

# Bulls again fail to shake off the Sunshine jinx

ARGENTINA were not the only soccer side at the weekend to know what it felt like to have four goals put past them.

The FNQ Bulls' hopes of finishing the regular season in second place took a hit yesterday when the Mareeba side lost 4-1 to Queensland State League ladder leaders the Sunshine Coast at Kawana.

The Bulls were down 3-0 in the

first half before striker Jo Rusch scored from the penalty spot after he was felled by the Sunshine Coast keeper in the box.

The Bulls dominated possession and field position when play restarted for the second half but any hopes of a fightback were ended by a fourth Sunshine Coast goal in the 67th minute.

The loss was the Bulls' third to

the Sunshine Coast this season following defeats in Round 1 (3-1) and Round 8 (2-0). Bulls coach Peter Tokesi said it was clear his team had trouble beating the competition front-runners.

"They seem to be our bogey team," he said.

"The difference between the sides was the composure in the front third.

"We had our opportunities but we made poor decisions and took bad options.

"I don't think 4-1 was a fair reflection of the game but we didn't deserve to win, that's for sure."

The Bulls' biggest injury concern out of the game was goal keeper Angelo Serafin, who is in doubt for Saturday night's game against the Bundaberg Spirit at Borzi Park.



**Pure power:** Fusion player Jason Haydon is airborne as he unleashes a thunderbolt against the Lions last night.

Picture: CHRIS HYDE

# Lions teach the cubs few valuable lessons

IT was the fear of losing to a group of high school students that made Leichhardt muscle-up and beat the FNQ Fusion, development coach Martin Docherty claims.

Docherty's team, with an average age of 16, went down 3-1 to the Lions at White Rock last night in round 12 of the FNQ Football season.

Docherty said his under-19 development side was being targeted because clubs feared losing to a young team.

"I think they go harder because they don't want to lose against us," he said.

"It's all fair, don't get me wrong, I've got no problem with it.

"Our main objective is learning and developing and teaching them how to play the game of football.

"At the end of the day Leichhardt probably deserved to win, we just lacked genuine leadership on the field and that comes with experience."

The win reinstates the Lions with top spot on the ladder ahead of Stratford, who had a bye.

## Ben Blomfield

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"The game wasn't as intense as last week," Lions coach Chris Pennington said.

"The young fellas are playing really well.

"They're young, full of beans and love to run."

Darcy Fernandez, Pasco Rogato and Martin Scott all scored for the Lions and Paul Eigl found the back of the net for the Fusion.

The game married attack and defence well, amid claims by Innisfail coach John Cavanah that soccer in Cairns is getting boring.

Cavanah last week claimed a counter-attack culture was breeding boring players and stifling individual talent.

"I just laughed when I read that," Pennington said.

"Our game plan is about winning, we've got an attack and defensive program and I think we married the two well."

Pennington, qualified in sports medicine, will play doctor this week after defenders Kevin Frisch and Mark Pinto both suffered hamstring injuries.

In other games, Marlin Coast Rangers beat Mareeba 7-1 and Innisfail beat Edge Hill 4-1.

Meanwhile, Innisfail thumped Edge Hill 8-0 in round 12 of the FNQ Football men's premier youth league on Saturday.

At their home ground, Innisfail led 3-0 at the half before storming home.

Incredibly, Darcy McCormack scored six goals for Innisfail. McCormack bagged his first goal in the 29th minute before scoring five within the next 35 minutes.

In other games, Marlin Coast Rangers lost to Mareeba 6-2 with Leichhardt and FNQ COE settling for a 2-2 draw.

In the ladies division: FNQ COE lost to 4-0 Leichhardt, Edge Hill beat Innisfail 2-0 and Marlin Coast Rangers beat Mareeba 1-0.

# FFA gets clean bill on Cup funding

FOOTBALL Federation Australia says it has been cleared of allegations it attempted to mislead the Federal Government over the use of funding allocated for the 2022 World Cup bid.

FFA said in a statement yesterday it had willingly opened its books for an investigation by the Government's Football World Cup Bid Taskforce and had been cleared of any wrongdoing.

The examination followed Fairfax newspaper reports last week which suggested the Federal Government was not told specific details about how taxpayers' money was to be spent on the lobbyists and grants to overseas football bodies headed by powerful FIFA officials.

Rejecting any suggestions of dual account keeping, FFA said the Government had accepted the document which formed the basis for the reports was merely "an informal planning document".

FFA chief executive Ben Buckley said suggestions of dual accounts were "outrageous and defamatory" and could cause unnecessary damage to Australia's bid.

"All of our operations are in line with FIFA guidelines and our financial reporting meets our obligations under the funding agreement with the Government and any suggestion otherwise is completely wrong and the Government has accepted that," Buckley said.

The newspaper report said "secret" FFA files revealed two European lobbyists hired to help bring the cup to Australia stood to receive up to \$11.37 million in fees and bonuses between them if the bid were successful.

## Be proud of Cahill plea

EVERTON defensive stalwart Phil Jagielka says Australians should be proud of their superstar midfielder Tim Cahill.

Jagielka is part of the Everton side which has arrived in Australia for pre-season friendly games against Sydney FC, Melbourne Heart and Brisbane Roar.

The central defender said Socceroos midfielder Cahill, was hugely important to the English Premier League club, both on and off the field.

"Timmy has been a big player for us for the last three or four years, he pops up, the right person at the right time, for very important goals," Jagielka said in Sydney yesterday.

"But it's not only his performances on the pitch, it's off the pitch. If you need anything he's the first person you'll speak to, so as a nation you should be proud of Timmy C as we are to have him playing for us."