



2 TEAMS -19 AUSSIES
ONLY THREE BORN IN AUSTRALIA



HUSBAND & WIFE
CHRIS AND NOELENE
CENTRAL COAST NSW



SIGGY AND SIGGY
SAME NAME DIFFERENT
CONTINENTS

ITALY 2022



Italy - Over 60s

Losing is always hard. How can you explain it? "We played well but were beaten by a better side?" Yes, Italy were a good team. They scored 7 goals against us, but we were not totally outplayed. Far from it. We conceded goals because Italy were extremely ruthless when given opportunities. It was impossible for Tony "The Wall" to stop full blooded shots on goal and the barrage of fierce shots were overwhelming. Italy's frontline marksmen were simply impressive. We didn't take our opportunities however. Plus we gave the ball away in strategic places far too often. Yes, at times we did have lots of great possession passing the ball around and stretching and

Church bells
ringing, olive trees
and villas on hills
behind our field,
I'm breathing/alive,
I'm in Italy of all
places, and still
playing football!!
For Australia!!
Savour/
contemplate that!

running our opposition but our finishing at the end of forward runs was less than satisfactory. We also made a few defensive errors which were immediately and severely punished. Compounding the inevitable exhaustion everyone was feeling with the heat, was the continuous booking of three of our players - for running. The ref was strict - 2 blue cards (off for 3 minutes) and 1 red (permanently off for the rest of the game). Despite the jovial comments, curbing our enthusiasm for running was something the team did not learn. Taking off too fast towards the ball, pushing it in front and assuming one could speed around an opposition player and running behind play were immediately penalised. It resulted in less risks being inevitably taken by our team and therefore less opportunities being presented. The Azzuri won well and we realised we had to win our next game against Sweden to have any hope of continuing on in the competition. The Over 50s also lost their match. They too had to win their next one.

Sweden

There are a number of lessons learned this afternoon. At our age we have all had our “day in the sun” and have experienced football ups and downs. This trip should have been seen as cream on the top - an occasion to enjoy and savour. Yes it is a competitive occasion where thinking about and playing as a team is paramount, especially since this was a game we had to win. Playing Sweden was always going to be tense - really tense, because if we lost or drew, due to our poor goal difference, we would not be in the finals. This was a hard competitive occasion so our coach devised a strategy to ensure we had the best competitive chance. The issue was always going to be fatigue and overcoming the dichotomy of “are we here to play socially or are we here to win at all costs?”

The first half was end to end stuff but we were actually the better team. There were few chances. Sweden made many changes but we stuck with the players who started. At the half time break - score 0-0 - one player expressed disappointment about lack of game time. This resulted in a wholesale change with all the bench being put on the field together. This unbalanced the team. We were soon down by 3 goals and chasing the game. To the team’s credit we came storming back with a goal and a penalty and attack after attack before time ran out. The Swedes congratulated us for our efforts in coming back from 3-0 down — it was a game played in the best spirit of walking football. An exciting game that we could and should have won. Tomorrow we play France.

Behind the scenes



Coach extraordinaire



**Scotty
in
charge**



Naughty Corner

When Steve received his blue card in quick time he was pragmatic - “I gotta take my medicine even though I don’t like it.” Two minutes goes by slowly. Referee beckons him to come back on so Steve RUNS onto the field. Ref: “You don’t seem to catch on, do you?” and promptly issues him with a red card. You can still hear Steve “reflecting” to this very day!

