

# June/July 2010: “What’s it all about Alfie?”

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**P**raise the Lord. It’s that time again. And am I so eternally grateful and expectant. It’s World Cup time and as of 11 June 2010 your “man in Havana” is on night shift!!!!!! Divorce is on the menu.

Now it’s my first column for a while. Much has happened and gone by the way. It seems that every 20 minutes there has been a new judicial appointment and resignation: Chief Magistrate goes to Supreme Court: Chief Justice retires and everything else in between. As far as CLANT is concerned: **No Comment**.

As far as the Northern Territory criminal justice system is concerned, the same “real” issues exist: the Northern Territory Government’s apparent intent on refusing to bring in any real policies to address crime and instead spend over \$300 million of tax payer’s money on a new super jail. Our Government poses as tough on crime but not tough on the causes of crime. Meanwhile the ocean surrounding our beautiful city is polluted by faeces. How can this come about? Where are this Government’s priorities?

Another live issue is our Police Force’s decision to use taser guns on Northern Territory citizenry. In 2008 when it was announced tasers were coming, our Association consistently said “**cave, cave**”. We gave our reasons then. In May there was a Coronial Inquest in Alice Springs into the death of a 39 year old Aboriginal man which seemed to reveal virtually all the reasons why our Association had said on their introduction “**cave,**

**cave**”. Namely unhealthy, middle-aged Aboriginal man in a situation where he’s firstly capsicum sprayed and then tasered multiple times by a Probationary Police Officer. The man then dies of heart failure. Rest assured CLANT will be following closely this case which is presently **sub judice** with a decision to be published by the Learned Coroner in August of this year.

## June/July 2010

For the time being let me now talk about June/July 2010 and what it’s all about. And it’s about one thing because there is only one thing; South Africa and the World Cup. Now I know most Australians have no real appreciation of what this involves.

The very fact that I personally neglect my duties and responsibilities as CLANT President in this very column manifests what a sickness and bacillus it is.

I’m from Scotland. It’s a soccer (presently mediocre) nation. The game is a “passion”. We are not alone; far from it. My sister rang me from Edinburgh only the other night. She kept me abreast of my old man’s health situation etc and then informed me of her other news. She and her husband have purchased a super, digital hi-fi television specifically for June/July which of course equals the World Cup. By the way, Scotland hasn’t even qualified. This **is** the real deal. The country (Scotland) sits down for a month. Much of the planet

does likewise. It’s all about football. Football played at its zenith. This is four weeks of French champagne; skill, beauty, drama and emotion at the maximum; at a level beyond comprehension.

Australia is one of the greatest sporting nations on the planet but for some reason “wogball” did not kick in until relatively recently and so the populous do not endure/enjoy the bacillus that we, the football nutters, endure.

Sure, there is Collingwood versus Carlton, Bulldogs versus Parramatta and, of course, State of Origin which is definitely up there, but there is nothing, absolutely nothing, to compare with the mayhem which flows in a World Cup Tournament. Never mind Wimbledon, the US Open, and the Olympics. All of them pale to this four week extravaganza.

Now, I could probably write a book about the history of this caper but space dictates. Suffice to say it started in South America, specifically Uruguay, in 1930. There have been 18 World Cups. Brazil has won five, Italy four, Germany three, Argentina two, Uruguay two, England and France one each. Italy won the last one in 2006 in Germany beating France in the final in a penalty shoot out.

## South Africa 2010

Australia is there but probably for a limited period. Germany, Serbia and Ghana are in their group and if they get top two to go through they



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will be doing well.

Now, when you write and hand in these columns to the *Balance* Editor, and I write and hand this one in on Thursday 10 June 2010, the fact is they are actually published weeks, if not months later, so I am conscious that any predictions made by yours truly herein are seriously up for grabs. So be it. I will try and not be predictive and concentrate on the general.

## A general observation

This is the first World Cup held in Africa. F.I.F.A. is of course political and the political message is that it's there to acknowledge, confirm and **promote** the "World Game" in Africa.

Jolly good, but let's get real.

Sure there are some fabulous African players playing football in Europe at its highest level, for instance Michael Essien and Didier Drogba for Chelsea and Sulley Nuntari for Inter Milan. But don't be deluded. There are in fact enormous amounts of African players playing in Europe at all levels but the game in any African country is mediocre.

These players are scooped up by the European Clubs when they are boys aged 14. Many don't actually graduate to play the game in their own leagues. The World Cup won't alter that one bit.

True, South Africa will employ thousands of people building the

five new stadiums etc and that will generate the economy but once the World Cup circus ends and moves on South Africa will be left with wonderful stadia but little if no advancement to its local league. The players will go "on show" where they will be seen and scooped up by the money and South Africa and the other African nations will be left with their status quo.

## Europe

It displays and reveals what the World Cup is really all about: **Europe**.

Whether it be the timing of the games to accommodate the European audiences or the poaching of African talent. It merely confirms who runs the joint: **Europe**.

True it is that South American countries, especially Brazil (consistently) and more recently Argentina, have enjoyed fabulous success in this Tournament but their domestic leagues are not in the same "league" as the Barcelonas, Inter Milans, Real Madrids, Bayern Munichs, Chelsea and Manchester United as regards capital. All power to those countries for what they have achieved and continue to achieve. Romance really does abound in the world game's ultimate Tournament. Go Brazil, go Argentina, go Chile.

## What's in store?

But look; enough of politics; let's look at what's in store. There are eight groups containing four

countries each. 32 starters. The first two qualify from each group and then it's knockout. As with everything in life, history teaches us lessons.

Statistically speaking, who wins the World Cup is either Brazil, Italy or Germany (Uruguay's two triumphs were in the 30's and 50's: they haven't been a real force for 60 years).

England fancies themselves every tournament they manage to qualify for, and this one's no exception. Arguably, more than previous. France? Maybe.

And so to the big three; Europe (Italy and Germany) versus Brazil. Put in that equation the real dark horse Argentina. They have the World's best player, Lionel Messi and are coached by arguably the greatest player ever, Diego Maradona, who in 1986 won a World Cup off his own left foot (not to mention the left hand that came from God). Their combination is probably fatal, rather than effective. There **will** be huge drama with Argentina but it will probably end in trauma and blood, spit, tears and horror and a difficult trip home.

That leaves the main men: Brazil, Italy and Germany. Spain and Portugal fancy themselves for good reasons: they're seeded respectively two and three but their history in this event is mediocre. Methinks this will be confirmed. Sorry Cristiano Ronaldo, the second best (if not the best), footballer on the planet.



For what it's worth, I see Brazil, Italy and Germany wrestling to win the World Cup. Germany have lost their captain Michael Ballack through injury which could be fatal. I go Italy and Brazil in the final on the 11 July at Soccer City Stadium in Johannesburg with Brazil to win.

### A parting anecdote

A parting anecdote to illustrate this ridiculous bacillus.

The 1978 World Cup was held in Argentina. Argentina beat Holland in the final 3-2 to win their first World Cup.

I was 21 and studying law in University in Glasgow but in July I was back at home in Edinburgh with my football daft father.

Like now, like always, the programming accommodated us Europeans beautifully. For four weeks you basically got every day three games in a chronological order starting at about 6pm and ending at about 1am.

The 78 World Cup was an absolute cracker and every night I sat up with my father and watched those three games in a row. This went on for weeks, but what I really and truly remember is every night after the third game ended, which had taken Dad and I into the 1am territory, we would both look at each other, somewhat despondently and make the observation "wish there was another game" and with that forlorn sentiment we would both sadly trudge to bed. ●

### Ian Morris Community Contribution Award

Nominations are now being sought for the Ian Morris Community Contribution Award (formerly the Law Society Northern Territory Community Contribution Award). Community groups and individuals are encouraged to nominate a legal practitioner who has, or a legal firm or other legal organisation that has, made a significant contribution to the Northern Territory community in the last two years.

Nominations close on Friday 30 July 2010.

To honour Morrie, please take the time to nominate an outstanding fellow practitioner . . . **NOW!**

### Robing Room Lockers

Supreme Court Robing Room Lockers are available for rent at an annual fee of \$88 (incl. GST). Rental is billed annually in January. Replacement keys are available from the Society at a cost of \$11 (incl. GST).

### AUSTRALIAN LAWYERS' CRICKET COUNCIL ("ALCC") TOUR TO BARBADOS JULY 2011



#### CALLING TO ACTION TO CRICKETING LAWYERS!

- Are you a cricket playing lawyer?
- Would you like to represent Australia at the 3rd International Lawyers' Cricket World Cup?
- Would you like a trip to Barbados in July 2011?

A selection carnival will be held in Sydney on 5 – 7 July 2011. All selections are based on merit. Both male and female cricketers are urged to participate.

Australia is the current World Champion.

Please contact Alex Martin to register your interest on [armartin@martinlegal.com.au](mailto:armartin@martinlegal.com.au)