbler said.

"We were under-prepared because apart from Mark (Shield) and Matthew (Breeze) our top referees had been

"I think we are paying the price for the lack preparation provided to the referees by FFA for this first season"

in this void for the last 18 months. For them to be expected to suddenly step up to the plate for a whole new standard of football was a big ask," he added.

A valid argument indeed, but 75% of the A-League players had to do exactly the same thing with many of them stepping up from state leagues.

The players themselves seem to have made the transition more seamlessly if you believe the punditry being trotted out around the country. Nationwide, commentators and observers have lauded the new standard of professional football in Australia and Kibbler agrees with their assessments, but it created a whole new set of problems for our whistle-blowers.

"Overall the standard of the league has been excellent. It was aggressive and very quick and I don't think our referees have been exposed to that kind of intensity and high standard of play since the old NSL ended. Refereeing in the local competitions is never going to prepare you for a league of this standard. In the early part of the season I'm not sure that the officials were keeping up with the speed of the game, both mentally and physically."

Rather than bleat on about the problems, we have to find solutions and Kibbler thinks this starts with increased interaction between the state federations and the national body.

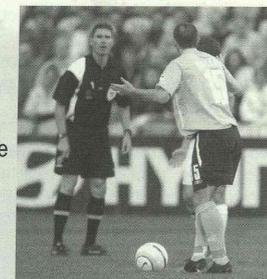
"Firstly, there has to be a greater level of communication between FFA and the local body to enlist their help. Whilst I inspect the local guys and we do talk to them and work with them, we don't get a copy of the tapes from FFA. So if there are some decisions that are contentious or marginal we don't get a chance to review them on the tape. We don't get feedback on the performances of our referees or assistant referees either when they officiate interstate. So, unless a referee chooses to confide in me then even as a coach, I am not involved with their A-League work."

Although clearly irked by the situation, Kibbler conceded that he does not think this is necessarily the root of the problem given the small size of the A-league and says the National Referees Manager should be able to analyse and instruct when things go awry.

"Well, when you consider that there are only four games a week and therefore only four referees actively working



Players are never wrong of course



each round, plus there are only 10 (referees) on the panel, then really one could argue with some justification that is within the capabilities of the National Referees Manager to take that portfolio under his wing. I wouldn't have thought that to be an onerous task. Anyway, what you don't want is too many cooks sticking their ladle into the pot."

One of the more oft repeated criticisms levelled at refs this season by many good folk in the Suncorp Stadium galleries was that our top local referees should not be employed as linesman given the differences in the roles and the varying demands of running the line. Kibbler dispelled a few misconceptions though, confirming that those who perform as assistant referees in the A-League specialise in the role.

"The local guys who do the A-League games are there first and foremost because they have shown a desire and expertise to excel as an assistant referee. They specialise as assistant referees, they train both physically and mentally for the assistant referee job. Because they have to run sideways and often from a standing start to a sprint, their training requirements are different. Even at local level they are inspected as assistant referees through the season. Because of circumstances in the local competition they often referee as well, but their major training and their speciality is as assistant referees."

General competency aside, even the most staunch supporter of the men in black would have to admit that there have been key decisions in very important A-League games this season that were, shall we say, clangersome?

The stakes are high in the A-League with the Asian Champions League a mouth-watering carrot and home support inextricably linked to winning results. Bums on seats at home is of course, income, so a game-changing blunder can cost a club in more ways than one.

We can't turn back time in most cases and reverse results or decisions, but should it be almost taboo to question the ability of a referee despite the thanklessness of their task?

"Should clubs have a right to question the competency of an official? Absolutely. Should they get answers to their questions? Absolutely. We are accountable in the game just like everyone else. There will be the occasional screw-up because we're human," said Kibbler.

"We can't just drop referees following mistakes because there aren't any others to take their place. All we can do is highlight the problem and try to put measures in place that prevent it happening again," he added.

Do some of the more ambiguous rules (namely, offside) create a perception that referees are worse than they actually are? Coupled with the lack of expert knowledge held by most of the paying public of this increasingly confusing law, it could be said that maybe it is football supporters who "need glasses".

"The new offside interpretations are always going to cause problems for assistant referees and how the public perceive them. There have been decisions this year which have led to goals where many people thought an offside decision went against them, when in fact, the decision was correct according to the new rules."

Ok, we'll pay that one, but what about temporary blindness?

"It's a tough job. Your eyes only have to be in a different direction for half a second and you've missed it. It's frustrating for coaches, players and all concerned when this happens, but because of the demands of the job you are required to monitor so many things at once and mistakes can happen."

If we assume that additional and continuing coaching will help to improve our current top refs, can we expect the next crop to be pushing hard to take their place on the top panel roster? Come to think of it, is there even a 'next crop'?

Kibbler is worried: "It's not a problem at the moment, but it will be. We're currently working with the top five referees and about five more below them, but after them there's nothing. There's no youth league anymore, there are no national development processes, so where are the next ones going to come from? If a few of our top refs left

"It's a tough job. Your eyes only have to be in a different direction for half a second and you've missed it"

the game for one reason or another, we have to know what processes or pathway our next generation has to help them get to the top. Where are the referees who need more experience going to get it from? We've been arguing this with FFA."

When asked, Kibbler said that importing referees to the A-League was "unlikely" and that he was not aware of any national competition that currently did that. A last resort of course, but perhaps some radical thinking is required in the short term.

"We have a concern that we need to find better ways to make referees ready for the A-League. We have a young referee at the moment, a 21 year-old who is currently refereeing in Division One."

"This young man has 'FIFA' and 'World Cup' stamped all over him, but the problem is, how do we make him ready for the A-League? What can we do to take him to the next level? Hopefully, our current liaison with Asia might offer some alternatives to finding a different level of competition to aid their development."

"We have to have more opportunities for our fringe referees to bridge the gap between the local game and the A-league. It's pretty bleak right now. At the moment we are trying to identify those who have real talent and decide what we have to do to work with them and help them. Then we can go back to FFA and say 'these are the ones we need to help to the next step'."

"Until we get that next level of competition then we are always going to have a problem. At least FFA have shown that they are aware of the situation. I don't think they have the answers as yet, and quite truthfully, I don't think anyone does," said Kibbler.

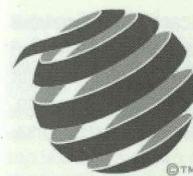
He added: "When you are talking about a league where a club is forking out millions of dollars a year to be part of it, then it requires the officials to be the best we can make them. If they're not then we have to either replace them or make them better. That is what we should be doing."

It's fair to say the scrutiny our referees have been under is somewhat unprecedented for our national competition. The TV deal the A-League has with Fox Sports has allowed for previously unseen angles, analysis and replays; not too mention the increased coverage in the press.

This is clearly one of the reasons why the issue has been brought into sharp focus, and as Kibbler rightly points out, this is not a new problem; it's just that more people are more aware of it now.

One hopes the attention the refereeing standard in some games has received from the media will accelerate the process of rectification and that FFA's tackling of the situation doesn't earn them a yellow card, whether they deserved it or not!

One thing's for sure - if nothing, or not enough, is done then someone should be heading for an early bath. ☺



FOOTBALL QUEENSLAND

Football Queensland President, Dennis O'Brien, on the future of the State Cup

In my last column I noted that the first A-League Season was moving to a successful conclusion.

As that happens, the Queensland Roar Board is examining their season. From my point of view they get a good report card, probably 65%, and that's as much as we could have believed before the season started (even though we hoped for more).

They recruited well, the team was fit and they played an attractive brand of football. Losing a few games in the last several minutes detracted from the beginning of the season but the latter half was encouraging. Recent news that we are losing a number of the better performing players is concerning, as is discussion about team disharmony.

By the time you read this the Queensland Roar Board is likely to have made decisions about coaching personnel for 2006. Whatever that decision is, Football Queensland is committed to supporting the Roar in whatever way we can. Their success is important to the growth of football in Queensland and I would encourage us all to congratulate them on their success and support them in the new season both by wearing the strip with pride and attending as many games as we can.

The restructuring of a national league raises many questions. Two are particularly relevant to us in the near future. The first is the gap that exists between our best competition and the level of the A-League. For local players to move to the A-League we must help players bridge that gap. However, there is no obvious way to do that in such a disperse State.

The Board is currently waiting for a response from the State Men's Standing Committee on a Report of the State Cup and we will use that to discuss the future with Zones and Standing Committees. The question of whether the State Cup focus



Queensland Government
Getting more people active
through sport and recreation

should be on an elite program or on a State-wide inter-zone competition is a critical one. Of course, these two aims aren't mutually exclusive but focussing on one limits the success of the other. In the meantime, the State Cup for 2006 will be conducted on the guidelines of 2004 and 2005.

As Players sign up for the new season, we are in a much better organisational position than we were 12 months ago. However, we are facing greater challenges than ever before with other sports invigorating their approach to new players.

We can't be complacent that this is the "World Game" and that people will want to be involved because of that or because of the World Cup. Of course some will, but many of the parents who bring their 6 year old sons and daughters to us don't even know of the Matildas or the Socceroos. They simply want their children to be active, and to do so in a fun and safe environment.

They have chosen football for many reasons but often it is because it is safe. We need to add other values to their engagement with us, including providing an environment that cares about their children as individuals, that demands fair play and teaches those habits, that treats all equally and allows them to develop to the best of their potential. They also expect an effective administration, and club officials that seek to engage with them and listen to their concerns.

In support of this aim, Football Queensland is instituting additional support to the many Mums and Dads who accept responsibility for coaching teams through the introduction of a State Coaches Accreditation Program that will provide a basic coaching course.

This will be provided in the knowledge that many of the participants will be Mums and Dads who just want to know a bit more so they can do a better job. It will be done at a time that best suits the participants. Thirty years ago I was one of those Dads and I know that I would have loved a little support as I stumbled in teaching the U6's new skills.

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the full MONTY

WELL here we go once again with what promises to be an exciting season both locally and of course nationally, with the main event being the Socceros and the World Cup.

This should be the year when football takes all the back (and hopefully front) page headlines from all other codes which will turn certain sectors of the media green, and I don't mean as in the 'green and gold' of the national side!

Hopefully the local game will latch onto the World Cup year and promote the hell out of the game to give it a major boost. A hectic pre-season is now history and I need to get the money in to keep me in the lifestyle that I am accustomed to - hence the bookies board has been set.

I must admit last year I was spot on with Sharks winning their inaugural premiership and the students sent packing back to Division 1, so let's see if I can ping it again:

Rochedale Rovers - I think that all Coops' hard work will come to fruition this year as he has built a squad that has gelled together well and will prove extremely hard to beat home and away.

They've gone from a Club that was on the brink of

Coops' Rochedale get Monty's 'favourites' tag



Holding folding? Flashing the cash? Dangling your dosh or paying the piper? Why waste your wonga on anything else when you can sell your soul with Monty's odds for the 2006 season. You know it makes sense.

relegation three years ago to one of the tightest outfits in Brisbane. Sorry about the favourites tag Coops, but I'm confident the revival is fully complete and I am sure you don't expect (or hope for!) any of the hiccups you encountered early in 2005 (ie, Souths defeat at home). **Odds 3/1.**

Brisbane Strikers - made all my money last year from the North Star Strikers big punters who were pushing their mum's and wives aside to get their hard earned on the juicy odds of 12/1.

The only difference with Strikers and the Lions team of a few years ago is their colours as the Strikers have assembled an array of local talent including the 'Spice Boys' who made the move from South's to Perry Park obviously due to its proximity to the night-life of the Valley!! But in all seriousness they look extremely tough but I just think that there is a little chink in their make-up (plus I have plenty from last season!) which allows me to post them at 7/2.

Pine Rivers - another tremendous season last year and looks as though they will be equally as competitive this year. Can't think of too many sides that will relish a trip to WAP on a Saturday night with the Pig Pen all fired up (most of which are reaching legal age and starting to shave!) and a side that is blessed with plenty of talent and spirit. If there is a team that can wrestle the mantle from Rovers and Strikers then Rivers are certainly the outfit. I suppose depth will be the key if injuries and suspensions (sorry JH!) become a factor, however they will be kept safe at 5/1.

Palm Beach Sharks - what's this all about? Season about to k-o and talk of player power being responsible for the departure of head coach Karl Herdle! Unbelievable! Karl has been a tremendous success for the white shoe brigade. He has taken the club from strength to strength with a policy of promoting the wealth of excellent young talent on the Coast, who have all proved that knobby knees and sand in the eyes is not an impediment for good football! I am absolutely speechless as to what has happened on the Coast and for this reason alone hope that they are **not** successful

However one must respect the absolute talent but feel that the spirit that is evident with a team like Rivers has gone AWOL on the Coast. **Odds 8/1.**

Brisbane City - yes, I am predicting a year of revival at Spencer Park which could see the sleeping giant return to a more respectable position than last year and this will be a positive for the league. The squad is built around youthful players with a sprinkling of experience, not sure that they have the stamina to compete at the top but they may slip into fourth spot at the expense of the Sharks. I do hope that they succeed as a winter Sunday afternoon at SP is always a great way to finish off the weekend with a plate of ribs and coffee. **Odds 10/1.**



Edwards & Tulloch - can they steer City up the table?

Mt Gravatt - I believe they can do a 'Mitchelton' of 2 years ago and have an impact on the league. Outside the top 4 or 5 teams the balance of the competition looks extremely even in its majority and as such I can see the Mounties winning more than they lose of these '6-point' encounters. Can't see them working into the top 4 but certainly do not see them at the other end of the table either. Welcome back lads, 15/1.

Brisbane Wolves - this is the side that firmly holds the title of the most inconsistent outfit in Brisbane. Over past few seasons they have promised so much but produced so little. I firmly believe that Peter Tokesi's departure a few seasons ago was the start of their inconsistency. However that is all history and at least in keeping with Roche's ethics they are showing a level of loyalty. Looks and sounds like a lot of good players have been assembled and I could be totally off the mark, but I think we all need to witness a level of consistency unseen in recent times before we can get too excited about this Wolves side. **Odds 16/1.**

Mitchelton - well the honeymoon with the imports from Vanuatu is over and Greg Brown has recruited some much needed experience in Strange, Waugh and 'Fish' but despite this obvious spine of class they appear to be lightweight up front. Depth may also be a problem as Brown's policy has always been to run a

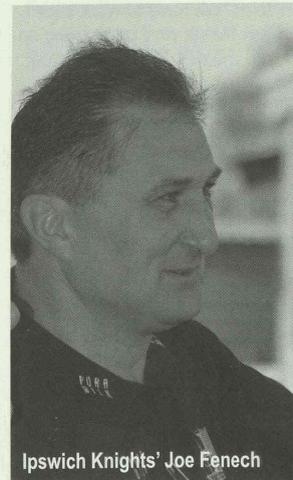
small first team squad allowing younger players to step up when circumstances prevail. This is tremendous for the development of young players but will see them fall short of a finals spot. **Odds 20/1.**

Taringa Rovers - I just have this feeling that the lads from JSP may do an Everton (must be the colours!). Following a successful season last year, which surprised all except Alan Waller and his troops, they may struggle this year. The talents of one of Brisbane's better goal poachers in Unsy will be put to the test this season as Rovers return to Saturday night football (key in Steve's signing!). Hopefully we'll hear a return of some much missed wit from the balcony boys. **Odds 20/1.**

Souths Utd - any side coached by Peter Tokesi must be respected and who knows what the big fella will pull out of his hat as far as his final squad goes. However, with the current level of losses it will need some miracle to see them compete at the top level. One certainty is that they will be fit and organised and we all know what a comforting environment Wakerley Park can be on a cold Saturday night. The Tokesi factor tells me that they won't be destined to the cellar and maybe this is a year of re-establishment. **Odds 33/1.**

Toowoomba Raiders - I was really pleased that the 'Tractor Boys' avoided the trip back to Division 1 and still hope that they can maintain their status as a trip to Toowoomba is one that most fans enjoy (despite the temperature!). There have been some positive noises coming out of their pre-season encounters but I am still not convinced and maybe that pre-season cannot be taken too seriously. But I have said that outside the top 4 or 5 we will have a tight competition and the Raiders may still finish safely. **Odds 50/1.**

Eastern Suburbs - the 'Friendliest Club' in Brisbane title still rests with the Tigers but I think that this year will be a long and hard battle and I expect them to struggle to get away from the cellar door. If I am wrong then I would be as pleased as the most ardent



Ipswich Knights' Joe Fenech

Tiger's fan but in reality I think the Tigers will be returning to Division 1 in 2007. **Odds 100/1.**

Division One - **Ipswich Knights** are my pick for an automatic return to the top division under the guidance of Joe Fenech so **Odds of 2/1** for them.

Division Two - **Newmarket** are a sound bet at 4/1.



Pic courtesy of Queensland Times

ROVERS CLAIM SILVER BOOT

BRISBANE Strikers coach Bobby Hamilton says his side's 3-1 Silver Boot final loss to Rochedale serves as a timely wake-up call ahead of the Premier League season.

Touted by pundits as the clear favourites for this year's championship, the Strikers were outclassed by a superior Rochedale outfit in the pre-season decider at Luxury Paints Stadium.

"We weren't good enough and we got what we deserved," Hamilton said. "We have to work a lot harder and there's a few things we'll be working on at training."

Despite his side's convincing win, Rochedale coach Kieran Cooper isn't getting carried away and insists the Strikers remain the team to beat in 2006.

"They've got quality all over the park ... but it was a pretty good effort from us," said Cooper, whose side profited from goals from Andrew Butler, Nick Maas and Carl Tabulo.

But you got the feeling the Rochedale mentor would gladly swap the Silver Boot crown for three points in his side's season-opener against last year's division one champions Mount Gravatt at Dittmer Park.

"It's a must win game for us ... we want to win everything this year," he said.

Hamilton has similar ambitions but played down talk that the Strikers would run away with this season's title.

"We'd be one of the teams that are up there, but I think it's going to be pretty similar to last year with Pine Rivers, Rochedale, Palm Beach, the Strikers and possibly one or two other clubs in the mix," Hamilton said.

He acknowledged his side would have to cope with opposition teams lifting when they played the Strikers.

But Hamilton said it was unfair to suggest the Strikers had become "the Queensland Lions" of the competition by attempting to buy the state's best players, despite the purchase of former Richlands trio Craig Slaughter, Craig Collins and Chris Day.

"In our midfield for the final we had Michael Butters, Chris Di Sipio, Alex Cornish and Michael Zullo they're all young players - we're not full of big-name players," he said.

Hamilton hinted it would take some time for his new-look side to gel.

"We've got five or six players that have hardly played together and barely know each other's names," he said. ☺

SILVER BOOT '06

All the scores and placings for this year's tournament, taken out in stylish fashion by Kieran Cooper's Rochedale Rovers side with a 3-1 win against Premiership favourites, the Brisbane Strikers.

GROUP A	pts	GROUP B	pts	GROUP C	pts
MT GRAVATT	5	BRISBANE WOLVES	3	BRISBANE STRIKERS	6
ROCHEDALE	4	MITCHELTON	3	CAPALABA	3
WESTERN SPIRIT	0	UNI OF QLD	3	EASTS	0
GROUP D	pts	GROUP E	pts	GROUP F	pts
PINE RIVERS	3	PALM BEACH	4	BRISBANE CITY	6
BRISBANE OLYMPIC	3	TOOWOOMBA	4	IPSWICH KNIGHTS	3
BETHANIA RAMS	0	BRISBANE FORCE	1	TARINGA ROVERS	3
				PENINSULA POWER	0

GROUP STAGE

Wednesday 25/1/06
Mt Gravatt 2 - 2 Rochedale Rovers 7.00pm

Friday 27/1/06
Brisbane Wolves 4 - 2 Mitchelton 6.30pm
Eastern Suburbs 0 - 9 Brisbane Strikers 8.30pm

Saturday 28/1/06
Brisbane Olympic 1 - 4 Pine Rivers 5.00pm
Toowoomba 1 - 1 Palm Beach 7.00pm

Sunday 29/1/06
Ipswich Knights 1 - 3 Brisbane City 4.30pm
Peninsula Power 0 - 3 Taringa Rovers 6.30pm

Wednesday 1/2/06
Mt Gravatt 2 - 0 Western Spirit 6.30pm
Brisbane Wolves 1 - 2 University of Qld 8.30pm

Friday 3/2/06
Eastern Suburbs 1 - 3 Capalaba 6.30pm
Brisbane Olympic 4 - 2 Bethania Rams 8.30pm

Sunday 5/2/06
Toowoomba 1 - 1 Brisbane Force 4.30pm
Ipswich Knights 4 - 1 Taringa Rovers 6.30pm

Wednesday 8/2/06
Peninsula Power 1 - 2 Brisbane City 6.30pm
Rochedale Rovers 7 - 0 Western Spirit 8.30pm

Friday 10/2/06
Mitchelton 2 - 0 University of Qld 6.30pm
Brisbane Strikers 7 - 0 Capalaba 8.30pm

Saturday 11/2/06
Pine Rivers 3 - 1 Bethania Rams 5.00pm
Palm Beach 9 - 1 Brisbane Force 7.00pm

Sunday 12/2/06
Brisbane City 1 - 2 Taringa Rovers 4.30pm
Ipswich Knights 7 - 0 Peninsula Power 6.30pm

QUARTER FINALS

Friday 17/2/06
Mt Gravatt 1 v 8 Brisbane Wolves 6.30pm
Brisbane Strikers 3 v 2 Pine Rivers 8.30pm

Saturday 18/2/06
Palm Beach 5 v 0 Brisbane City 5.00pm
Ipswich Knights 0 v 4 Rochedale Rovers 7.00pm

SEMI FINALS

Wednesday 22/2/06
Brisbane Wolves 0 v 5 Brisbane Strikers 6.30pm
Palm Beach 1 v 2 Rochedale Rovers 8.30pm

3rd/4th PLACE PLAYOFF

Saturday 25/2/06
Brisbane Wolves 2 v 5 Palm Beach 5.00pm

SILVER BOOT FINAL

Saturday 25/2/06
Brisbane Strikers 1 v 3 Rochedale Rovers 7.00pm

PRIZE MONEY

1st place \$4,000 plus Silver Boot trophy
2nd place \$2,000
3rd place \$1,000

ADMISSION: Adults \$5.00, Pensioners \$2.00, Students (15+) \$2.00, Children under 15 FREE





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