



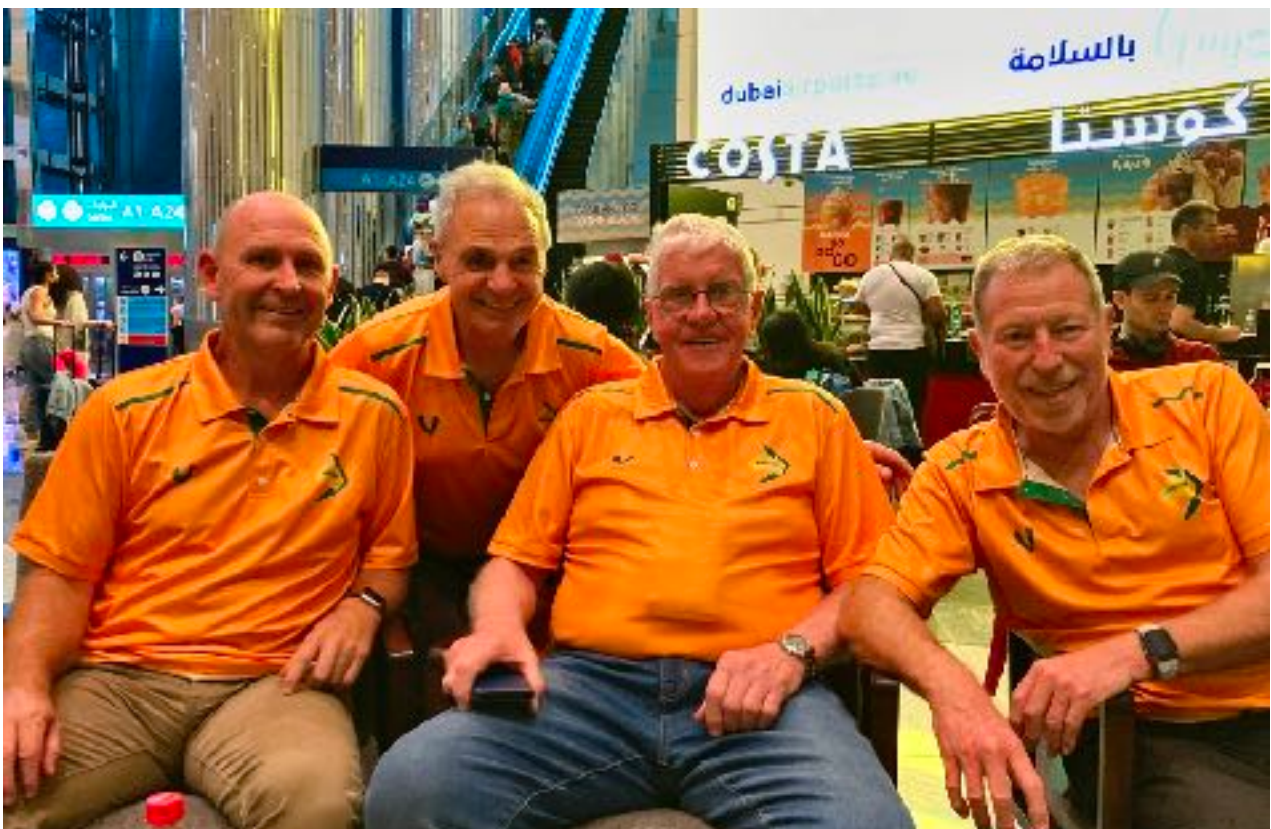
PAPPARAZZI
AUSTRALIAN TEAM
GETS MOBBED



ALL OUT!!
A REASONABLY
QUICK EXIT



ITALY 2022



World Cup Team Mobbed

This trip was organised in a matter of weeks. Siggie got the opportunity of a lifetime to represent Australia at the world cup of walking football for 50s to 70s plus. One week playing soccer with guys who are now mates and two additional weeks of roaming the Italian countryside with none other than his beloved spouse - namely me.

This has already been a memorable experience. Let's start at the beginning. We left home at 9 pm flying by Emirates to Dubai and then onto Rome. It was the usual trip that has to be bared to get to your destination. The squashed body (getting worse as the body expands), the

Italian Customs:
"What is your purpose in coming to Italy?"

Answer: "We are here to beat Italy by more than 2 goals!"

impossibility of sleeping upright and the seemingly random presentation of food, is all to be experienced. We slept a few hours and watched about 7 movies between us. Some of the other players were on the same flight, so we were able to catch up with them and get to know them a little better. Our arrival in Rome and transfer to Florence via train went fairly smoothly. The excitement was soon to come.

“The Very Best Exotic Marigold Hotel”

If you have seen this movie then you might appreciate what I am about to explain about our hotel — The Delta. It has certainly seen better days. We, by providence, apparently got one of the better rooms. Our air conditioner actually works. Our cupboard doors do close. However there is no in room tea making facilities (a major drama for Heather) and no pool as advertised and shown in the brochure. Some team mates went into numerous rooms before they were willing to lay their heads down for the night.

We alone tried the in-house restaurant - that was a mistake. It was the worst meal we have ever paid for! They obviously imported the Cordon Bleu from Coles Australia. And have cottoned onto the trick of presenting a plate of cabbage as a salad. Breakfast was even more “interesting”. We arrived to see Jen and Jimmy sitting in a large dining area with tables covered in dirty dishes. We cleaned up a space and sat beside them. We were presented with boiled eggs, croissants, cake and yoghurt for our contemplation. The eggs weren’t all fully cooked (not good in cold boiled eggs), the bread was stale and no toaster was provided to make it more palatable. It was terrible to the hilarious stage as people started to come in and view their options.

At one point I “rudely” asked the attendant if that was all we were being offered (having pleasantly suffered last nights “worst meal ever”). This lady subsequently got back at me by stalking out saying “I am going to resign” and took my bag as well. I realised it was missing later and found it all in tact at the reception. What was that all about? I don’t normally complain. I suppose I got my just desserts. Anyway, we haven’t laughed so much for a long time. It is one of those experiences that one often remembers with hilarity.

This morning we are all meeting together to travel in to Florence by train. The Delta Hotel sits on the city outskirts with industrial land all around us - few shops to speak of. A day of exploring awaits!!



We alighted our express train in Florence only to be greeted by a rather long line waiting for taxis at the taxi ramp. The group behind us were Welsh and they enquired about us wearing our distinctive gold tops. We duly let her know we were from Australia representing the country in walking football. Selfies upon selfies were taken for tip tok/twitter.