



VIAREGGIO 2013

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By James Chetcuti

The coastal city of Viareggio represents the 'riviera' beach strip of Italy, wedged on the northern shores of the Tyrrhenian Sea, 25 miles west of Pisa.

This prestigious youth cup was first established back in 1949 when 16 crack European youth club sides battled for a spot in the final.

The 1949 inaugural final saw Italian giant AC Milan defeat Lazio. Since 1949, the Viareggio Cup tournament has rapidly expanded from the initial 16 participating clubs teams to now embrace no less than 48 clubs squads from all over the world, divided into 12 groups of four teams.

In 2013 the Viareggio Cup will be the 65th torneo mondiale di calcio staged, and attracted a tournament record of no less than 57 club applications for entry. This number now has been cut back to 48.

The Viareggio tournament has launched the playing careers of numerous international stars like Mario Balotelli & Sebastian Giovinco among many others. This year the tournament will comprise squads from no less than 22 nations.

The 12 groups are as follows;

Group A.

1. Juventus (Italy), Maribor (Slovenia), Avelino (Italy), APIA Leichhardt (Australia)
2. Inter (Italy), Nogoom El Mostakbal (Egypt), Virtus Entella (Italy), Phoenix
3. Torino (Italy), Honefoss (Norway), Citta Di Marino (Italy), Deportes Concepcion (Chile)
4. Sampdoria (Italy), Recreativo Huelva (Spain), Varese (Italy); All Boys (Argentina)
5. Genoa (Italy), Rijeka (Croatia), Parma (Italy), Santos Laguna (Mexico)
6. Serie D Select (Italy), Anderlecht (Belgium), Reggina (Italy), Norte America (Ecuador)

Group B.

1. Atalanta (Italy), Belasica Strumica (Macedonia), Siena (Italy), Pakhtakor (Uzbekistan)
2. Fiorentina (Italy), B93 Copenhagen (Denmark), Padova (Italy), Club Nacional (Paraguay)

3. Milan (Italy), Newcastle (England), Empoli (Italy), Under 17 Select (Congo)
4. Napoli (Italy), Honved Budapest (Hungary), Lecce (Italy), L.I.A.C New York (USA)
5. Roma (Italy), Spartak Mosca (Russia), Spezia (Italy), Long Island (USA)
6. Lazio (Italy), Stella Rossa (Serbia), Juve Stabia (Italy), Mutual Uruguay A-Net (Uruguay)

In the 64 year history of the Viareggio Cup Tournament, no English club side has ever been able to win it. In fact Ipswich Town has been the only English team to have made the Cup Final (1981 & 1982), but to be defeated by A.S Roma and Fiorentina respectively.

Italian giant clubs have been the major conqueror of this Cup Tournament. Fiorentina, Juventus & Inter have each won the tournament on no less than eight occasions.

APIA's long serving president Mr Tony Raciti stated: "We are extremely proud that this will be APIA Leichhardt Tigers 11th year that our historic club been accepted and invited to compete in this global, historically famous club youth tournament. "Our players will gain immeasurable vast knowledge whilst on this tour & will return to Australia as far better educated players. They will gain a much stronger, burning degree of desire to lift their very own game quality" Raciti concluded.

