



The Pulse

with **DARYL TIMMS**

DON'T QUOTE ME

EXCUSE the puns, but SBS is hitting a few sixes and kicking some goals. First it covered the Ashes series in England and now Australia has made the World Cup finals. If only it could get a slice of the AFL.



Grudge match

Tigers Hanoid

> WHILE the AFL focus in Melbourne is on pre-season training, Hanoi is preparing to host a grudge match between the Hanoi Swans and the Thailand Tigers.

The Swans, who haven't won a game in two years, hope to break the drought against the Tigers tomorrow.

It's such a big occasion the Swans are thinking of employing similar tactics to Australian soccer fans, who created plenty of noise outside the Uruguay team's Sydney hotel in a bid to unnerve the visitors.

Butter figures

> DARWIN betting agency Sportingbet reckons rotund American boxer Butterbean (aka Eric Esch) is almost unbeatable in his heavyweight bout against Australian Baden Ovi on the Gold Coast tonight. Butterbean, who fights over four two-minute rounds, has had his odds reeled in from \$1.30 to \$1.18 since Ovi was substituted for original opponent Big Bear Mirovic. Butterbean has a 60kg advantage over his rival and is famous for his knockout haymakers.



Butterbean

Sheeds socked

> KEVIN Sheedy's quip that fans should "get a life" and watch Australia play Ireland in the International rules Test rather than watch the A-League match between Melbourne Victory and Adelaide, could come back to haunt him.

Victory coach Ernie Merrick, who went to Sydney for Australia's victory over Uruguay on Wednesday night, took the opportunity to have a crack at the Essendon coach.

"Kevin Sheedy was right, 82,000 people went to Sydney and got a life," Merrick said.

"In fact, they've got a whole new lease of life.

"There were many AFL players at the match who I met and there were people from all walks of life who had seen how interesting and exciting the game is."

Sheedy, who is a friend of Merrick, was in Birmingham last weekend to represent Australia at a coaches conference.

Punters jump on Roos

> ONE punter has wasted no time backing Australia to win the World Cup after Wednesday night's victory against Uruguay.

English bookmaker Totesport reported a \$2500 bet on the Socceroos at 250-1 just 20 minutes after their 4-2 penalty shootout victory.

Totesport spokesman Paul Petrie said the punter was obviously an expatriate Australian.

"I am assuming he had too many cans of Castlemaine XXXX while watching the match because I can't see his thinking behind this gamble," Petrie said.

Totesport has Socceroos captain Mark Viduka at 80-1 to win the Golden Boot for the World Cup's top goalscorer.

Meanwhile, Bet365 has England striker Michael Owen at 2-1 to score more goals than the Australian team at the tournament.

"Australia may have ran up cricket scores against the likes of Tahiti, Fiji



Viduka

Owen

and the Solomon Islands in qualifying, but they will find it a little tougher in Germany," Bet365 spokesman Steve Freeth said.

"Owen, on the other hand, has got the T-shirt when it comes to scoring at the highest level and, in his current form, he's going to take some stopping."

TAB Sportsbet has the Aussies at 40-1 to win the World Cup, while British bookies have them between 100-1 and 150-1.

> VIDUKA said it was the first time he'd heard an Australian crowd jeer its opponent's national anthem. But he wasn't complaining because the Socceroos have copped plenty from rival supporters.

> GUUS Hiddink's contract as Socceroos coach would have expired at midnight on Wednesday had the Socceroos failed to qualify for the World Cup. Hiddink has an excellent record in the World Cup, having coached his native Holland to the semi-finals in 1998 and South Korea to the 2002 semis.

> IT DIDN'T take long. Australia's stunning victory over Uruguay will be available on DVD next week.

Wonder whether soccer fans will be able to sit through the whole game or skip straight to the sudden-death penalty shootout?

Produced by the Visual Entertainment Group, it will sell for \$29.95.



MO Herald Sun 18/11/05

COP THAT, URUGUAY

'Don't mess with us' was the blunt message from Socceroos supporters at Wednesday's World Cup qualifier at Telstra Stadium, judging by these banners. Sick of Uruguay's gamesmanship, allegations of foul play and Alvaro Recoba's divine right claim, the fans' retribution was sweet.

Pictures: TOBY ZERNA, GREGG PORTEOUS

“It's great to be playing again. I've been through a horrible time.”

— Socceroos hero HARRY KEWELL on his exasperating battle with groin and hernia injuries

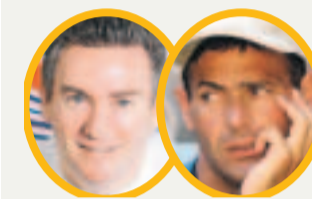
IT'S SHANE, BY GULLY

CRANBOURNE horse trainer Stephen Theodore was on the road to Gundagai yesterday.

Theodore made the 6½-hour trip to the New South Wales town for today's Snake Gully Cup with Ranch, which is part-owned by his former school buddy, Hawthorn champion Shane Crawford.

The Hawk will be trackside today and could return with snakeskin boots if Ranch salutes.

Theodore said Crawford starts full-time pre-season training next week.



McGuire

Rasheed

ROGER AND OUT

IT TAKES a while, but Collingwood president Eddie McGuire usually gets his man.

And it happened when he caught up with Lleyton Hewitt's coach, Roger Rasheed, once the centre of a controversial incident involving the Magpies at AAMI Stadium.

Rasheed was scoreboard announcer at Port Adelaide home games in 2002 when he infuriated McGuire with his parochial comments.

The pair caught up at the Emirates marquee during the spring racing carnival and, as they were talking, Hewitt interrupted by cupping his hand to his mouth and calling: "Ground announcement."

IMPRESSIVE RELATIONS

WHILE tensions were high on the field at Telstra Stadium on Wednesday night, relations between members of the Uruguay and Australian media were very cordial.

At the end of Socceroo coach Guus Hiddink's press conference, a member of the Uruguayan press got to his feet and thanked the Australians for their hospitality and wished the locals all the best in the World Cup.

Got a good idea ?

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