



# VIAREGGIO 2012

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### Article 1 - by John Economos

APIA'S YOUTH\_squad flew out of Sydney last Saturday afternoon to challenge for the prestigious 2012 Viareggio Cup , for 10th consecutive year. Following a 32 hours of gruelling travelling that embraced flights, a whole day tour of Rome -the City rated as the 'Gateway To Europe'-, plus seeing the Serie a clash A.S.Roma vs Bologna at the Olimpico Stadio, the squad finally arrived late Sunday evening at Viareggio, wedged on the shores of the North-Western coast of Italy in the Tuscany region.

After an 8.30am Monday (today),breakfast, Youth coach Rod Williams organised the squad to play a full match amongst themselves to shake off jet-lag and get the circulation boiling. The 64th Viareggio Cup tournament, established and competed for annually since 1949 which saw giants A.C.Milan first crowned as Cup Champions, has notoriously been dominated by the crack Italian teams.

This year, no less than 29 Italian teams will compete in the 48 Club Cup tournament. Of the 19 'foreign' clubs including APIA Leichhardt Tigers, this year sees no less than three Brazilian teams competing , plus two from Paraguay and one from Uruguay to complete the South American participating contingent.

As was the case last year, only one English club has submitted an entry this year, that being from Newcastle United.


So tough is this Tournament that in the 63 years history of this prestigious Youth Club Tournament, twice only has an English club ever made it through to the Final, that being Ipswich Town in 1981 and 1982, failing on both occasion to ultimate Cup Champions A.S.Roma and Fiorentina respectively.

APIA's Head coach, Rod Williams, after this mornings hit-out, seemed satisfied with the players' performance, stating:

"Yes I have to say that I was pleased with the effort of all the players, considering having come out from the gruelling travelling and touring of Rome.

"All the boys did very well, and I was particularly impressed by our right back Brad Bartels and the intelligent tough-tackling Victorian centre-back, Tou-Yeng Yang.

"The lads wasted no opportunities in the whole 70 minute intensive session, despite having to rapidly adjust to a strange pitch and different climatic conditions." Despite being in the middle of Winter, the climate today in Viareggio was ironically very mild with a bright, strong sunshine splashing the soil all day.



Tomorrow (Tuesday), the APIA squad will travel a short distance to play their first warm-up match at the township of Massa against the local team called Massesse at 3pm.

On Wednesday, APIA's Chairman Tony Raciti has organised a second warm-up game against a local side from the City of Cesena, a four hour bus trip North-East from Viareggio.

This match is of particular interest to the APIA officials and players as it will be played on a modern synthetic pitch, (Generation 3).

This playing surface is similar to the quality material that will be used at Lambert Park on the installation of their spanking new, modern playing surface with work due to commence in July of this year.

Coach Williams late last night installed right-back Bradley Douglas Bartels as the captain of APIA's Viareggio touring squad with goalkeeper Stefan Joseph Giglio as the Vice captain.

APIA has been classified in the Cup under Group 4 Section A, bracketted against Citta Di Marino, Juventus and Danish champions Nordsjaelland.

The Group matches start from next Monday, Wednesday and Friday with all starts listed at 3pm.

APIA's match against Juventus to be played on Wednesday week will be telecast Live by Rai t.v. Sport and Australian fans can view it via the Internet by logging in on [www.raisport.rai.it](http://www.raisport.rai.it).

