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## Sports World

With LAKIS KONISTIS

### OVER 35'S MEN'S SOCCER TOURNAMENT - ARMIDALE (NSW)

The Over 35's Men's Soccer Tournament was held in Armidale for the first time in 2008 at the Consett Davis Soccer Fields at The University of New England.

From 2001-2007, Nick Machalias who is the Chief Convenor of Armidale United, has played in the Over 35's Soccer Tournament in Coffs Harbour, which most years attracted no more than 12 teams. The tournament is normally held in either September or October.

"In the middle of August 2008, I decided to try and organise the tournament in Armidale. It was held on 18th-19th October 2008, with 15 teams participating, many of them from Sydney, and the rest from Armidale and regional NSW. The tournament was well organised, with excellent soccer fields, all at the same location, and it became very popular", according to Nick Machalias.

As was the case last year, Nick is still the Chief Convenor (main organiser) of this event. The tournament was held at The University of New England.

The tournament was much bigger this year, with 25 teams participating (about 500 players). Originally, 26 teams were going to participate, but Brooklyn FC withdrew a few days before the start of the tournament. In addition, 2 teams were refused entry for applying far too late, and another 6 teams were taking part in the World Masters Tournament in Sydney- but they have indicated they will be competing in 2010.

Armidale is half way between Sydney and Brisbane. It has a population of around 25,000 when The University of New England (situated in Armidale itself) students are included. Armidale is about 6 hours from Sydney by car (New England Highway) or 1 hour and 15 minutes by plane, and is known as 'the Athens of the North' because of its educational and cultural reputation.

"In the 60's to the middle 80's there was a sizeable Greek population living in Armidale, but many have now moved on to the big cities. There are still a few Greeks living here", said Nick.

Armidale is also a soccer mad city. Soccer is by far the biggest football code here. According to Nick, "It is my

understanding that more than 2,000 players (junior and senior - both male and female), played soccer in Armidale in 2009. Not a bad effort for a provincial city of this size!"

The geographical spread of the teams that participated this year was impressive:

Sydney (10), Brisbane (3), Sunshine Coast (1), Armidale (4), Newcastle (1), Cessnock (1), Woolgoolga (1), Tamworth (1), Scone (1), Coonabarabran (1), Glen Innes (1), Grafton (1).

For the record, the Sydney teams were:

Brookvale, Pittwater RSL, Hurlstone Park (2 teams), Glossodia, Pagewood Botany, Kings Langley (Blacktown Association), West Pennant Hills - Cherrybrook Lions, The Chubby Vagrants (Hills District), and Brooklyn (late withdraw).

#### All teams competed for the following trophies:

- The Wards Auto Paint Supplies Soccer Cup (Prizemoney: \$1,000)
- The Hutchinson and Harlow Real Estate Soccer Cup (Prizemoney: \$600)
- The Sportspower Armidale Soccer Cup (Prizemoney: \$300)
- The Consolation Plate (Prizemoney: \$100)
- The winners of the 2009 trophies were:
  - The Wards Auto Paint Supplies Soccer Cup (Armidale United)
  - The Hutchinson and Harlow Real Estate Soccer Cup (Pittwater RSL)
  - The Sportspower Armidale Soccer Cup (Broadmeadow Magic)
  - The Consolation Plate (Regents Park Old Boys - Brisbane)

According to Nick, "The standard of play this year was outstanding. The semi-final between Brookvale (raging hot favourites to win the tournament) and Armidale United was one of the best Over 35's games seen in the area for many years. It was fast-paced and skilful, and kept spectators on the edge of their seats! Armidale United played

out of its skin (lifted greatly) to win it (1-0).

Armidale United defeated Woolgoolga 2-0 in the major final to claim the main trophy. The Armidale United team has been playing together for 8 years, and has reached the semi-final stage every year, finally claiming the trophy this year".

The team in 2009 included Michael Reda (former NSL player), Angelo Petratos (Penrith FC), Jim Konistis (Marrickville Red Devils), Nick Kambounias (Hurstville Minotaurs), Stamatii Kefalianos (Earlwood Wanderers), and Michael Schensual (team not known).

"These players added tremendous quality to the team and the tournament with their skill and style of play. They have all been invited back for next year", Nick added. "We are expecting at least 35 teams next year, possibly 40! We have 7 soccer fields to accommodate them. It would be great to have some Greek teams here".

### QANTAS & THE SOCCEROOS

Qantas has unveiled one of its first ever Qantas Socceroos Boeing 747-400 aircraft, painted in the colours of the team with a good luck message, in preparation for the FIFA World Cup in 2010.

Qantas CEO Alan Joyce said the new Qantas Socceroos aircraft shows the company's support for the Socceroos in the lead up to the World Cup next year.

"Qantas is the team's number one fan and this new painted aircraft, 'Qantas Socceroos- We're With You All The Way,' highlights our support as they prepare for South Africa next year," Mr Joyce said. "This aircraft will be flying across Australia and around the globe, showing the support that Australia has for its football team."

This Boeing 747-400 will be carrying the team to the World Cup next year.

Football Federation Australia CEO Ben Buckley, and members of the

Qantas Socceroos and Olyroos joined the Qantas team at Melbourne Airport to welcome the new livery. Members of the Good Samaritan Roxburgh Park School football team were also at the airport to get close to the action and view the aircraft that will carry their heroes to the World Cup.

Qantas has supported football in Australia for more than 10 years, has been naming rights sponsor of the Qantas Socceroos and all men's national teams since 2004 and has committed to the team through to March 2012.

### KIDS, COME WRITE, COME PLAY

Football Federation Australia (FFA) is giving eight children the chance to win a trip to South Africa in early December to help bring the FIFA World Cup to Australia.

With the experience of a lifetime, one winner from each state will be appointed a FFA 'Come Play!' FIFA World Cup 'emissary' and travel to Cape Town and be part of the team that helps put Australia's case forward to host the FIFA World Cup in 2018 or 2022 at an official Bid event.

The FIFA World Cup is the largest single sporting event in the world- bigger than the Olympic Games. If successful, the FIFA World Cup will see Australia host more than 750,000 overseas visitors with 700 million people from 214 countries expected to tune in to watch the final at next year's FIFA World Cup.

To be a part of history, children simply tell the FFA in 300 words or less why they think Australia should host the FIFA World Cup. Children can also say why Australia should host the games through pictures as well as words.

CEO Ben Buckley said that participation rates in the game are at an all-time high with around one million Australians now playing. "Participation rates for boys aged 5-14 have been growing strongly for more than a decade and eclipse the three other football codes combined. It is vital that the enthusiasm and passion for football that exists across Australia is communicated to FIFA. While the decision isn't made for another year, the Cape Town event is one of the few official opportunities to present on Australia's bid before the international football community and media. This bid is important for football, but it is also important for our country. Now is the time for everyone to get behind this bid and show why Australia is the best country in the world to host the World Cup," Mr Buckley said.

The decision on the host nations for 2018 and 2022 is made in December 2010.

### CHAMPION OF CHAMPIONS WINNERS 2009

<b>Grade 10:</b>	Figtree 1 v Bondi United 6
<b>Grade 11:</b>	Balgownie 4 v Wakehurst 1
<b>Grade 12:</b>	Fairfield Colts 1 v Glossodia 1 (6-5 on penalty shoot-out)
<b>Grade 13:</b>	Oak Flats 2 v Gladesville Ravens 1 (after extra time)
<b>Grade 14:</b>	Lidcombe Waratahs 0 v Wakehurst 3
<b>Grade 15:</b>	Balgownie 4 v Earlwood 3
<b>Grade 16:</b>	Leichhardt Tigers 2 v AC Utd 2 (3-2 on penalty shoot-out)
<b>Grade 17:</b>	Wollongong Olympic 0 v Inter Lions 5
<b>Grade 18:</b>	Orana Spurs 1 v Kenthurst 2
<b>Grade 21:</b>	Kemps Creek United 2 v Quakers Hill Juniors 1
<b>All Age:</b>	Yagoona Lions 1 v Brookvale 0 (after extra-time)
<b>Over 35's:</b>	All Saints Hunters Hill 0 v Collaroy Strikers 0 (4-2 on penalty shoot-out)
<b>Over 45's:</b>	St George 0 v Gladesville Hornsby 1