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GRASSROOTS TO BENEFIT THANKS TO HYUNDAI



With just over half the Hyundai A-League 2008/09 Season completed, Hyundai Motor Company Australia has already donated a total of \$39,000 to grassroots clubs across Australia.

The 'Goals for Grassroots' program is an initiative between Hyundai Motor Company Australia and Football Federation Australia (FFA) which supports selected grassroots clubs with much needed support especially through these tough times with drought and the current economic climate affecting many Australians.

Hyundai Motor Company is a proud supporter and sponsor of football across the globe through its association with FIFA and the major sponsorship of the World Cup; locally it supports the Qantas Socceroos through FFA, is the naming rights sponsor of the Hyundai A-League and supports football right down to local grassroots clubs through the 'Goals for Grassroots' program.

Ben Buckley, CEO of FFA said that the initiative allows both organisations to contribute to local communities which support football. "Investing in the growth of football in Australia through such initiatives helps ensure the future of quality football in Australia."

These donations have been used in a variety of ways including purchasing new equipment, laying new turf, football education for coaches and referees right across Australia.

Blackwood United Football Club located in regional Western Australia used their donation for purchasing a small mini-bus which has been used to collect children around the area for training as well as transporting team members to games.

The Harrisfield Junior Soccer Club is looking to use the donation for a number of exercises from purchasing lights for training at night to subsidising fee for under-privileged children.

George Tasianakas of the Harrisfield Junior Soccer Club said "As our club located in a lower socioeconomic area of Melbourne the donation has permitted us to help children who would otherwise not be able to play football to join our club, in addition we have been able to purchase equipment to further reduce the financial burden off our members."

Hyundai will continue to support football in Australia with the recent re-signing of its strong partnership with the Hyundai A-League and FFA.

Steve Yeo, Chief Executive Officer of Hyundai Motor Company Australia said, "As the founding sponsor of the Hyundai A League, our partnership with football in Australia is extremely strong and our 'Goals for Grassroots' program is testament to this."

One home game per round of the Hyundai A-League 2008/09 Season has been selected to be part of the 'Goals for Grassroots' program. To be consid-

SOCEROOS IN THE "TOP 30"

The Qantas Socceroos have attained their highest ever FIFA World Ranking, climbing into the top 30 for the first time in their history.

Australia climbed nine places with its 1-0 win over Bahrain in Manama last month to number 28, eclipsing the previous high of 31 in July 1997.

Picking up 38 ranking points, also meant that Australia crept further away at the top of the Asian rankings, with Japan next best at number 35. Korea Republic were the big movers in Asia, jumping back into the top 50 to 42 with a move of 11 places, while Iran and Saudi Arabia are also placed in the top 50 at 43 and 48 respectively.

Qantas Socceroos coach Pim Verbeek said of the news, "It's fantastic news. It proves we are getting up to the top of world football, and other countries will look at this and give us the respect for what we have done."

The large jump in the rankings saw Australia overtake some established football nations such as Sweden, Poland, Scotland, Chile and Republic of Ireland.

Spain remains at the top of the rankings at the end of 2008, with a massive points lead over second ranked Germany. The Netherlands, who Australia beat in September, Italy and Brazil round out the top 5.

The Qantas Socceroos will next play on January 28 with the opening tie of their 2011 Asian Cup qualification campaign against Indonesia in Jakarta and followed by the crucial 2010 World Cup qualification match against Japan in February.



ered for a donation ahead of each home match, local football clubs should complete an application on-line at www.ilovefootball.com.au and submit why their club should receive support.

Grassroots clubs selected will benefit from an initial \$1,000 donation from Hyundai Motor Company Australia, and an additional \$1,000 per goal scored by the home team that nominated them (up to \$5,000 total).

To be eligible to enter, local clubs must belong to an association affiliated to FFA.

GREEK REFEREES COP ANOTHER BATTERING!

The referees in Greece at the moment are copping it from many fronts and the latest spray comes from Thrasylvoulos' striker Giannis Chloros who has said that referee Georgios Kastanidis deserves a bonus after his performance during his side's recent 1-2 loss to Olympiakos.

During the post-match conference Chloros stated, "The Olympiakos players should give the referee a bonus!"

BETEZY BET-OF-THE-WEEK

Apparently "the Scotsman" is still spending all his winnings and therefore

has no bet for us again this weekend.

Rest assured he will be back in business next Friday.

Judging by the number of you who have approached me about just WHO is "The Scotsman", his identity remains anonymous, but please, continue to follow his "mail" because he IS a high-profile identity within the racing industry!

HAPPY NEW YEAR

As we are only hours away from welcoming 2009, I would like to take the opportunity to wish you all a happy and healthy New Year.

CHARISTEAS TO BOLOGNA?

Bologna are looking for a new striker- and are considering making high-profile moves for either Giampaolo Pazzini or Angelos Charisteas.

It is no secret that Bologna are looking for reinforcements in January, as coach Sinisa Mihajlovic has repeated that he would like to bring in some more players- with Angelos Charisteas high up on the shopping list.

The 28-year-old Greek international Angelos Charisteas, is currently playing for Nuremberg in Germany's second division.

