



Briton spoils F1 title party

THE 2012 world drivers' championship will go down to the wire at next weekend's season-ending Formula One race in Brazil, with Lewis Hamilton spoiling Sebastian Vettel's title party by winning a thrilling United States Grand Prix. The Briton, 27, who started second on the grid on Sunday in his McLaren alongside the defending champion in Texas, made the most of his superior outright speed to pass Vettel on lap 42 and claim the 21st victory of his career.



Beckham's suitors must wait

A-LEAGUE clubs will have to wait a little longer to have a crack at signing superstar David Beckham after his LA Galaxy side booked a spot in the MLS final. The Galaxy lost 2-1 to Seattle in the second leg of the Western conference final, but advanced 4-2 on aggregate after winning the first leg 3-0. Because it finished the season with more points than Houston Dynamo, Galaxy will host Dynamo at the Home Depot Centre in the MLS Cup final on December 1.



Trainer loses ban appeal

QUEENSLAND trainer Nathan Schofield has lost his appeal against a 12-month disqualification for intending to treat a horse via a stomach tube on race day. Schofield had Besech entered for the last race at Flemington on Melbourne Cup day but the horse was forced to stay in his Geelong stable after a raid by officers from Racing Victoria's Compliance Assurance team. During the stable inspection, they found a naso-gastric tube and other equipment.

Winning combo

AN Antipodean combination in the closing minutes of play earned Millwall a 1-0 win over Leeds United in the English League Championship.

Sunday's middle-of-the-table clash was scoreless until the 85th minute when Australian defender Shane Lowry's left wing cross found the head of New Zealand international Chris Wood.

The 20-year-old striker from Auckland, on loan from West Bromwich, found the net and with five minutes to go scored his seventh goal of the season and sealed victory for Millwall.

In the Premier League, Socceroo Mark Schwarzer could not save a 10-man Fulham team from a 3-1 loss to Sunderland.

Fulham captain Brede Hangeland was shown the red card for his 30th minute charge on opposition midfielder Lee Cattermole, opening the door for an in-need Sunderland.

Schwarzer managed three saves but conceded the same number.

Sunday's result put Sunderland 15th, level on points with Stoke City.

Doing it tough

HOLDERS Chelsea and Scottish champions Celtic can seal their places in the last 16 of the Champions League on Tuesday but they will have to do it the hard way by winning away from home.

Chelsea travels to Serie A leader Juventus but Celtic's away form in the Champions League is woeful. It will have to repeat the form of its home win over Barcelona against a talented Benfica side.

Bayern Munich, the team Chelsea beat on penalties in last season's final, also has a tricky trip to Spanish side Valencia.

Bayern and Valencia have nine points apiece, but with Belarus side BATE Borisov breathing down their necks on six points and all but guaranteed three points when they host hapless French side Lille, neither can afford a slip-up.

A win for Valencia or Bayern would see the victor join the one side playing on Tuesday already assured of a place in the last 16, Manchester United, also guaranteed to top its group.

Soccer's \$160m TV deal a shot for goal

SOCCER
By DAVID DAVUTOVIC

THE soccer community has hailed the \$160m TV deal as a giant leap forward, less than two years after the game was on its knees.

The four-year deal with Fox Sports and SBS commences next season and will see the A-League on free-to-air TV for the first time.

SBS will televise a live game each Friday, and show a weekly highlights package, with the finals and grand final shown on delay.

Socceroos games will continue to be shown on SBS



Frank Lowy

a one-hour delay. The \$40m a year deal (\$37m cash and \$3m contra) is more than double the current seven-year soccer deal, which was signed and sealed before the 2006 World Cup.

Chairman Frank Lowy promised A-League clubs that Football Federation Australia will increase its annual dividend by almost \$1m per season.

"The first thing we're going to do is increase the subsidy to the clubs to the tune of \$2.5 million, \$2.6 million, to

cover the salary cap," Lowy said.

"It was always my objective to do that, from day one."

Fox Sports chief executive Patrick Delany admitted the Pay TV broadcaster was considering its future after some lean A-League ratings several years ago.

But he paid tribute to FFA's vision during the negotiations.

"We've spent \$160m over the last eight years," he said. "The first few years were good then in and around that World Cup bid ratings went down — last year it all turned

around. I don't think anyone in entertainment wouldn't have had a heart flutter in that period.

"When negotiations started we did several workshops about where they're taking football, so we took a deep breath and went with FFA."

SBS will televise domestic soccer for the first time since 2004, and head of sport Ken Shipp promised they wouldn't disappoint.

"SBS is the spiritual home of football in Australia and our passion, dedication and football expertise is unrivalled," Shipp said.

Melbourne Victory chair-

man Anthony Di Pietro said the deal will open up new revenue streams.

"We knew this was coming, it's about two parts — the free-to-air component, which widens the potential audience," Di Pietro said.

"And financially it's a big plus it gives clubs sustainability and surety."

Melbourne Heart chairman Peter Sidwell said this goes some way to stemming the financial bleeding.

"The pressure point for all clubs and club owners has been finance, not belief or vision about where the game should head," Sidwell said.

Tommy's chance to work with Rangers

SOCCER
By IAN BUTTERWORTH

DARWIN soccer playing teenager Tommy Makarounas will take a trip to potential stardom when he travels to Scotland in the new year to attend a training camp with leading club Glasgow Rangers.

Makarounas was among the youngsters at a training camp in Darwin by NT Loyal Rangers Supporters Club and Mindil Aces FC, which featured six coaches from the Rangers' coaches academy.

The 14-year-old was noticed by Rangers scout Robin Gibson, who was part of the coaching contingent, and he was offered a brief academy place at the home of Rangers, Ibrox Stadium.

Makarounas, who started playing with Darwin Olympic eight years ago, swapped to Mindil Aces but is back at his original club, is hoping his stint at the academy is the first step to a future as a professional footballer.

"I would like to be a professional footballer and Rangers are my favourite club in Scotland," said Makarounas. "I'm expecting a hard time and some pretty intense training sessions."

"I will take every opportunity, and hopefully it will be the first step to a professional playing future."

It is no secret that Rangers are in a spot of bother but with their financial woes being sorted out, a lift from their current third division status may be long term, but inevitable.

NT Loyal Rangers club pre-



Darwin's Tommy Makarounas is off to Scotland to attend coaching sessions with world-renowned side Glasgow Rangers

sident Andrew Power said that despite their troubles, Rangers will again make the visit to Darwin next year and this time Darwin Olympic

will be the venture partner. "Firstly, our best wishes go out to Tommy Makarounas. He is in good company because other players

to be noticed by Robin Gibson are Danny Wilson (Liverpool) and Manchester United's Darren Fletcher," Power said. "In the new venture,

we've partnered with local side Darwin Olympic and our committee is very excited to be working with such a well organised group."