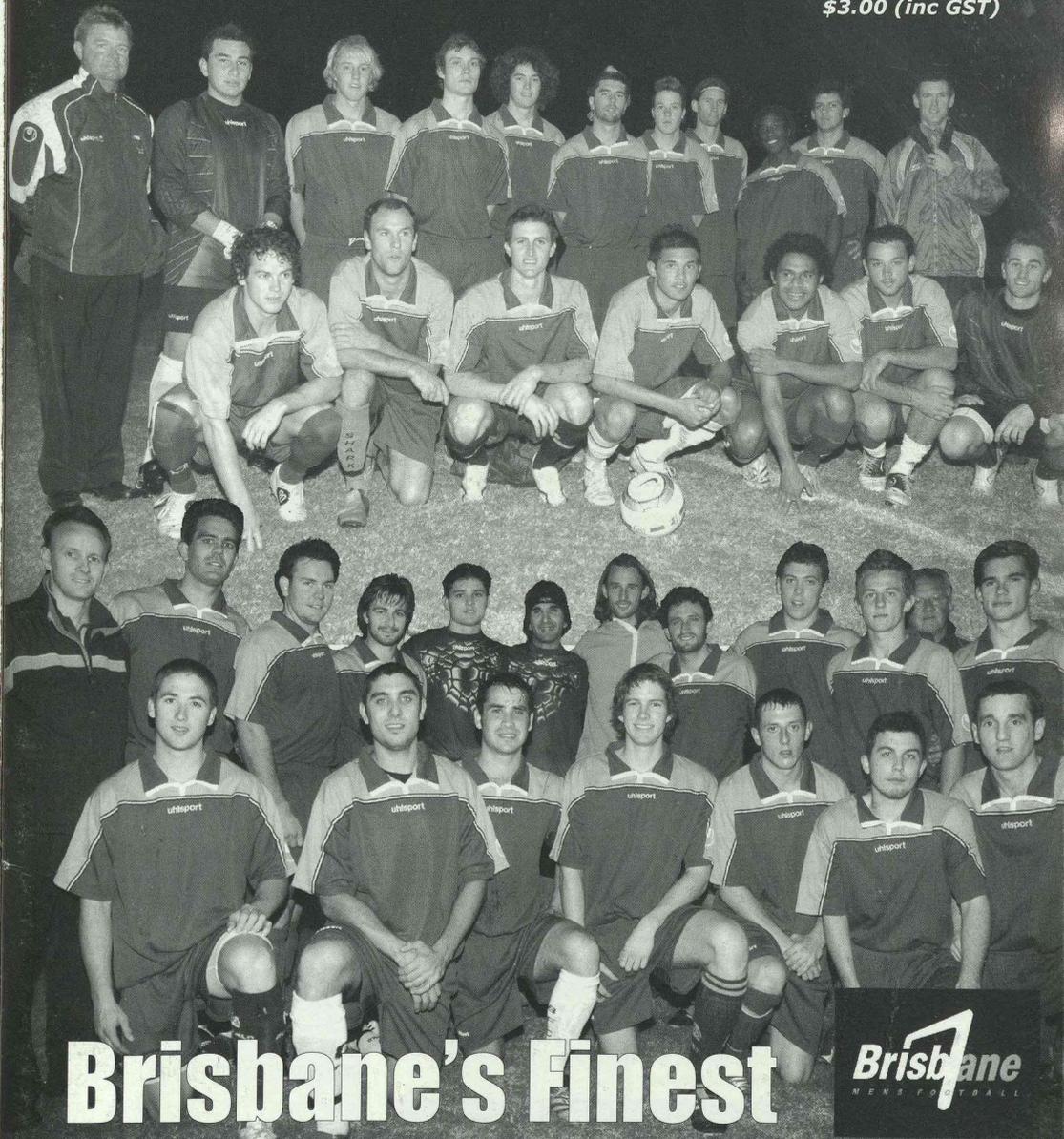


Brisbane's Football Magazine

Extra Time

Issue 24 August 2006
\$3.00 (inc GST)



Brisbane's Finest

Brisbane
MENS FOOTBALL

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

Brisbane's Football Magazine
ExtraTime

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Brisbane's Football Magazine

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Cover Pic: BMF's two sides to take on Queensland Roar line up with Josh Kennedy

comment

TAKING THE NEXT STEP

NOT even the most ardent rugby league or AFL fan could argue that the recent World Cup in Germany has not changed how the game is viewed in this country.

An unprecedented level of media coverage took the heroics of the Socceroos' campaign into every lounge room in the country, morning, noon and night.

Drama followed Australia's World Cup exploits around like a devoted disciple adding that little extra ingredient that guaranteed the nation's hearts and minds would be captivated for a few more days. Right from the penalty shoot-out victory against Uruguay last year that brought qualification for Germany, Guus Hiddink's men have not been involved in a run-of-the-mill game. Heroic comebacks, dramatic last-minute wins, dramatic last-minute losses; they did it all.

Despite causing a rise in the nation's blood pressure, it couldn't have been healthier for the pulse of the code. Not even FFA with their footballing Midas touch, could have written a more compelling script for its green and gold cast of thousands.

Amidst the shock of the last-gasp exit at the hands of the Italians in round two, journalists and pundits across the nation scrambled to formulate their opinions on why the game will never take a stranglehold on the nation's sporting psyche. Their arguments were varied to say the least, with each journalist trying to add a different perspective, but still singing from the same negative song-sheet. It has to be said that the cause of these detractors was given further impetus by some contentious refereeing decisions and several oscar-winning performances by uninjured players.

That said, there is little doubt that some so-called experts were just waiting for any reason to sink the slipper into football. From, "the referee can decide the outcome of the game", to, "the game is too low-scoring", and "the players act like girls", we heard or read it all and we've heard it all before. It was as if there was a need to reassure the rugby and AFL faithful that football was not in fact taking over Australia as it had taken over the world and that everything was going to be back to normal soon.

The vast majority of this negative copy in the national press was of course generated by exponents of other codes, with few retorts from football pundits. This was all exacerbated somewhat by some unnecessary gloating by some in the round ball camp and accusations of 'band-wagoning' aimed towards those who had only just discovered the beautiful game. The fact that people jump on board with us is what is important, not how or why.

So what do we do to make sure that all levels of the game benefit from the increasing profile of the game? The A-League will feel it most, but what can local clubs in the next tier of competition do to capture a slice of the action?

Senior Vice President at Souths United, Paul Young, says it's all about getting football into schools and refining infrastructure at local clubs.

"We need to get some information out into the marketplace and make people aware of the game. The problem at club level is that the volunteer and support structures are very thin in most clubs and they need help. At Souths we even considered capping the amount of teams we have because of inadequate

continued page 31

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BRISBANE Premier League

TABLES TO 23rd JULY

Premier League	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Brisbane Strikers	18	14	3	1	47	11	45
Rochdale Rovers	17	12	0	5	41	23	36
Taringa Rovers	18	11	2	5	43	32	35
Pine Rivers	18	11	1	6	45	25	34
Palm Beach	18	11	1	6	39	31	34
Souths United	17	8	4	5	37	17	28
Brisbane Wolves	18	6	7	5	33	28	25
Mitchelton	18	7	1	10	24	32	22
Brisbane City	18	6	1	11	17	35	19
Mt Gravatt	18	4	0	14	17	34	12
Toowoomba Raiders	18	2	5	11	26	45	11
Eastern Suburbs	18	2	1	15	17	73	7

Premier League Reserves	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rochdale Rovers	17	15	1	1	64	17	46
Brisbane City	18	11	2	5	40	23	35
Mitchelton	18	10	1	7	45	26	31
Souths United	17	10	1	6	44	27	31
Pine Rivers	17	10	0	7	37	25	30
Mt Gravatt	18	9	2	7	31	34	29
Taringa Rovers	18	8	3	7	27	25	27
Palm Beach	18	8	3	7	38	38	27
Brisbane Wolves	18	7	3	8	43	36	24
Toowoomba Raiders	18	3	3	12	9	38	12
Brisbane Strikers	17	2	3	12	13	44	9
Eastern Suburbs	18	1	2	15	21	79	5

Premier Division 1	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ipswich Knights	18	11	3	4	41	18	36
Peninsula Power	18	10	4	4	39	19	34
Brisbane Olympic	16	10	2	4	34	14	32
Beenleigh	17	8	4	5	31	22	28
University of Qld	17	7	5	5	32	24	26
Brisbane Force	17	7	5	5	27	21	26
Rocklea United	17	6	4	7	21	35	22
Logan City	15	5	5	5	23	25	20
Albany Creek	18	4	7	7	23	32	19
Capalaba	18	5	4	9	22	33	19
Redlands United	17	2	3	12	18	39	9
Western Spirit	16	1	6	9	9	38	9

Division 1 Reserves	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Brisbane Force	17	15	1	1	57	14	46
Ipswich Knights	18	11	4	3	46	20	37
Redlands United	17	10	2	5	49	23	32
Brisbane Olympic	16	9	4	3	37	21	31
Peninsula Power	18	9	4	5	31	15	31
University of Qld	17	9	2	6	44	30	29
Albany Creek	18	7	2	9	29	40	23
Western Spirit	16	4	3	9	18	29	15
Logan City	15	3	5	7	20	33	14
Beenleigh	17	4	1	12	15	32	13
Rocklea United	17	2	4	11	12	49	10
Capalaba	18	3	0	15	15	57	9

Premier Division 2	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
North Pine	18	14	2	2	57	21	44
Southside Eagles	17	12	3	2	45	15	39
Pine Hills	18	11	3	4	40	15	36
Slacks Creek	17	10	2	5	49	32	32
Newmarket	18	9	1	8	35	33	28
Grange Thistle	17	7	2	8	31	30	23
Ipswich City	18	6	2	10	37	50	20
Samford Rangers	18	6	2	10	29	54	20
The Gap	18	5	4	9	37	48	19
Acacia Ridge	18	5	2	11	38	67	17
Annerley	17	4	3	10	26	37	15
Moggill	18	3	2	13	24	46	11

Division 2 Reserves	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Grange Thistle	17	13	2	2	47	22	41
Ipswich City	18	10	5	3	41	17	35
North Pine	18	10	4	4	43	24	34
Slacks Creek	18	10	3	5	37	25	33
Annerley	18	10	2	6	41	24	32
Newmarket	18	9	4	5	43	23	31
Pine Hills	18	9	2	7	39	28	29
Southside Eagles	17	9	2	6	26	31	29
Moggill	18	5	3	10	27	35	18
The Gap	18	2	4	12	25	43	10
Samford Rangers	18	2	1	15	20	59	7
Acacia Ridge	18	2	0	16	19	77	6

Metro 1	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bayside United	18	11	3	4	36	21	36
Wilston Athletic	18	11	2	5	36	16	35
Regents Park	18	9	4	5	48	30	31
Kangaroo Pt Rovers	18	9	4	5	37	25	31
Souths United	18	9	4	5	36	26	31
Oxley United	18	6	8	4	27	28	26
Acacia Ridge	18	6	5	7	29	35	23
Old Bridge	17	5	5	7	31	39	20
University of Qld	18	6	2	10	19	35	20
Clairvaux	18	4	4	10	24	36	16
Logan City	17	5	1	11	27	47	16
Taringa Rovers	18	3	4	11	25	37	13

Metro 1 Reserves	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Taringa Rovers	18	11	3	4	52	26	36
Kangaroo Pt Rovers	18	10	3	5	44	27	33
Souths United	18	9	4	5	44	29	31
Clairvaux	18	9	4	5	35	32	31
University of Qld	18	8	4	6	38	27	28
Wilston Athletic	18	6	6	6	34	23	24
Bayside United	18	6	6	6	33	35	24
Old Bridge	17	5	6	6	27	30	21
Acacia Ridge	18	6	3	9	24	36	21
Oxley United	18	5	5	8	26	27	20
Logan City	17	5	1	11	29	50	16
Regents Park	18	3	3	12	20	64	12

Metro 2	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Park Ridge	18	15	3	0	70	14	48
Brisbane Strikers	17	12	4	1	56	18	40
Brisbane Wolves	18	11	4	3	53	27	37
Ridge Hills	18	11	0	7	42	27	33
Pine Rivers	17	10	2	5	37	22	32
Mitchelton	16	9	2	5	39	31	29
Annerley	18	5	3	10	24	36	18
Grange Thistle	18	5	2	11	25	46	17
Brighton District	18	5	2	11	28	55	17
Woodridge	15	4	3	8	28	34	15
Newmarket	17	2	3	12	21	48	9
Redcliffe PCYC	18	0	2	16	16	81	2

TABLES TO 23rd JULY

Metro 3	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
The Gap	16	12	2	2	45	15	38
Mooroonda	18	11	2	5	68	32	35
Newmarket	18	11	2	5	58	31	35
Acacia Ridge	17	10	3	4	38	27	33
Eastern Suburbs	17	9	4	4	49	34	31
Western Spirit	17	9	4	4	43	29	31
Capalaba	17	9	3	5	44	29	30
Peninsula Power	18	6	1	11	33	45	19
Ipswich Knights	17	6	1	10	34	55	19
Westside Sports	17	3	5	9	31	44	14
Moggill	18	4	1	13	36	57	13
North Pine	18	0	0	18	13	94	0

Metro 4	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Slacks Creek	18	16	1	1	64	22	49
Brisbane Olympic	17	13	2	2	79	22	41
Park Ridge	18	11	1	6	39	25	34
Brisbane Strikers	18	9	2	7	46	36	29
University of Qld	17	8	1	8	37	37	25
Albany Creek	16	6	5	5	37	28	23
Ridge Hills	18	5	6	7	26	38	21
Ipswich City	16	6	2	8	24	39	20
Newmarket	18	5	3	10	32	52	18
Redlands United	16	4	2	10	26	52	14
Southside Eagles	17	1	6	10	16	42	9
Logan City	17	1	5	11	29	62	8

Metro 5	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Narangba	17	14	3	0	71	20	45
Mt Gravatt	18	14	2	2	56	18	44
Kangaroo Pt Rovers	17	10	3	4	39	25	33
Logan Village	18	9	6	3	47	34	33
Albany Creek	18	9	3	6	42	30	30
Jimboomba	18	9	3	6	41	40	30
Beenleigh	18	7	1	10	47	57	22
Slacks Creek	18	5	2	11	33	44	17
Clairvaux	18	4	5	9	37	54	17
Grange Thistle	18	3	6	9	27	44	15
Mooroonda	18	3	1	14	22	50	10
Annerley	18	2	1	15	15	61	7

Metro 6	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
North Pine	17	16	0	1	101	20	48
Narangba	18	10	4	4	36	20	34
Pine Hills	17	10	3	4	44	23	33
Kangaroo Pt Rovers	17	9	4	4	35	16	31
Eastern Suburbs	17	9	1	7	29	23	28
Annerley	18	8	3	7	26	36	27
Ridge Hills	18	8	2	8	34	28	26
Moggill	18	7	4	7	40	34	25
Oxley United	17	4	4	9	30	45	16
Regents Park	17	4	0	13	20	61	12
Brisbane Wolves	18	3	2	13	25	72	11
Park Ridge	18	2	3	13	26	68	9

Premier Youth	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Pine Rivers	16	15	1	0	61	13	46
Brisbane City	17	12	2	3	47	19	38
Brisbane Wolves	17	11	3	3	41	20	36
Rochdale Rovers	17	8	4	5	36	24	28
Queensland Lions	17	8	4	5	31	25	28
Brisbane Strikers	17	7	5	5	22	16	26
Brisbane Force	16	8	0	8	38	21	24
Palm Beach	16	6	2	8	20	32	20
Toowoomba Raiders	16	3	5	8	14	38	14
Mt Gravatt	17	0	7	10	20	42	7
Souths United	16	1	4	11	12	44	7
Mitchelton	18	1	3	14	10	58	6

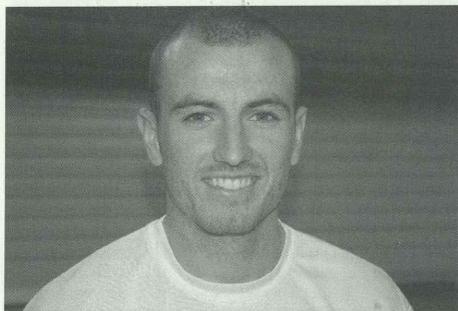
Division 1 Youth	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
University of Qld	18	15	3	0	50	11	48
Albany Creek	18	12	2	4	53	26	38
Narangba	18	11	0	7	58	40	33
Eastern Suburbs	18	10	2	6	28	22	32
Brisbane Olympic	16	8	3	5	33	30	27
Ipswich Knights	18	6	6	6	35	38	24
Brisbane Wolves	17	6	2	9	29	40	20
Capalaba	18	5	4	9	31	48	19
Redlands United	17	4	4	9	24	32	16
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news desk



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BLEIBERG ADDS NEW FORWARD TO ROAR SQUAD



MIRON Bleiberg has added another piece to the Queensland Roar jigsaw as the second season of the Hyundai A-League fast approaches.

Scottish forward Simon Lynch has agreed terms with the club on a two-year deal after impressing Bleiberg during the week-long training camp at Runaway Bay. Lynch, 24, who was born in Montreal, bagged 13 goals in 28 starts last season for Scottish Division One side Dundee and has been courted by clubs from the English Championship and the Scottish Premier League.

The 182 centimetre striker began his career at top Scottish side Glasgow Celtic between 1999 and 2003, before moving south to English outfit Preston North End where he stayed until 2005. During his spell with Preston, Lynch spent time on loan with Stockport County and Blackpool.

With Roar Coach Bleiberg looking for pace and movement to compliment the lethal finishing of Ante Milicic, Lynch fits the bill nicely and becomes the 18th member of Bleiberg's 2006/07 squad.

Speaking before he heads back to Scotland to finalise the shipping of his belongings, Lynch said the decision to sign was easy once he had seen the set-up at Queensland Roar.

"Everyone has made me feel very welcome here and I'm delighted to have signed for the club. I like what Queensland are trying to do and what they aim to achieve, so I'm looking forward to being a part of it.

"I was keen to come out to Brisbane and see what the club and the city was like before I signed and since I've been here I've been so impressed with everything. The team, the facilities and the professionalism is just first-class and I can't wait for this challenge in the Hyundai A-League."

In the Scottish press recently, Dundee's chief executive, Dave MacKinnon, suggested that if the striker chose to ply his trade in Australia rather than in Scotland, then it would be a lifestyle decision rather than a football decision, but Lynch was quick to refute these claims. "Obviously there are lifestyle factors associated with my decision to come here, but as far as I'm concerned I'm coming here for the football and I have a lot of ambition to do well. At this point in my career I have no doubt that this is the right move for me," said Lynch. After searching for further firepower to add tooth to his attack, Roar Coach Miron Bleiberg is delighted to have secured Lynch as his latest signing.

"We were looking for an out-and-out goalscorer; someone to go with Ante Milicic and Reinaldo who would give us some variation in our attacks. In signing Simon I think we have achieved that and he has enjoyed a good scoring record throughout his career. He is quick and has a good nose for a goal, which is a natural talent and not something that you can teach. "It is not every day that you can sign a player who has played in the first team at Glasgow Celtic and there is no doubt in my mind that after two years with us he will have made a name for himself in Australian football," Bleiberg said.

"It is a win-win situation for us and for Simon. He wanted a change with a challenge and we were looking for a player with his kind of ability, so we are very happy that he has decided to join us and I'm sure our supporters will enjoy his style of play," he added.

BROWN IN AT CITY

FORMER Brisbane Strikers hit-man, Rod Brown, has been appointed as the new coach at Brisbane City following Gordon Tulloch's departure last month.

City President, Bill Monteverde, said the club felt a change of coach was the right move after some ordinary recent performances that saw City fall from finals contention.

"The players weren't responding and it was a case of changing 15 players or just one coach. We are disappointed that he has left the club all together but he chose to do so. That is his decision and we have to live with it," said Monteverde.

EASTS GO FOR BELL

EASTERN Suburbs have also changed their coach with Graeme Binney axed and Cameron Bell installed in the hot seat after a torrid season for the Tigers.

A perplexed Binney said: "I don't understand why they (the club) would make this decision at this stage of the season. At the start of the year I made it clear that we would struggle with the players we had.

"I hope they stay up but they still have to win the same amount of games with the same players as I had and that's not going to be easy."

Brisbane
MENS FOOTBALL

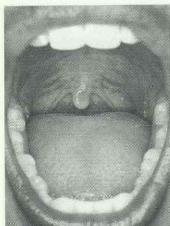
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a month of mouth

with JOEL GOULD

The coaches have their say on their side's season so far

BRISBANE Strikers look set to finish on top of the Brisbane Premier League in 2006 but with four matches remaining there are five teams in contention for the other three semi-final spots.

It's hard to imagine the final makeup of the top four being decided before the final round of matches with Rochedale, Taringa, Pine Rivers, Palm Beach and Souths all semi-final contenders

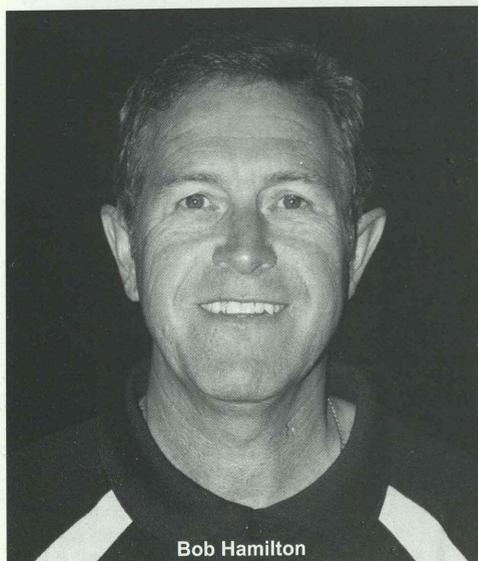
Consistency, quality and a positive attitude are all there at front runners Brisbane Strikers this year.

Strikers group CEO, Steve Wilson, said nothing had been left to chance in 2006 with quality personnel across all positions a major factor in the club's success.

"I really do think the reason for our success is everything to do with the calibre of the people at the club - the players who were already here and the ones who have wanted to come here.

"The players all get on extremely well. There is a lot of joking in the dressing room and the players enjoy their football. As a club we look after everything else so all the players have to concentrate on is playing football. Coach Bobby Hamilton came in last year and we thought he did a good job and deserved another shot at it."

The Strikers were tipped by many to win the title in 2005. That didn't happen but few would bet against them



Bob Hamilton

achieving that goal this season. Despite some player comings and goings the season has developed with few mishaps.

"I think the depth of the squad has definitely been a difference this year," he said.

"This time last year we were hit with a number of injuries. We have been lucky with injuries this season and also have been able to pick up quality players as well."

Wilson pointed out that the club had shown foresight to replace quality with quality. Up front the Strikers have lost Josh Rose to Romania and Gareth Musson to Wolverhampton Wanderers.

Former Lions and Queensland Roar striker Reece Tollenaere has replaced Musson and is working well up front with Alex Panic. The Strikers also lost gun midfielder Michael Zullo for a month while he went overseas for the World Cup.

Wilson rang Jamie Johnson who was studying in Boston at the time and he came back to Brisbane to fill the breach. Johnson has played in Vietnam and the US and slotted in well out wide on the left.

Wilson said Zullo was a player to really set the competition alight.

"Michael Zullo is one of the most exciting players around," Wilson said.

"Talk to the coaches and they have all got their eye on him. He is small in stature but a real handful when he is running at the opposition. He also has plenty of speed across the ground."

Zullo will be back for the Strikers throughout August and September.

When pressed on which team Strikers would most likely meet if they make the Grand Final Wilson pinpointed the Kieran Cooper-coached Rochedale. Not only do Strikers expect to meet Rochedale they also look forward to meeting the Rovers on the pitch.

"We always enjoy playing Rochedale," Wilson said.

"They are a team that wants to play on a good pitch and they want to play football."

Due to their history and player strength Brisbane Strikers are expected to win the Premier League competition. Wilson said the pressure of having to perform at the top level each week was something the players had dealt with well in 2006.

"For us it is very similar to what Lions used to experience. Everyone lifts against us. You can see it. Bobby (Hamilton) has been able to instil in the players the need to meet all the challenges head on."

Taringa Rovers will look to get a full three competition points at Easts on August 5 before finishing with tough matches against Strikers, Rochedale and Palm Beach.

"Most of the teams in the top five have to play each other so it is going to be an interesting last month," said Taringa assistant coach Russell Sommerville.

Sommerville said it was encouraging to see striker Steve Unsworth in such good form. Unsworth bagged a double in a recent 3-0 win over Brisbane City.

"Steve is scoring goals most weeks and it is good to know you have got someone like him there. He and Resa (Aysen) have proved to be a good combination.

"Steve is a good target man. He keeps the ball well and has got that bit of mongrel about him for a striker."

The Rovers have been pleased with their strike-power but it is other areas of the pitch where they will need to be secure.

"I think defence is going to be a big thing. That is what we are going to concentrate on. We have shown that we can score goals but the focus will be not conceding any."

The Rovers have some quality defenders. David Thomas has done well at left back and guys like Ryan Love have also performed well on the right.

Pine Rivers coach Clayton Koch agreed the Premier League was set for a grandstand finish. With four rounds to go Koch pointed out that a winning streak could keep or catapult a side into the four.

"If any of the teams in contention can win the last four games then it is going to be hard to keep them out of the four," Koch said.

"It is going to be a very entertaining end to the season. Strikers are home for top spot but in my view the other positions are anyone's. Rochedale, Taringa, Palm Beach, us and Souths are all fighting for those three other spots. Palm Beach look to have the toughest run of anyone (with Souths, Rochedale, Pine Rivers and Taringa). Taringa also finish with the top three teams (Strikers, Rochedale and Palm Beach)."

Koch pinpointed the Predators round 21 clash with Palm Beach away as 'a six point game' and one likely to be crucial in the final placings.

"But all of our games are just as important. We will take it week by week and not get too far ahead of ourselves," he said.

At the time of writing six **Division 1** teams - Ipswich Knights, Olympic, Peninsula Power, Beenleigh, UQ and Brisbane Force - were fighting for top spot. The Joe Fenech-coached Ipswich Knights were leading the table.

Fenech said no matter whether playing the top or bottom placed sides it was going to be a tough closing month.

"The bottom placed sides are fighting for survival and have just as much to lose as the top teams. This Division 1 competition is by far and away the tightest in many a year. On their day any side can beat another. While half of the competition is out of (finals) contention those teams will still have a big say in who makes it and who doesn't."

Fenech said his squad had shown plenty of character throughout the season and praised the young brigade in his squad.

"They have followed the match plan to a tee and have trained exceptionally well. Michael Brown has just turned 18 and has really led by example. We've played him at central midfield, stopper and sweeper. He's proven very versatile and has done well in all of those positions.

"Brodie Kenyon is 19 and he has scored some fantastic goals. Last year he made the team on and off but this year he has come along in leaps and bounds. Trent Griffiths is 23 or 24 and has played Premier League with Taringa a few seasons ago. He has been absolutely brilliant. He is one of our leading strikers and can also play midfield. He is a quiet achiever who just gets on with the job."

Fenech added he was confident about making positional changes to the 11 if things aren't going to plan without having to make substitutions. While admitting every game was important the Knights coach did look ahead to the August 20 clash at Goodwin Park as pivotal.

"I'm really looking forward to the second last game against Olympic. It may well be the decider (for top spot)."

Fenech, a former Australian and British armed services football representative, is keen to leave a lasting legacy at Ipswich Knights.

He is also director of coaching at the club and has helped establish a junior program. He gets around all of the junior sides, chipping away each weekend

A holder of a UEFA B coaching license, he is a visionary too. At the start of the year he told the parents that he was going to 'teach the kids how to run.' They were a bit bemused by that but he pointed out that without the requisite speed and agility the skills of the game cannot be put into practice. Fenech's 'learn how to run' clinics on a Friday have proved a huge success.

Beenleigh are another of the sides well in contention for promotion to the Premier League.

Some key results in recent times, including a 2-0 win over Ipswich Knights, have Peter Bannon's side in a strong position.

Bannon said there was no easy game in the league with most teams "on a par" right down the points ladder.

"We've played as well as anybody in patches," he said.



Joe Fenech

"For us it is just a matter of making those patches last longer. When we play well it is usually because we've put in a good team performance."

While Bannon conceded the win over Ipswich Knights was a crucial one he does not have much time for the notion that there are 'six point matches'.

"People put that connotation on it, probably you blokes in the media, that there are six point games, but it is just three points. There are no six point games," he said.

Slacks Creek's rise to be a top four **Division 2** team in contention for promotion under coach Darron Ryan is one of Brisbane football's fairytale stories in 2006.

Ryan, a player with the club since the mid 1980s, was goalkeeper in the 2003 Slacks Creek side that came from third spot to beat Southside Eagles in the Grand Final.

The following two years Slacks Creek finished second last and only stayed up after relegation battles.

Some of the key players had moved to other clubs by the end of 2005 and Ryan had to coax back guys who were getting paid. No-one gets paid at Slacks Creek, he told ExtraTime.

Ryan said he went in search of experienced players when he took over the job as coach at the start of the year. Where better to start than the successful 2003 premiership winning side. A third of Ryan's squad played in that glory year.

"I don't know what I said to them," Ryan joked when asked what he said to attract the guns back.

"They knew I had a passion for the game, don't do things by halves and hate losing. The players enjoy their football - the social side and the competitive side. And I have two good squads of 18 which you need in this competition."

Ryan added he had the full co-operation of the Slacks Creek committee, a committee he said that did not meddle in team selections. He also has a trustworthy lieutenant in long time player Ross Constable who looks after the reserves.

North Pine, Southside Eagles, Slacks Creek and Pine Hills look likely to finish as the top four but the order is still to be decided. Attacking football has paid off for Slacks Creek and made them one of the favourites.

"The key to our success has been our ability to score goals. We've conceded a fair few but each time we cross half-way we look likely to score."

Star striker Asa Harrington had 18 goals after 15 games, an amazing strike rate.

"Asa certainly has an eye for goal. He is so often in the right spot at the right time," Ryan said.

Harrington played in the 2003 team as did gun midfielders Ryan Wandschneider, Daniel Travis-Jones and David Fisher who have all been inspirational.

"Ryan is our team captain and is a real workhorse in midfield. He doesn't say much on the pitch but he really leads by example.

"Daniel Travis-Jones is our club captain and plays both in the mid-field and sometimes up front. He is a real motivator and does the talking for me."

Ryan said Fisher wasn't out of place when his side took on

Rochedale in a recent Premier Cup clash.

"David has an indoor background where he played for Australia. He is the one who provides us with the silky, smooth touches."

Talk to Ryan and you realise he is man with a genuine love of the game; he knows a challenge awaits too.

Slack's Creek finish with a tough four matches - three against the top teams and another hard one against a resurgent Moggill side that will be fighting to stay up.

"Our destiny is in our own hands," he said.

Southside Eagles coach Dale Zimmerlie said the race for the crucial top two promotion spots was still wide open.

Speaking just before round 18 he said it was "definitely not a two horse race" between his side and the North Pine Gorillas.

Zimmerlie praised his players for the way they have adapted to different styles of play depending on the opposition. Talk to top opposing coaches and you soon realise that tactical nous has been a hallmark of Southside Eagles success in 2006. Credit must go to coach and players for that.

It hasn't been all plain sailing for Zimmerlie and his side with goalkeeper Robert McVie leaving for overseas and sweeper Kurt Taylor ruled out with injury.

Zimmerlie said all of his players paid their registrations fees and were at the club because they want to be. Players brought up from reserves have slotted in well too.

"The boys have been disciplined towards the referee, towards the opposition and towards the way we want to play the game."

The Eagles are very much a team focus with a number of individuals shining throughout the season.

The last two minutes of the recent win over Pine Hills the Eagles withstood plenty of pressure to win 2-1. Zimmerlie trains his players to scramble in critical game situations with 11 taking on 15 in team training drills. The team also practices regularly to deal with the eventuation of playing with 10 men.

Zimmerlie said his focus was on getting the processes right rather than worry too much about the ladder.

"I don't focus too much on the results. If you just focus on results then it can become stressful."

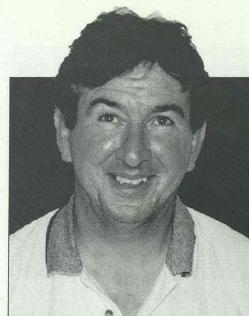
Meanwhile, Pine Hills must play the rest of the season without injured star midfielder Matthew McKenna. Coach Ashley Hempstead conceded his hopes of promotion to next years Division 1 were slim and a semi-final spot is the goal for his side.

"Well just try and win as many games as we can. If we finish in the top four that will still be a good result."

Hempstead added that he just favoured Southside Eagles ahead of North Pine for the first past the post.

"They are both good sides. Against Southside Eagles recently I thought we dominated the second half but they kept their shape well and play a good tactical game. They defend strongly and they have good strikers.

"North Pine have the advantage of a bigger squad but I just think tactically Southside Eagles are the better team and have the better coach in Dale Zimmerlie." ☺



Opinion

with kieran cooper

WITH the World Cup now a thing of the past (for another 4 years at least) it will be interesting to see what impact it has on our game. Hopefully the excitement generated by our beloved (Socceroos) will kick on and football in this country will no longer be seen as the fourth code.

I must say that during the World Cup it was fantastic to pick up a newspaper on a daily basis and have 4 or 5 pages of football. Ok, many people jumped on the bandwagon but it was still terrific. It did die off a bit when the Aussies were knocked out but I suppose that's understandable. During the World Cup I must have taken about 10 phone calls from parents whose children had been watching and now wanted to play football. If this is a sign of things to come then surely this great game of ours is going places. The problem now will be keeping it in the spotlight.

This brings me to another point. Australia's elimination. When I came to work the next day I was bombarded with questions from non-football people about how we were robbed. It is hard sometimes to explain to these people but I did my best. My personal opinion is that we left the World Cup in a perfect way.

Let me explain.

Australia captured the hearts of the nation; in fact they probably captured the hearts of the whole world. They went into the tournament as minnows and came out with credibility. I was in a tipping comp and I tipped them to lose each game. Against Japan they came back in the last 8 minutes to win. It was one of those great Australian sporting moments. Against Brazil we were all worried that they would get hammered but they more than held their own. Against Croatia they again came back twice, had a number of very dodgy calls go

At the end of the day, if you dive in or make a tackle in the box you are taking a huge risk



against them and still managed to progress. I must say the way they played in the group stages they deserved to go on to the next round.

Then came the Italians. This is the game that we were supposed to be robbed in. This was the game that really got the Australian public talking. You see, had Australia been beaten by a wonder goal, the public would have been happy but it would have been expected. However, to lose in the final 10 seconds to a dodgy penalty left them with a feeling of being robbed. So you see, to the average Australian, we were not beaten, we were cheated. This will keep a lot of non-football people interested.

Now I will ask a question to all you football people. When the incident occurred, was your first thought "Penalty"? Mine was. So if your first impression was 'penalty', then what should the referee's be? It was only after watching the slow motion replay from different angles that we could see the Italian actually went over the top of Neil and it shouldn't have been given. I read a few comments from well-known football people the next day who asked, "if the decision was at the other end of the pitch and Australia won the game in a similar situation would we be complaining?"

I don't think so. At the end of the day, if you dive in or make a tackle in the box you are taking a huge risk. Has your coach never told you not to dive in, especially in the box? Neil took the chance and lost. Hindsight and video evidence shows it was a bad call, but

unfortunately that's part and parcel of the game. Like I said, Australia played very well and should be very proud.

This brings me to the subject of video evidence. Should we be using what's available? People from the old school will say that the video evidence takes away the spur of the moment calls and ruins the game. They will say the referee is human and will make mistakes, just like everybody else. This is always how it has been, even at our level. How often do we read on the forums about the referee? If we use the cameras available will it destroy the game? When should we use them? How often should we use them?

Martin Tyler made a suggestion that each coach had 3 occasions during a match to question the call. Sure this would help, but what if the coach has already made his 3 calls and something happens with 10 seconds to go like what happened to Australia. Is this fair? Do we want the same situation as Rugby League, where we all have to wait for a result? I glanced at parts of the last State of Origin match and witnessed this on a few occasions. We all waited for a call from the video ref, the commentators were sure the decision would be one way as it was obvious to them after seeing it once. But the longer it went on, the more angles they looked at, the decision went the other way. Even the commentators were left wondering. So here we were, after the game had been stopped for a couple of minutes getting the decision wrong anyway. Or was it?

In my view here is the problem. If we accept that mistakes will be made and if we educate the commentators to say the right things then maybe the spotlight won't continually be on the referee. We must accept that the referee is human. If he has made mistakes he will not be given another game. Either way, it has to be one or the other. We either allow video evidence in football or we accept the result of decisions. What will it be?

And finally here are questions to ponder.

Question: During games, if a player is involved in something in back play that has not been seen by any of the officials but it is brought to the attention of FIFA by way of video evidence, what happens to the player?

Answer: FIFA make a ruling and the player is suspended.

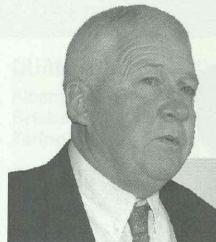
Question: If Australia had lost to Croatia because the referee made the mistake of not sending off a player who had been booked three times and the video later showed he had made the mistake. What would have happened?

Answer: The game would have been replayed.

Question: If the referee makes a mistake and a team loses as a result of this mistake, then video evidence later shows the mistake, what happens?

Answer: ??????????????

So what's the difference? ☺



The BMF Chairman on taking advantage of our local environment

mikebailey

LIFE'S A BEACH

I want to talk about two quite different aspects of football this month. Firstly, Beach Football. Now, by Beach Football I don't mean the state of some of our grounds courtesy of the current drought. I mean Beach Football, football played on a beach; well sand anyway. BMF have had a meeting with Beach Football Qld about a proposed competition involving some of our best players to be played in October. If this sanctioned event is a success then we will be looking to establishing a full blown Beach Football Competition in subsequent summers. Any of you who have seen this exciting form of our game on TV will know of the skill level it expresses and the passion it generates. At present Beach Football is dominated by the South Americans yet right here in Queensland we have the climate and the lifestyle that could well embrace this particular type of football. More info about this competition will be available through BMF very shortly and we would encourage all interested Clubs to get their nominations in early, as entries will be limited. So stay tuned for more on Brazil in Brisbane.

THE NEW COMP

BMF have also had further discussions with Football Qld about the proposed new elite Competition which we are hoping to get under way in 2008. We have begun to formulate the criteria for entry into this competition and at a meeting on July 29 we hope to be able to produce a document which we will present to interested parties detailed information about the requirements of this new league. This information will include player payments, marketing requirements, set up costs, and so forth. In short, we hope to be able to tell prospective entrants what they need to budget to be part of this exciting new concept.

This information will be presented at a meeting in August. This meeting will also seek feedback about

Having watched the BMF Invitation Team give Queensland Roar a run for their money in their friendly match I am more than ever convinced that we have the talent in Queensland to considerably narrow the gap between our top comp and the A-League



Beach Football: Feel the sand between your toes

what the prospective teams believe needs to be included. I have avoided using the word Club because we will welcome applications from any sector of the game or indeed individuals who believe they meet the required criteria. After this meeting people should then be able to assess whether or not they currently have the capacity to be part of the new competition. It should also enable those who are thinking about joining other Clubs or entities to form new Clubs to assess their viability and potential to be part of this Competition.

We will also seek at this time input from the wider Football Community about what they would like to see in this new elite competition. Having watched the BMF Invitation Team give Queensland Roar a run for their money in their friendly match, I am more than ever convinced that we have the talent in Queensland to considerably narrow the gap between our top comp and the A-League. Moreover, the ability and skill displayed by the players in the BMF team deserves a bigger stage. And the players need to be more highly rewarded for the time and effort they put into their football. This new competition will ensure that this happens.

In conclusion, it was good to see the Qld Government put a substantial sum of money into the Development of The World Game. It seems as if the World Cup has opened some very important eyes to the strength and the beauty of our Game. Better late than never. And here in Brisbane our major competitions continue to provide a state of excitement with seemingly every top division going down to the wire. As I write this it's impossible to pick top four teams or be remotely conclusive about promotion or relegation. Great, is it not?

See you at a game. ☺



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PREMIER CUP

QUALIFYING ROUND

Albany Creek	2 v 3	Beenleigh
Brisbane City	4 v 3	Brisbane Wolves
Taringa Rovers	8 v 0	Logan City

ROUND 1

Mitchelton	3 v 2	Rocklea United
Ipswich City	0 v 2	Acacia Ridge
Toowoomba	0 v 4	Brisbane Strikers
Taringa Rovers	2 v 1	Mt Gravatt
Slacks Creek	0 v 7	Rochdale Rovers
Samford Rangers	2 v 3	North Pine
Beenleigh	0 v 1	Annerley
Ipswich Knights	0 v 1	Brisbane Olympic
Western Spirit	0 v 1	Capalaba
University of Qld	2 v 0	Redlands United
Brisbane Force	6 v 1	Newmarket
Moggill	0 v 7	Palm Beach
Peninsula Power	4 v 0	Pine Hills
The Gap	4 v 2	Grange Thistle
Souths United	3 v 0	Pine Rivers
Brisbane City	4 v 0	Eastern Suburbs

ROUND 2

University of Qld	0 v 5	North Pine
Acacia Ridge	2 v 1	Capalaba
Annerley	0 v 4	Brisbane Strikers
Souths United	0 v 0	Brisbane City
<i>(City won 5-4 on penalties)</i>		
Peninsula Power	2 v 1	Taringa Rovers
Rochdale Rovers	5 v 2	Brisbane Olympic
Palm Beach	8 v 0	The Gap
Brisbane Force	2 v 3	Mitchelton

QUARTER FINALS

Brisbane Strikers	2 v 1	Peninsula Power
Rochdale Rovers	1 v 2	Mitchelton
Brisbane City	0 v 3	Palm Beach
North Pine	8 v 1	Acacia Ridge

SEMI FINALS (Sat 29th July @ Perry Park)

5.00pm	North Pine	v	Palm Beach
7.00pm	Brisbane Strikers	v	Mitchelton

METRO CUP

The Quarter and Semi-Finals of the Metro Cup have been run and won. The major talking point of the Quarter-Finals was Park Ridge's victory over Metro 1 leaders Bayside Utd. After a scoreless first half, the Ridge notched an early second half goal and doubled their lead shortly after. Bayside pulled one back on the hour through Metro 1's leading goalscorer, Babou Faye. However, an own goal in the 77th minute put the game beyond Bayside's reach.

Metro 2's Brisbane Strikers scored just before the break against Wilston Athletic from Metro 1 to hold a half-time lead. Wilston came out firing after the interval to score three goals in 15 minutes before the Strikers immediately replied to bring it back to 3-2. It looked like the Metro 1 team would hang on but the Strikers managed an equalizer with five minutes remaining. Straight to penalties and Wilston got up 4-3 in the shootout.

The Metro 3 boys from Easts put up a fight against Old Bridge from Metro 1, going in to the break at 1-1. Old Bridge went ahead after 64 minutes and held on to this lead until they scored another in added time. Regents Park atoned for their recent Metro 1 league defeat at Taringa by beating them 5-2. They were up 2-0 after 12 minutes through a strike from 18 yards and then a shot from a very acute angle. They extended their lead to 3-0 just before the half ended. Taringa opened their account 3 minutes after the restart but Regents snuffed out any thought of a comeback by notching their fourth 5 minutes later and then an own goal on the hour made it 5-1. A Taringa penalty with 5 minutes left finished the scoring.

The first semi-final was between two Metro 1 teams, Wilston Athletic, who after a mid-season slump have surged back up the table and Old Bridge, currently involved in a fight at the other end of the table. It started off at a cracking pace with Wilston scoring a well

worked goal after just 8 minutes through Brian Sexton, who finished of at the far post. Play continued to see-saw before Senad Catic hit a long range shot that gave the keeper no chance, 2-0 to Wilston after 36 minutes. Old Bridge came back into the game after half-time as Wilston appeared to have settled on their lead. Their persistence was rewarded when they reduced the deficit in the 70th minute with a similar goal to Wilston's first, with Adnan Avdic slotting the ball home. Old Bridge continued to press for the equalizer that would have sent the game to penalties but couldn't find a way through the Wilston defence. Wilston had chances to finish the game off but were unable to capitalize on them.

The other semi-final saw Regents Park take on Metro 2 leaders Park Ridge. Nine minutes into the second half Ridge went behind when George Sukker headed home from 8 yards. Regents Park doubled their lead with a deflected Andrew McIntyre free-kick.

The Metro Cup Final between Wilston Athletic and Regents Park will be played on Sunday, 30 July at Perry Park, kicking off at 3.00pm.

QUARTER FINALS

Brisbane Strikers M2	3 v 3	Wilston Athletic M1
<i>(Wilston won 4-3 on pens)</i>		
Eastern Suburbs M3	1 v 3	Old Bridge M1
Bayside Utd M1	1 v 3	Park Ridge M2
Taringa Rovers M1	2 v 5	Regents Park M1

SEMI FINALS

Wilston Athletic M1	2 v 1	Old Bridge M1
Regents Park M1	2 v 0	Park Ridge M2

FINAL (Sun 30th July @ Perry Park - 3.00pm kick off)

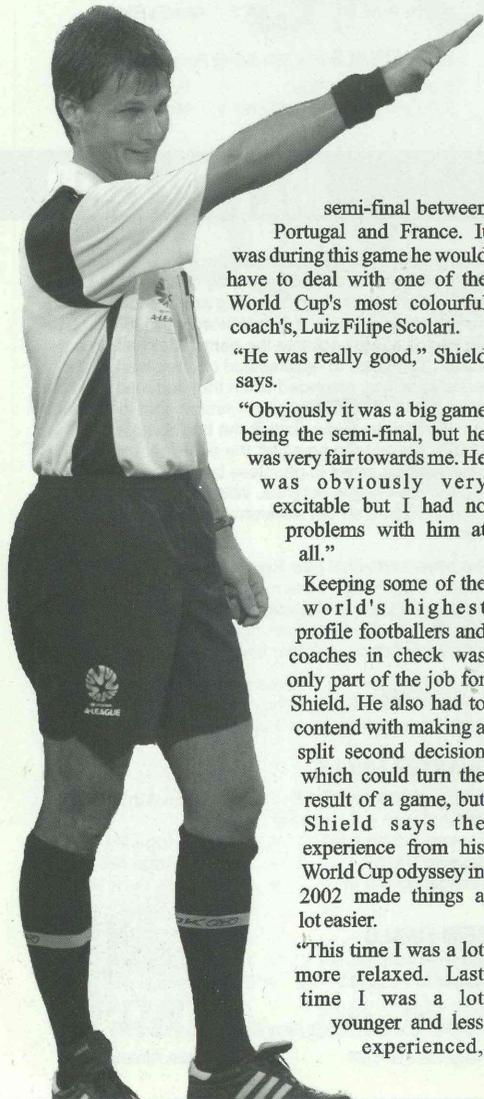
Regents Park M1	v	Wilston Athletic M1
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ON-SIDE

WORDS: VITOR SOBRAL

The Socceroos may have gone further in the World Cup than any Australian had gone before, but Queensland's own referee Mark Shield is now our most experienced FIFA World Cup campaigner.

MARK Shield has been to the last two World Cups and his performances in Germany were just as impressive as the Socceroos'. He was an outsider to referee the final, and was given the task of fourth official for the



semi-final between Portugal and France. It was during this game he would have to deal with one of the World Cup's most colourful coach's, Luiz Filipe Scolari.

"He was really good," Shield says.

"Obviously it was a big game being the semi-final, but he was very fair towards me. He was obviously very excitable but I had no problems with him at all."

Keeping some of the world's highest profile footballers and coaches in check was only part of the job for Shield. He also had to contend with making a split second decision which could turn the result of a game, but Shield says the experience from his World Cup odyssey in 2002 made things a lot easier.

"This time I was a lot more relaxed. Last time I was a lot younger and less experienced,

this time I knew what to expect and that helped a lot."

What also helped Shield and every other referee at the World Cup was FIFA's preparation for the officials.

"Last time round there was still a lot of physical preparation, but this time there was a lot more instruction and a lot more preparation on the practical side of things," Shield explains.

"We were doing practical sessions almost every day."

Even with so much preparation, Germany 2006 still had its fair share of controversial refereeing decisions. But Shield points out that the standard of officiating at the World Cup was still very good.

"FIFA set benchmarks for the referees to achieve at this World Cup, and overall the referees did achieve those benchmarks, certainly in terms of stamping out lunging tackles and elbowing."

But there is one thing that referees were powerless to abolish, and it is the same thing that could have cost Australia a place in the quarter-final and beyond simulation. Shield recognises that referees were unable to stop the diving peril which engulfed the World Cup.

"Determining what is a dive and what is a foul is very hard because players are so quick and getting so good at it (diving), you really have to be in the right position to tell," Shield says. "Some of the decisions made by referees, it's a split second decision, then sometimes you look at the TV monitor after the match and it shows a different thing."

The menace which is plaguing the sport has been spotted by many media pundits and football fans. German World Cup winner Franz Beckenbauer has asked for a summit to combat diving in football, and it is something that Shield agrees with wholeheartedly.

"There were a lot of yellow cards given for simulation but there was a hell of a lot of diving in this World Cup too. It's a form of cheating and I agree with Franz on this because it just makes it so difficult for referees."

The other talking point of World Cup from an officiating point of view was the amount of yellow and red cards dished out during the tournament. Shield says FIFA gave the referees a directive to protect the skilful players and the officials duly obliged.

"I don't think anyone really likes sending off a player or giving a lot of red cards in a World Cup, but there were many instances where foul play was punished correctly and I think that's a good thing."

In his two games in charge, Tunisia vs Saudi Arabia and Iran vs Angola Shield, handed out 10 yellow cards. His grasp of Arabic must also be improving because in all three World Cup matches Shield has been number one, an Arabic speaking team has been involved. But learning Arabic and being part of a semi-final is perhaps not Shield's highlight of the tournament. That honour would have to go to the performance of the Socceroos.

"The boys performed exceptionally well and it just gave Australia a little bit more credibility on the international stage," Shield says.

The Queensland referee celebrated along with every other Australian football fan on the night Australia drew with Croatia, and he hopes this World Cup is just the beginning.

"As a football fan I hope they're part of the next one and a regular competitor in the World Cup. It's a good feeling to have your national team play in the biggest tournament."

But the Socceroos and Shield were not the only Aussies participating in the World Cup. Assistants Ben Wilson and Nathan Gibson were also part of the action. Shield says having his fellow countrymen by his side made things easier on him.

"It makes a big difference. I've refereed with them many, many times and it just makes a big difference having a team you know and work well with, it's much easier than working by yourself."

The performance of Australia's officiating contingent showed just how far its referees had come in the last few years. Shield points out that the formation of the A-League has also helped the credibility of Australian referees.

"Australian referees have a good reputation around the world," Shield says.

"With the A-League that's only going to get better and I know we can match with the best in the world."

Shield also believes young referees should be encouraged to get to that top level.

"We need to make sure there are referees to follow up and more so we have to make sure there's competition at the top."

To make sure our referees are of the highest standard they may have to turn professional. FIFA President Sepp Blatter has already pointed out that the next World Cup should be made up of professional referees. If this is to be the case Shield is all for it.

"If it means choosing from a panel of full time referees I agree with that. In the last 12 months I've spent 160 days overseas, so to try and do a job and spend so much time overseas is very difficult. I'm lucky in my situation that I can do it. There's so much money in game these days, so I think referees should be full time and 100% concentrating on the game."

Although being part of the semi-final was an excellent experience for Shield, he is still a little disappointed he

"There's always mixed feelings at the end of the tournament. Everyone wants to referee the final but only one team gets to do it."

wasn't involved in the final.

"There's always mixed feelings at the end of the tournament. Everyone wants to referee the final but only one team gets to do it."

Shield will have to wait another four years to fulfil his ultimate dream. However this doesn't involve working on his angry face as the media pointed out. Shield says that quote was taken out of context.

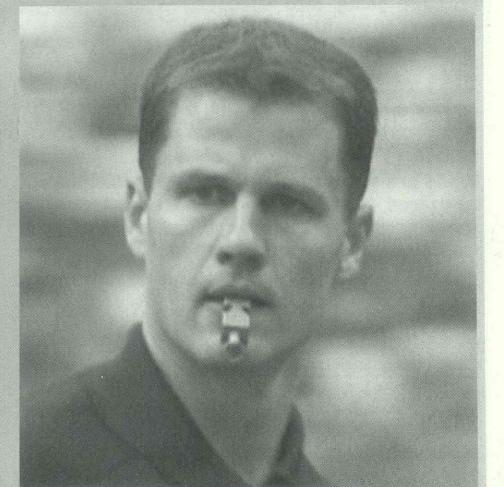
"It was an interview with Spencer Howsen, and he said every time we talk you're a nice fella, you're a real gentleman, how are you going to referee the World Cup final? I jokingly said I've been working on my angry face. AAP got a hold of it the next day but didn't explain what context it was talked about, and all of sudden people think I am going to try to get into the World Cup final by working on my angry face, but at least the article was funny."

Mark Shield has now gone from officiating in the local Brisbane competition to two World Cup tournaments. Yet the hard working North Queenslander still wants to achieve more as a referee.

"Now it's back into the A-League and keep chipping away at it basically."

But first, Australia's most experienced World Cup campaigner will take a well earned rest.

"I'm going to spend a lot of time with my family and friends," Shield says, and there won't be too many football fans who could argue with that decision. ☺



the full MONTY

This month Monty takes time out to speak with ex-Queensland Roar goalkeeper Scott 'Giggles' Higgins, who has recently been signed by Scottish Premier League, club Falkirk (the 'Bairns').

Scott, I really appreciate you taking the time out to speak with ET and I am sure your article will be consumed eagerly by all your friends in Brisbane. 12 months ago you were about to embark on the new A-League competition with Roar. How did the opportunity to play in the SPL come about?

Obviously I have Scottish connections through my family and have been across here several times and tried my luck. I thought it was a lost cause until late May when I received a phone call from the gaffer at Falkirk, John Hughes, to say they needed a 'keeper and Karl Dodd had spoken highly of me and it just snow balled from there.

No doubt Karl Dodd would have helped to make the transition more comfortable from a personal point of view, but how are the two of you regarded by the rest of the squad and are there any other foreign players in the squad - excluding English of course!?

Yeah, it is always good to have someone you know when traveling abroad to trial or play so it was great for me to have Karl here and good for him to have me joining the squad. I feel we are regarded highly but like anything, you have to earn respect from your workmates through hard work and dedication. It is a big squad with boys from all over: we have three Portuguese players, two Trinidadian players and some Irish boys, so it's a great mix.

Without going into specifics, what length of contract do you have with Falkirk?

At this stage I have signed a 12 month contract with an option to extend. Looking at the big picture, I would love to finish my career in Australia, with Queensland Roar if possible, but at the moment I am very happy to be fulfilling my dream.

While pre-season training is somewhat different compared to when the season has started, in speaking with Karl, how do you see a typical week from Monday through to match day?

Yeah well I hope it is different! All we have done is run and work in the gym, very gruelling but beneficial of course. Once the season starts we will do a double session Mondays, gym in the morning then some head tennis and some 5v2 and 6v2 small sided games just to get the legs going after Saturday's match.

We will then be on the park in the afternoon for a ball session, small sided games etc. Tuesday we will have a double ball session morning and afternoon finishing off

with an hour of running short and sharp and then some long distance stuff. Wednesdays will be double sessions in the gym again during the morning and some small sided games on the ball during the afternoon, practicing crossing and finishing. We will have Thursdays off and just a single session shooting, set pieces for and against, on Fridays.

From a professionalism point of view, what are the major differences between being a Roar player and being at Falkirk?

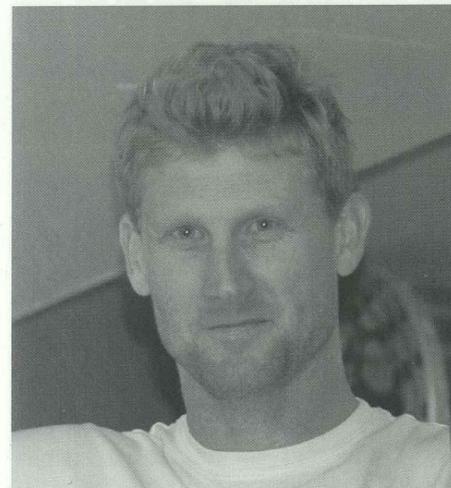
The Roar would have to be the best set-up in Australia. I haven't been to all the other clubs but having spoken to many players from around the country other clubs just don't compare to the Roar. They really do have everything you need. Falkirk also is very well run. The facilities are excellent: pools, gyms, running tracks indoors and out. Obviously with the weather the way it is it's a little different. The real differences are that over here we have a physio whose clinic is at the training ground so any injuries can be handled on site. Also, the youth boys here take a lot of responsibility in ensuring your kit is ready and your boots are clean!

For those not aware, can you give the readers a brief run down of your career starting when you were a wee lad (can't image you were ever a 'wee lad' though!) through to your time playing with the Roar.

I started with Westside Soccer Club at Grovley and played all my junior football there. I then moved to Pine Hills at age 14 and played under Peter Tokesi for a few years and that really changed the whole way I thought about football.

Peter was a massive part of my footballing career and still today I speak with him regarding my football and options. I left Pine Hills and went onto Grange where I had my first taste of senior football. While there I was lucky enough to have another excellent mentor in Danny Docherty. I was there for a few years before moving to the QAS and played a season in the National Youth League with Greg Brown, another excellent coach. It was then on to Brisbane City, a stint at Taringa and back to City.

I then signed with Canberra Cosmos (thanks to you mate). Unfortunately after only two weeks they were thrown out of the NSL so I came home to Brisbane and played in the local leagues again with City and then Wynnum. I got a trial with the Strikers when Stu McLaren took over and was signed as second choice to Jason



Kearton. Jason ended up with an injury and I came in and did ok so played most of the season which was great. I will always thank Stu McLaren for giving me the opportunity and for believing in me. After that season I linked up again with Greg Brown, this time at Mitchelton and had one of the most enjoyable seasons of my career. Then came Queensland Roar! I have been around a bit and in between all of that I trialed at a number of clubs overseas but none were successful.

Unfortunately I missed one of your local 'highlights' when you came off the bench for Wynnum as an outfield player, but apart from this, what was your biggest thrill playing in the local scene?

I had some great moments in the local league and have fantastic memories. Some highlights were winning the Qld Cup and also the Grand Final on penalties with Brisbane City, but my whole year at Mitchelton was so enjoyable and for our team to make the top four and give Lions a big fright in the semis was massive for the club and Brown just made me enjoy my football like never before and the people at the club were fantastic.

On the other side of the coin, what was your most frustrating time, playing in the local competition?

Obviously my two knee reconstructions were a nightmare and kept me away from football for 16 months. When I started playing again I was terrible, letting myself and my team mates down and I thought I would just pack it in for good. That was a low time in my life as far as football goes. I met my now wife around the time I was coming back from my injury and without Helena I would have probably chucked it in.

The A-League's inaugural season was a great success and with the euphoria of the Socceroos in the World Cup the coming season holds further promise to build on. Did this make the decision to move to Falkirk more difficult?

It was a very difficult decision. I had a year left on my contract and loved being at the Roar. The club, people, coaching staff and of course the players are all great. I

spoke at length with Miron about it and put an offer to him to extend my contract for an extra year. I would have loved to have stayed but the club wasn't willing to except my offer so I felt my future lay overseas, at least for now anyway.

Your new gaffer, John Hughes, has playing experience with Celtic and Hibs but probably had his best days as a defender for the Bairns. How has he 'sold' the move to you and what competition do you have for the number 1 guernsey?

He didn't really need to sell too much once I had spoken to Miron at the Roar and felt that I wasn't really in the frame to be there long term. The gaffer is a great motivator and hearing him speak about playing at Park Head was enough for me. At this stage I am here as number 1 'keeper. There are a couple of young boys who are very good but are only 17. They have been looking at other 'keepers to bring in and the boss has told me as long as I keep performing at training and on the pitch then I will be playing.

Falkirk finished third bottom last year with 33 points, scoring 35 goals and conceding 64. I have seen how upset you get conceding a goal on the training ground, have the club been able to recruit well to improve these statistics?

The club hasn't made any signings really. They have some great young boys that have come through and are ready to step up so that's a positive and then there is me! They have been trialling a lot of players though, so I am sure come the 29th, away to Dundee United in the opening fixture, the squad will be settled and ready to win.

I see that there is a local mottie which goes along the lines of: "better meddle wi' the De'il than the Bairns of Falkirk". Although it is early days, how do you rate the 'spirit' at Falkirk?

Fantastic mate! That's one thing I love about the football here. The boys all dig in for each other and help one and other out. Everyone hates loosing so even the training games are competitive and intense. But no matter what is said or done at training the boys are all great afterwards and the banter is brilliant!

I note two specials days coming up. Saturday 9th September, Rangers away and the big one for you, as a Celtic fan, Sunday 1st October against Celtic at home. I can imagine that every game will be special but do you need to pinch yourself to look at the prospect of playing Celtic in front of a packed house at Falkirk?

Of course mate. I have tingles just reading that question. What a buzz it will be for me! Two clean sheets on those days and I will be over the moon mate!

What is the capacity of the ground and what are the average home attendances?

They have just built a new stadium but have yet to complete two sides of it so at the moment it only holds about 12,000. The temporary stand they have built will hold about another 7,000. They seem to think they will fill that every week so that is great. Although over here you can have 1000 and it sounds like you are playing in front of millions, the noise the crowd makes is that unreal!

cont'd p26

It's not cheating



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BMF SIDES PUSH ROAR

Invitational sides make Bleiberg's men earn win



The Division One XI

BRISBANE Mens Football sent out two squads of its top players from the Premier League and Division 1 last month to take on Miron Bleiberg's Queensland Roar as the A-Leaguers continued their pre-season preparations.

First up were the Division 1 Invitational XI coached by Steve Faulkner of Peninsula Power and University of Queensland's Glen Volker.

Miron Bleiberg fielded a composite team for the match with a sprinkling of up-and-coming QAS youngsters given their chance to shine with the professionals. The BMF XI battled hard and chased all night, but in the end it was a comfortable 5-0 victory for Bleiberg's men.

Andrew Packer opened the scoring just minutes in and Sasa Ognenovski made it 2-0 soon after when he touched in a Spase Dilevski drive. Tim Smits added the third with trialist Henry Faarodo making it 4-0 before the break.

QAS starlet Tahj Minniecon made it 5-0 in the second half as Roar took their foot off the pedal and cruised until the final whistle. BMF XI coaches Steve Faulkner and Glen Volker can be proud of their players though as they pushed hard to try and steal a goal in the final minutes against the Hyundai A-League men.

A surprise visitor on the night was Socceroo Josh Kennedy. Fresh from his World Cup exploits in Germany, he was a popular figure at Luxury Paints Stadium when he talked with fans and signed autographs.

The following week it was the Premier League XI's turn to test their mettle. Roar overcame them 3-1 but were made to fight all the way for the victory against the side coached by Anthony Roche and Alan Waller. There was little to choose between the two teams in the opening exchanges as Roar struggled to make clear chances, but on the half hour mark Spase Dilevski fired home strongly after some smart build-up play to make it 1-0.

On the stroke of half time Roar made it 2-0 when Dilevski delivered a pin-point corner to the head of new signing Sasa Ognenovski who powered home a text-book header to double Roar's lead.

Miron Bleiberg rang the changes at the break, bringing on almost an entirely new side that included a number of QAS youngsters and some trialing players. The BMF XI fought their way back into the game and halved the deficit in the 75th minute when Souths United's Ramone Close netted after some good work from Omar Hamid of Pine Rivers.

Roar restored the 2-goal margin just minutes later though when Robbie Kruse latched onto a superb through ball from Murdocca and gave Michael Pike in the BMF goal no chance with a well-taken lob.

Bleiberg commented that he was impressed with BMF's play and determination, inviting Ramone Close to train with his squad the following week.

"The opposition we have played recently was quite weak but we were tested a bit against BMF which was the idea. They played a clean game and in our opinion the match was an out and out success.

"Everybody on our team did their job and worked hard and I was also quite impressed with Ramone Close and as such I have invited him to train with us." Bleiberg said.

One half of the Premier League coaching duo, Anthony Roche, said he felt there are at least half a dozen players in the local league that could step up to the A-League if given the opportunity.

"It was fairly evenly contested, especially in the first half. That is a real credit to our players because we only had one training session together. I expected a fully professional outfit to do a bit better against us than they did. I told our players before the match that the main difference between us is that these guys (Roar) train every day and our boys only train twice a week. It's amazing the difference it can make to your game when you train that much," Roche said.

"There is no doubt that there are players in the local league that could match it with what Miron has there already. If I went through each Premier League team I'm sure I could find at least five or six players who would be capable of stepping up," he added. ☺



The Premier League XI

Still feeling the fall-out from the World Cup? Careful, you might get a yellow card for that

Trigger Happy

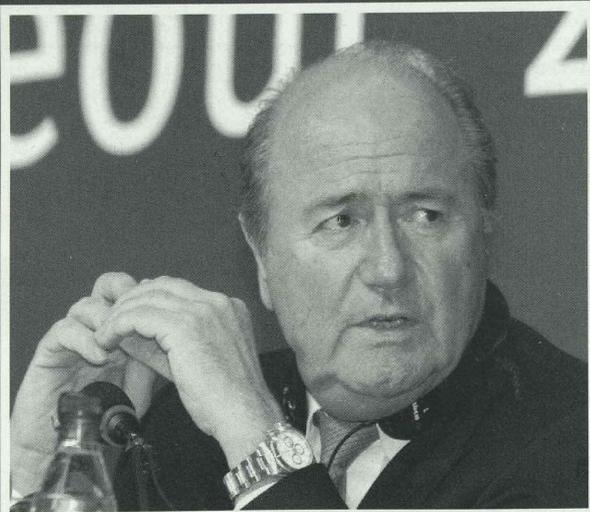
IS THIS football we're watching or something from a variety theatre show? You know, the one where the two masks reflect comedy and tragedy in the same show. In our case it could be, 'My knee, my knee, my kingdom for a knee', or did you hear the one about the traffic light repair man that went colour blind? He couldn't see the green light so they made him a World Cup ref.

I've never seen such performances from players and refs alike and I'm cringing and ashamed of them and for them. Are these athletes out there or the aspiring cast of the latest soapie, 'footballers lives'?

What are FIFA thinking of? Everywhere I turn at the moment, fans are bemoaning their team's fate. "It's Ronaldo's fault." "It's all down to the coach." "That ref better not come anywhere near us," conveniently forgetting that everyone is dancing to FIFA's tune.

At the quarter-finals stage, there'd been a total of 309 yellow cards handed out giving (with 70 games played) an average of 4.5 cards per game. Don't country football associations fine clubs on a weekly basis for having too many cards in a game? Well, I suppose FIFA can't fine itself.

Where has the flow gone? If I wanted to watch start/stop, start/stop, I'll take up Rugby Union. Players are alternatively too scared to challenge for the ball or cheating outrageously and diving and squirming in pain. The Argentinian 'keeper especially



Sepp! We don't have to book everyone for everything, mate.

should give up keeping and start his own drama school. But his team got their just rewards. It was a different story for us.

Australian football has achieved so much in the lead up to this World Cup to have it undermined by cheats and "more than my job's worth behaviour" from officials really hurts. The Australian team did us proud, in my view. From beating the Asian champions in spectacular style, the players took on the Brazilians with confidence and I remember thinking at the time about Schwarzer being rested.

If Brazil think they can Samba, they'll soon see Schwarzer can line dance with the best of them. But it wasn't to be, the inevitable loss leading to the best game of the tournament between the Australians and Croatia. In almost derby-match conditions, the draw saw us through to the round of 16 against the Italians.

A shrewd observer of life once said that rules are for the obeisance of fools and a guide to wise men. I always thought that this was a great benchmark until I saw the Italian striker's hands shaking with glee having gained a penalty from diving in the Australian box. I pitied the ref watching the replay afterwards and having been in Italy watching this match, I lost count of the Italian fans who came up and apologised for their win. Sporting contests shouldn't be won or lost in this way.

In a friendly leading up to the contest, officials even turned on the fans and told them to sit down and not display cards supporting an English debut player. Since when was this in the rules? Hardly friendly behaviour and we should have known what was coming.

FIFA may say their policy is to jump on small issues so that they don't become big problems and that is very true of life in general. But in both cases, I would say that it is akin to taking an American prohibition view and you are not solving your problems just sending them underground. This then creates the cheat and which sportsman likes to win in this way? Italian ones presumably.

Can't officials be allowed to have any discretion these days? Have they suddenly become less than human?



The last person you want to sit in front of you at a World Cup game. Not if you want to see the action that is

"Wiser people than me understand footballers will always bend the rules so give the officials some bendability as well. Back off with the yellow peril and focus on some people skills"

At least, if we're being so strict, let's use some technology here and have a "wristcam" with a replay function.

Am I being overly critical or wishing for Dr Who technology I'm asking myself? Great credit must go to the off-field organisers with the wonderful fan-fest, crowd control and support staff that looked after us so well. On-field, at least no-one is coming back with 'real' broken bones or career ending injuries. Perhaps I'm being unfair never having had to put on a pageant that is the World Cup.

My arse! If the game isn't right, there won't be any pageant. Wiser people than me understand footballers will always bend the rules so give the officials some bendability as well. Back off with the yellow peril and focus on some people skills. Give them respect, not a range of rules designed to scapegoat them.

FIFA is losing touch with the reality on the ground if they think that this attracts fans and sponsors alike. When you read stories that fans were asked to change their shorts whilst at the ground for fear of upsetting sponsors, it makes you wonder how they're working out the rules of engagement as well doesn't it?

Many have been vocal in their calls of player underachievement and poor judgment from the officials. If the rules are such that the players can't engage and the officials can't play to an outcome, what game are we left with? *

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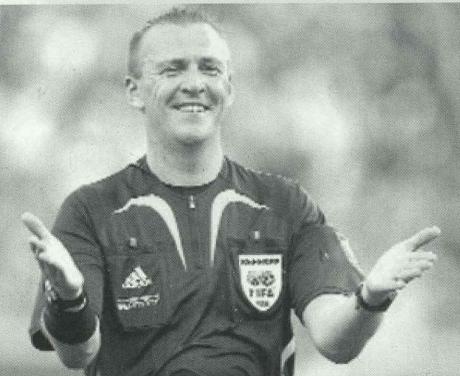
Worst News - Italy now hold the World Cup. I don't mean to offend any Azzuri fans out there but come on! The entire tournament was a farce. Never has the World Cup of God's game ever been so blatantly dishonest from start to finish.

It has often been mooted but never so openly shown as little more than a sham and if ever a case needed to be made, here are the simple facts; Referees of the utmost standing uniting to have a nightmare of a tournament and then admitting, "I made a mistake". Give me strength.

I'll highlight the Australia matches as examples, but in reality you can substitute just about any country you like.

Oz vs. Japan. Our little neighbors declare before the game that those nasty bully boys from down south are very mean and won't let them play with the ball and even push them away from it. Result; ANY and EVERY 50-50 decision goes the way of Japan.

Oz vs. Brazil. Result; not so long as your bum points to the ground when you walk will you ever see a more one-sided referee in a match. The foul count may have ended up almost square but really, where you get the free-kicks is what matters and, incidentally, can someone please explain to me just what all those sins against the Samba boys were? I am truly at a loss as to even contemplate why half of the decisions were awarded.



The so-called big boys were given the easiest of passages and abetted by the referees at almost every turn

Oz vs. Croatia. Result; Graham Poll (pictured), is one of the finest referees in the world let alone England, but again, explain to me how both he and the linesman, who had an exceptionally clear view of things, failed to spot 'Dukes being manhandled to the ground inside the box? The handball at the other end I'll give the benefit of the doubt, goalmouth melee etc. but still it should have been spotted and Australia awarded a penalty. Luckily, in the end it didn't matter as it was a case of Croat-SEE-YA!

Lastly, Oz vs. Greg Louganis... sorry, Italy. Is it any surprise the 'diver' who conned the ref stayed firmly on the deck with his face buried in the turf? I think I would have done the same to hide the acute embarrassment I would have been feeling.

For Italy to go on and lift the trophy, I feel the word 'win' is far too great an exaggeration, is appalling for the game, the tournament and the sport in general. It was abundantly clear that FIFA, or perhaps some strange and obscure Asian betting cartel, ensured certain teams safely navigated the group stages which, in turn, ensured greater revenues for the governing body. I quickly lost interest in the competition when I witnessed the first couple of Australian matches and several other group stage games as it was just so bloody obvious. The 'so called' big boys were given the easiest of passages and abetted by the referees at almost every turn. Conspiracy theory anyone?

Of course, it's the Socceroos and Australia's fault that Italy was not conquered. How dare that little upstart, backwater bunch of beer swilling, uneducated yobs even bother to turn up at the ground? Put another way, if FIFA didn't want Australia there why not simply say so and save us all the heartache and, in many instances, the expense. The way this competition was executed it would have been just as

interesting to watch the captains of each team go to Germany and roll a dice, the highest score goes through....but I bet even then the rules would have been changed if Viduka threw a six as it would be lowest number wins or the opposition could play their joker.... funnily enough dressed as a referee and bearing an uncanny resemblance to Graham Poll.....?

Very Bad News

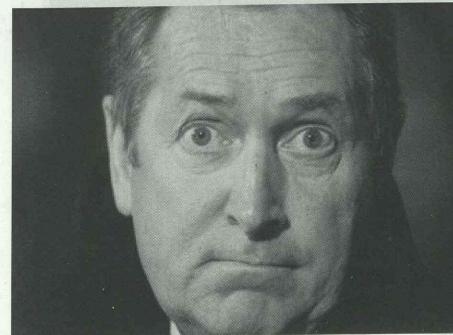
Gerard Houllier may or may not have been appointed as the next Socceroos coach. Now I don't know the man personally, never met nor spoken to him, but I feel if the appointment is made it is the wrong choice. The right choice is, and has been for a very long time, Graham Arnold.

'Arnie' I do know well and know enough about the man to be able to tell you that if he is not given the opportunity to coach the national side a truly great prospect will be lost to the game here for a very long time. Going back over the last ten or so years that I have been involved with him, I have always been impressed by his work rate, ethic and knowledge.

When at Northern Spirit, way back in the last century, I had the very great pleasure to often sit and chat with Arnie in his office or observe his team talks and training sessions. With no disrespect to anyone, if the squad had listened and carried out the game plans he set down; perhaps things would have been a whole lot different.

Without going in to too great a detail, I was present at one talk when he said the first corner Spirit get, three players home in on the near post as the 'keeper that day didn't like the front stick or getting into heavy traffic. All agreed what a good idea this was and during the match the first corner Spirit gained was played bloody short! I feel that gives you an idea of what he was dealing with at the time?

Anyway, I digress. I was sat with him one day and he pulled book after book after book out of his drawers and filing cabinet and showed me what they contained. Every coach he had ever played under in Australia and abroad had their own tactics, training



Houllier: 'non'



Arnold: 'qui'

regime etc. and Arnie had written them all out. Ajax of Amsterdam, their pattern of play, training, dead ball routines and all, to name just one. He has hundreds. He played the game, he talks the game, and he knows the game and is respected by many within it, except at Socceroo HQ it seems. Of course, it is his fault. How dare that little upstart, backwater, beer swilling, uneducated yob even bother to turn up. He is only Australian so couldn't possibly know as much as ANY European coach could he?

I'll tell you this. If Graham Arnold can't do the job AND equal recent results, I won't put any pressure on him, I'll kiss my own arse! I could see back then that one day he will be one of the best coach's going around. If Australia lose out then Europe will gain. He has it all, he can read the game, utilize his years playing with, and under, some of the games greatest and when aligned to his own ability, my God he is going to be something.

It's plain to see that I love Arnie, I readily admit it and always will, but the sentiments I have just penned are little more than a re-hash of an article I wrote some seven or eight years ago. I believed it then and I believe it today. You'll see.

As for Houllier, of the many Liverpool fans I speak to, all are of one opinion; he did nothing at Anfield other than sort out, organize and set-up an outstanding youth programme and little else. The cup wins papered over an ever widening crack as far as they are concerned.

Of course, if he accepts the position we must give him our support, but never lose sight of the fact that the only coach who can understand how the players really feel about situations like the debacle in Germany is a coach from the same land. They might feel down and dejected for a short while, until the pay cheque arrives (probably), but not one of them can understand the passion, pride and pain as a fellow countryman. I simply feel it's time for Arnold to be given the job and opportunity to show his mettle. By his own high standards if he felt it beyond him he would not accept the job. His integrity, pride and love of Australia and Australian football would see to that.

Better News

sportinfo.com.au is a name you will not have heard of but trust me, you will. I can reveal through my sources that this website will come into being early-to-mid August, before the football leagues of Europe and Australia kick off. It is a site that will be extremely user friendly but I need to explain a little more to you.

If you are at work, for example, and you feel the need to check out a result, a team line-up, latest information or simply want an insight into the history of the game or look up to see if the team you follow has a supporter group in Australia or anywhere else in the world for that matter, you can't use your computer to do it in case the boss catches you right? Wrong!

sportinfo.com.au will ensure you are completely free to display the site as your desktop. You will not only be able to do many, many more functions, once you become a subscriber you can download the screensaver which will also activate a calendar so you can enter all your appointments etc, whilst still showing the links to so much more.

Australia, England and Scotland Premier Leagues are the main features for the first season but Spain, France and Italy will also be covered with every result for every top flight team against every other top flight team from the origin of their particular national league starting (in the case of the latter teams it consists of top flight league results only unless any others have been fully certified).

The English and Scottish Premier League results

cover ALL league fixture results (first, second, third and fourth for each PL side against the other PL sides) and all have been collated to give you an idea of which fixtures have traditionally been high/low scoring, who has the upper hand etc. It is, as the name suggests, primarily an information site full of statistics that can be used in whatever way you see fit.

If you are a member of a supporter group in Australia, whatever the football team, please contact your Chairman and inform them of the free service that sportinfo.com.au provides.

They will need to forward club name details, contact numbers, meeting times/places, official or unofficial supporter group etc. and any further information they consider relevant. Details should be sent to: Supporter Groups at sportinfo.com.au PO Box 4056, Kingsway West, Sydney, NSW 2209. When the site is ready to launch these details will be able to be emailed through.

Other than the brief outline I have listed above I cannot tell you any further information as I have been asked not to reveal any more than this, although I can say that from what I have seen there is an awful lot more and much of it will blow you away, even more so when they start to bring in the many other sports they are already working on!

Well I've managed to get plenty off my chest in this issue, not too many laughs (apologies) but with the A-League 'season two' almost upon us I'm sure my sense of humour will return again shortly.

So until next time, as ever; be lucky.

THE FULL MONTY

Of course it was. Any team playing England was supported by many. Scots were buying and wearing the colours of any team the Poms played!

Giggles, I know that everyone who knows you is over the moon with your move into the SPL and we can't wait for the season to start. www.falkirkfc.co.uk has become one of my 'favourites'. Would you like to pass on any special wishes to anyone in Brisbane?

Just a big hello to everyone back home. I hope everyone is doing well. I have now got somewhere in football I have always wanted to be and there are so many people I need to thank.

So thank you. You all know who you are. Even you Wilko!! Also, I would like to wish Olympic Soccer Club the very best and really hope they win promotion. Its been a difficult year down there but they will pull through and be stronger than ever in years to come.

Mate, I have really enjoyed catching up with you and can only wish you and Helena all the very best for the new season and fantastic opportunity which you have fully deserved. ☺

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BUT NOT AS
YOU KNOW IT.



“I’m a sort of an easy-going, laid-back person who loves the game and just tries to do his best. I think once you get to know me I’m a decent bloke

ANTE MILICIC

Queensland Roar’s new hit-man is loving the Sunshine State and aims to give the home fans the goals they crave.

Interview: MICHELLE FOWLER



Some media articles have presented you as an arrogant character, is it true?

Everyone’s entitled to their own opinion, I think arrogant might be a bit harsh, I think once people get to know me they would think differently. I think that’s the best way to judge people; get to know them. Throughout my career I’ve been confident in my own ability and that’s the way I like to look at the arrogance tag. On the pitch most players are different to what they are really like off it. We’re professionals and have to be confident when we take to the field; that’s our job.

How would you describe yourself?

I’m a sort of an easy-going, laid-back person who loves the game and just tries to do his best. I think once you get to know me I’m a decent bloke.

You’ve been in Queensland for a couple of months now, what do you think of the Sunshine State?

Really nice. I mean it’s probably what I expected it to be because I’ve been here a lot of times but I’ve never really been a resident. So far with the way the club has accepted me and treated me, and getting along with all the players and everyone around the club, I couldn’t ask for more. My family has settled in nicely as well which also helps.

You’ve been brought to Queensland to score goals that escaped the strikers of last season. Can you escape the Queensland Roar striker’s curse?

I hope so. That’s been my job and my career - to score goals - and I like to think that my goals can take the side into the top four which is our aim. It’s a team sport and my goals will help I’m sure, but at the end of the day I’m not looking at how many goals I’ll score, I’m just looking at the team getting in the top four.

Queensland Roar finished 6th last season but speculation is already beginning to inspire confidence that the new-look squad can take the team higher. Do you agree?

I do. Without being over confident and with no disrespect to the squad last year, I think this squad has got a bit more quality and experience. With the basis of last year’s side, the core of eight or nine that remained, I think it could be an exciting season for the Roar fans.

Who on the Queensland Roar squad would you say to look out for this season?

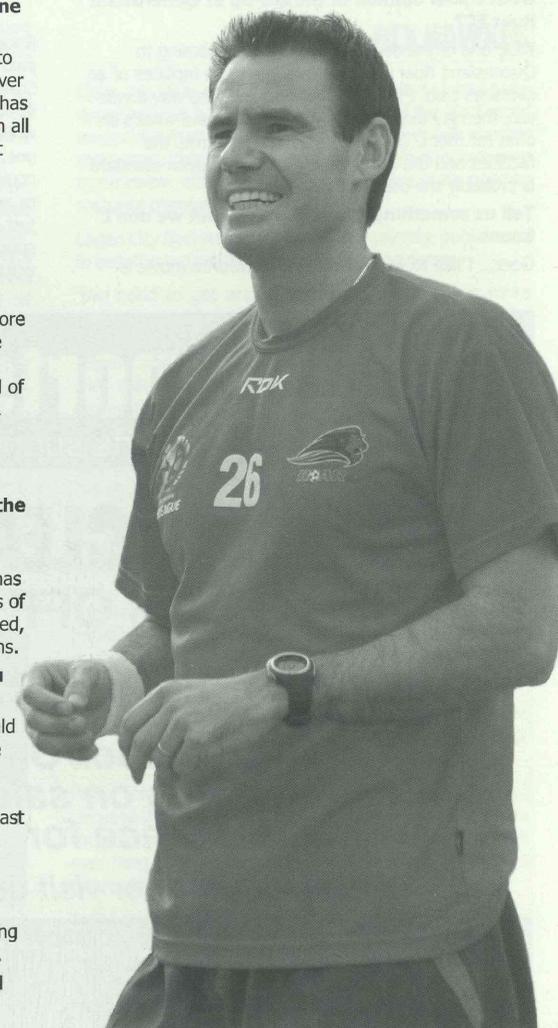
Ante Milicic (laughs)! There’s my arrogant tag! I would say myself though because I am keen to impress the fans and give them plenty to cheer. I think also the German, Marcus Wedau. I’d say that because we’re new players and people have seen the players from last year’s squad. I’ve been very impressed with the German boy and with his resume. I also think Liam Reddy, whose father played State of Origin rugby league for Queensland, will do well so it might be a nice touch for the Queensland public. I think he’ll bring something to the team as well, but yeah those three.

What about a Hyundai A-League team to stand out this year?

I’d honestly say Sydney because they’ve got the best money and buy the best players so I think the only certainty for the Hyundai A-League and the upcoming season is that Sydney will finish in the top four; that’s the one thing that I think I could safely say.

If you could bring any player currently in the Hyundai A-League to Queensland Roar who would it be?

Cheeky question! I would say Mark Ruden but we’ve got enough defenders at the moment so...that’s hard actually because when I look at players, my nature is to look at people I’m close to or that I’m friends with. I think you’d always have room for say a Kevin Muscat or a Simon Colosimo. I think Kevin Muscat would be good because of his leadership qualities and he’s been my captain twice at the AIS Under-20’s so definitely him for



his leadership qualities more than anything. But also I think Simon Colosimo is a really good player who just didn't have one of his best seasons and he can play a couple of positions. When he's on song he's quite a handy defender or midfielder, so probably those two.

Do you have any ambitions to coach?

I do, but at the moment I'm just concentrating on my playing career with Queensland Roar, who I've got a three year deal with. But throughout my career, wherever I've played, if there's been some good training sessions or whatever, I've come home and jotted it down on a note book and that's just normal I think. So I'm always looking at picking good things from all the coaches I've had so probably in the long-term yes, but at the moment I just want to focus on the present instead of the future.

You've played at a lot of clubs all over the world, what's your opinion of the set-up at Queensland Roar FC?

Well, one of the deciding factors in me coming to Queensland Roar was that they have the facilities of an overseas club. I liked everything about the way it was run, the way their players were treated and what's on offer for them. That's what stood out to me, the facilities and the organisation itself. European standard is probably the best way to put it.

Tell us something about yourself that we don't know.

Geez... I like to watch Foxtel! My favourite movie is

I think this squad has got a bit more quality and experience. With the basis of last year's side, the core of eight or nine that remained, I think it could be an exciting season for the Roar fans

Rocky IV and my wife thought I was an idiot when I paid \$1000 for a Rocky IV framed and signed Sylvester Stallone picture! She just couldn't get her head around it, but then again, three years ago I went to watch the wrestling in Sydney, and fair play to my wife on this one, I spent \$250 on a ring-side ticket! She said she could understand if it was the Champions League final or anything really apart from wrestling. Sometimes I just do stupid things that are off the cuff, but I'm a spur of the moment person sometimes and I don't actually think about what I'm doing though. ☺

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facilities. The state body has to encourage assistance for the clubs from, in our case, Brisbane City Council. We have to be able to manage the expected growth and build up our volunteer base to be ready for it. After that we have to manage the drop-off from the game at around 13 or 14 years of age," said Young.

He added: "The best thing that can happen to football in Brisbane is for the men's, women's and junior bodies to all fall under the same administration and have it more professionally managed. It would stop clubs from attending three or four separate meetings and reporting to three separate bodies. The meetings alone are a strain on human resources because someone has to attend them."

Another issue with Young was the question of affordability for our young players.

"We don't promote soccer as being an affordable sport and I think it is very affordable when you compare it to other sports out there."

Over at Mitchelton, President Rohan Cassell called for caution before the local game throws itself at the next grand plan.

"My worry is that we are going to get ahead of ourselves. All this talk of State Leagues, etc, is maybe a little premature and needs to be thought through first. The life-blood of the game is the clubs and not the associations. I don't think we should be focussing on senior men's football; we should be focussing on development of juniors and combat all the good work that the AFL are doing with the Auskick programs. Heavily investing in junior programs is the way to go in my view instead of worrying about State Leagues and so forth. However, I do think there is a place for a State League in the summer to coincide with the A-League, but I can't see the rationale for what is being talked about at the moment, although no-one is giving out too much advice on what the plans are," Cassell said.

The Mitchy chief gave his thumbs-up to the local league and says lessons should be learned from the past.

"I think the competition is a good competition and all the

Will the Socceroos' success have people rushing to the local games?



I don't think our presentation of football at local level is very good and we have to improve that... Professional presentation of our games, both on and off the field, is what we should be concentrating on right now

- REX HAWKES

clubs are fairly comfortable at the moment. I was lucky enough to get hold of all the old copies of the 'Go Soccer' magazines from years ago and all they ever talk about is restructure this and restructure that. No-one was ever comfortable with that situation and there is no need to rush into changes now."

Logan City Secretary, Rob Wilkinson, says the public need to be informed on the various levels of the game.

"We need to get across to people that there is more football available to them than just the A-League or the local Premier League and that there are places for 'little Johnny' and his sister to go and play the game. Coupled with that, we need to better educate our coaches to ensure the kids are learning the right things," Wilkinson said.

Rex Hawkes, Pine Hills President and BMF board member, has another view.

"I think we have to improve our image and not necessarily the standard of football. I don't think our presentation of football at local level is very good and we have to improve that. People want to watch football in a nice environment and we need to do as much as we can to promote that and improve facilities at all clubs. Professional presentation of our games, both on and off the field, is what we should be concentrating on right now," said Hawkes.

Four different views from four different clubs and we have over 50 under the BMF banner. All have merit but it begs the question 'do we really know what's best for us?'

Policy makers have to decide and decide pretty quickly because the time is now. Not only is there a need to create the vision for the future in what is the best chance we will ever have, but as this publication has preached time and time again, we have to formulate the 'how'.

Ideas are only ideas unless there is a definitive plan on how they will be implemented, managed and measured. From club level to the state body, we have to start thinking about this right now.

Thinking caps on ladies and gentlemen. ☺

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