



APIA Youth's Goless Draw, Plus Denied Certain Penalty.

VIAREGGIO 2012

Article 6- by John Economos

1st Viareggio Cup match report.
(From Lido Di Camaiore, ITALY).

APIA LEICHHARDT TIGERS in their very first official Viareggio Cup Tournament on Monday afternoon against Citta Di Marino, a team from outside of Rome, were repeatedly cheated by the three match officials to enable Marino to scramble to a 0-0 draw against the gallant Sydney side.

In the first session, not once, but twice the linesman flagged for off-side when an APIA attacker was clearly on side by a metre as he raced away into the clear bound for goal. As if this was not bad enough, in the second session, the opposite linesman did exactly the same, but this time on no less than four occasions.

But there was more, much more, like two denied penalties to APIA, one in each half. The first penalty denial was as early as in the 7th minute when APIA's powerful central striker, Blake Armstrong, was cut down in the Marino box.

With two minutes left on the clock, and with the duel still a nerve-wracking goless, pacey and courageous attacking midfielder, Chris Denkov flew into the box to be clearly brought down with the referee totally unresponsive to the

illegality.

As if these series of injustices were not enough, seconds before fulltime the Marino assistant coach, raced to the sideline and raised the board to signal an extra 6 minutes for 'injury-time'. Three minutes from normal time the referee flashed within five seconds two consecutive red cards to the APIA bench, the first to coach Tony Raciti for beggingly screaming for the denied penalty on Denkov, and the second to substituted right midfielder Frank Primerano for dissent.

The first session saw a powerful performance by APIA that culminated in two excellent goal chances, the first a glorious glancing header by towering striker Blake Armstrong that zeroed for to top left corner, plus a rocketting 20 metre drive fired from the left by Chris Denkov that shaved to top of the right post. High work rates from central defender, Paul Galimi, Denkov and Armstrong gave the Marino side a torrid time. In the 57th minute Raciti made his first change when he brought on Tyrone Gatt with fresh legs for Frank Primerano. By now Marino gathered power and began to have APIA under some considerable pressure, but the Australian defence gallantly marshalled by twin centre-backs Galimi and Brad Bartels, stood defiantly to this Italian period of sustained pressure.

It took 72 minutes for Marino to finally launch their very first threat on the APIA frame, when a glancing header flashed perilously past Stefan Giglio's left up right. Three minutes later it was APIA in fact that almost broke the deadlock when substitute Gatt smashed a square ball from the left to rocket inches past the left post. Ten minutes from normal time, Raciti desperate for a match-winning goal brought on more fresh legs in Frank Proietto for Matthew Napoli. The 85th minute APIA again almost had a goal when a wild poorly scrambled clearance in Marino's box the alert Dankov blasted well on target but the Italian tall, and hugely built goalkeeper, barely deflected the shot with his outstretched left shin. At the end of six erroneously added minutes of injury time, a wild fracas erupted as Marino players stormed the APIA players and substitutes.

In the dying minutes the second blatant penalty denial arrived when Denkov was slashed down in the Italian box.

APIA LEICHHARDT TIGERS' lineup: Giglio: Tou Ying Yang, Bartels, Galimi, Nasreddine: Primerano, Raciti, Denkov, Napoli, Salameh: Armstrong.

Yellow Cards: Bartel, Galimi.

Red Card: Primerano (off the bench).