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Sports World

With **LAKIS KONISTIS**

BLATTER HAPPY WITH 2010 STADIUMS

FIFA president Sepp Blatter was apparently dancing for joy after arriving in South Africa to check on preparations for the 2010 World Cup.

He was however less flattering about the nation's soccer team, which failed to qualify for the 2006 World Cup, seems likely to miss the 2010 African Nations Cup, and hasn't won any of its last five matches – including against lowly Guinea!

Blatter said South Africa should have taken advantage of the four years since it was awarded the tournament to build up a strong team. "In 1996 they were African Champions ... and where are they now? It's incredible and I cannot understand that," he said.

Blatter said he would even raise his concerns with the South African Football Association and also anti-apartheid icon Nelson Mandela, whose lobbying helped bring the tournament to South Africa in the first place.

And what about the political problems in Africa? "We are absolutely not concerned about the internal political problems in South Africa," Blatter said. "We are going to organise and deliver this World Cup and it will be a great, great event."

Ethiopia kicked out of 2010 World Cup Qualifiers

Ethiopia was thrown out of the qualifying rounds for the 2010 World Cup because of an unresolved dispute over its soccer federation leadership.

All four games played by Ethiopia in Africa's Group 8 have been wiped from the record. The group now consists only of Morocco, Mauritania and Rwanda.

Rwanda led the group with 12 points from five games, with Morocco three points behind with a game in hand. Ethiopia had six points and Mauritania had lost all five of its games.

Africa's 12 group winners and eight best runners-up advance to the next round. The 20 teams are then placed in five groups, with each group winner earning a World Cup berth. South Africa qualifies automatically as host.

SOCCEROO GAMES IN QUEENSLAND

The FFA this week has signed a five year agreement with the Queensland Government which means Queensland will play host to the Qantas Socceroos for five matches in five years.

"We played here earlier this year against Iraq and we chose to come here again next month for another crucial World Cup qualifier against Qatar, because the team feels well and truly at home," FFA's Ben Buckley said. "We also appreciate the work and commitment of Stadiums Queensland in providing world class facilities both on and off the field."

Announcing the agreement with Queensland Sports Minister, Judy Spence, at Suncorp Stadium, Buckley said that the five matches include:

3 x FIFA World Cup qualifiers, including the match against Qatar on 15 October and two qualifiers for the 2014 FIFA World Cup;

1 x AFC Asian Cup qualifier for the 2011 AFC Asian Cup; and

1 x international friendly match.

At least four of the five matches, including all three FIFA World Cup qualifiers, will be held at Suncorp Stadium with the capacity for either the Asian Cup qualifier or the international friendly match to be played at Dairy Farmers Stadium in Townsville or Skilled Park on the Gold Coast.

"MAN CITY CAN'T BUY HISTORY"

Manchester City's new owners might have cash to burn, but that faze Sir Alex Ferguson.

The Manchester United manager knows how much more valuable the Red Devils' tradition of winning is, and he proved it recently by showing off his newest signing, Dimitar Berbatov.

Ferguson, who took charge at United in 1986, knows that his club's global pre-eminence and history can be as great an incentive to a player as wages. "What you see here today has not been created overnight. This club has been built up over many years and will be here for a long time."

He had these words of warning for City's new owners, the Abu Dhabi United group....

"Sunderland were relegated with the dearest team, every player was bought for astronomical fees. You can buy 11 individuals but you don't have a team. It's difficult to say what's going to happen to City".

Not even Chelsea's revolution under Jose Mourinho rattled Ferguson. He just became more determined to topple the "new kids on the block." After the Blues won two Premier League titles, Ferguson responded by matching the feat and seeing Mourinho exit Chelsea!

CALLEJA NEW BERRIES COACH

John Calleja is the new Berries coach for season 2009. His assistant will be Matthew Ribarovski and the U/20's position has been filled by Nick Poniris.

Calleja this year was at the helm at St. George and in the past he has had a successful coaching stint at Parramatta and also Wollongong in the old NSL.

WEST SYDNEY BERRIES

PREMIER YOUTH LEAGUE TRIALS 2009

WILSON PARK Silverwater Road, Silverwater

SUNDAY 12th October 2008:

U/13's: (9:00am -> 10:30am)
U/14's: (11:00am -> 12:30pm)
U/15's: (1:00pm -> 2:30pm)
U/16's: (3:00pm -> 4:30pm)
U/18's: (4:00pm -> 5:30pm)

U/13's & U/14's:

MON 13/10, 20/10, 27/10 (6:00pm)
THURS 16/10, 23/10, 30/10 (6:00pm)

U/15's & U/16's:

TUES 14/10, 21/10, 28/10 (6:00pm)
FRI 17/10, 24/10, 31/10 (6:00pm)

U/18's:

WED 15/10, 22/10, 29/10 (6:00pm)
SAT 18/10, 25/10, 01/11 (10:00am)

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CORICA 400 NOT OUT...

Sydney FC's Steve Corica is set to reach another milestone this weekend, with the midfielder scheduled to make his 400th appearance at national league level.

Corica commenced his national league career in October 1990 at 17 years of age for Marconi. His lengthy club career has taken him from Marconi (102), to Leicester City (16), Wolverhampton (100) and Walsall (73) in England, and Japanese side Sanfrecce Hiroshima (44); while during his next Hyundai A-League match he will make his 65th appearance for Sydney FC in the competition.

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A-ΛΙΓΚ - 5η αγωνιστική

Κούνισλαντ Ρόα-Νιούκαστλ Τζετς
Σήμερα, 20:00, Suncorp Stadium

Σίδνεϊ FC-Αντελάιντ Γιουνάιτεντ
Αύριο, 17:00, Sydney Football Stadium

Σέντραλ Κοστ Μάρινερς-Μέλμπουρν Βίκτορι
Αύριο, 19:00, Bluetongue Stadium

Περθ Γκλόρι-Ουέλινγκτον Φοίνιξ
Κυριακή 21 Σεπτεμβρίου, 15:00,
Members Equity Stadium

ΣΟΥΠΕΡ ΛΙΓΚ ΝΝΟ - Τελική φάση

Προκριματικός τελικός
Μπόνιριγκ-Μπόσι Λίβερπουλ
Κυριακή 21 Σεπτεμβρίου, 15:00,
Bonnyrigg Sports Club

1η ΚΑΤΗΓΟΡΙΑ ΝΝΟ - Τελική φάση

Μεγάλος τελικός
Σπίριτ FC-Ντάλις Χιλ
Κυριακή 21 Σεπτεμβρίου, 15:00,
Melita Stadium