



APIA'S CUP PREPARATION FROZEN OUT

VIAGERGGIO 2012

Article 2 – John Economos

APIA LEICHHARDT TIGERS' Youth squad Viareggio Cup preparations have been almost totally wrecked by the severe freezing conditions that have struck the entire northern region of Italy in the last 72 hours, and worse still, these atrocious conditions are expected to extend till the week-end.

The 64th Viareggio Cup Tournament kicks off next Monday.

The massive northern European freeze that has drifted into Italy from Siberia has already shut-down no less than five major Serie a fixtures.

The Parma vs Juventus, Siena vs Catania, Novara vs Chievo, Atalanta vs Genoa plus Bologna vs Fiorentina in the past 72 hours were all cancelled.

However the clash between Inter Milan and Palermo played last tuesday night and ended with a 4-4 score line, resembled a game of ice Hockey not soccer.

Even worse, already Sunday's night match A.C. Milan vs Napoli has been scrapped.

The cities of Bologna and Livorno were both flattened by no less than a metre of snow.

Major railway arteries, schools and highways were forced to be shut down.

Not since 1956 has Italy been so severely struck by such ferocious freezing conditions.

APIA Leichhardt Tigers' President, Tony Raciti was livid last night.

Raciti had already blue-printed four vitally important warm-up matches to be played this week before next week's Viareggio Cup Tournament.

As if these severe climatic conditions were not bad enough, Rod Williams the APIA Youth coach flew out of Milan this morning, having to rush back to Kiama, NSW, where his mother is in a critical condition with her health.

Last Mr Raciti stated: "This is APIA's tenth consecutive crusade into Italy to participate in the prestigious Viareggio Cup Tournament.

"I have never experienced anything like this.

"It has paralysed all of our preparational work. We have been training every day, but game times are vital for this tough, serious cup tournament.

"For today (Thursday), I had a Plan B up my sleeve.

"That was to book an Indoor Calcio stadium in case of such an emergency surfacing."

Raciti had also booked two warm-up games in Livorno and Cesena, both have now been frozen out.

The match against Cesena was especially vital for the Australian travelling Youth squad and the APIA officials.

This game was to be played on a Generation 3 synthetic surface.

This synthetic pitch is the only such pitch in the World with a natural soil infill that also embraces a rubber shock-pad beneath the playing surface.

Further more it's the only such surface that requires an irrigation system for the essential weekly watering of the surface.

This super modern technology product, solely manufactured and marketed by the Italian Corporation 'Limonta', is the identical product that will be installed from next July at APIA's home ground, Lambert Park.

