

## Getting caged in by Melbourne Victory

By Heather Bloom

With all of the Colingwood/Geelong rivalry that's been played out across Melbourne, you'd be forgiven for thinking there was no other football happening in the state of Victoria. However, the boys from Mel-

bourne Victory set about making history by introducing the concept of "panna football" to Melbournians.

On October 6th, football lovers were invited down to Southbank Spillway (located between the two footbridges connecting Flinders St Station) to try their hand (and their feet) to the one-

on-one game. Panna, or nutmeg as it is sometimes called is a challenging game similar to football played on a field but downsized to a 5x5 meter cage. Players attempt to kick the football between each other's legs and score a goal in a battle to 'nutmeg' or 'panna' each other and win the game outright.

Stirring up excitement amongst the city crowd, Melbourne Victory players Nick Ansell, Luke O'Day and Jimmy Jeggo polished their skills within the 5x5 meter cage with goals at either end, and offered tips and advice to competitors.

A new concept to Australians, the Melbourne crowd was treated to the premiere display of the traditional street football game of panna, and Melbourne Victory fans eagerly watched their heroes battle it out ahead of



Lucky winners show off their prizes



Kids battle it out in the cage at Southbank

the first game of the 2011/2012 Hyundai A-League season against Sydney FC last Saturday night.

Several lucky competitors proved their skills in the cage and were awarded tickets to

Melbourne Victory matches and season memberships to the club. The event encouraged supporters and newcomers to participate and interact with the team during the tournament that helped bring awareness to the

club that can sometimes be neglected during the AFL season.

But with the Grand Final won and lost, supporters of the A-league have plenty of opportunities to cheer on the Melbourne Victory to well.... Victory.

## Victorian Government launches \$77m homeless plan

Homeless people who are young or elderly will be able to access services specifically tailored for them under a new \$77 million Victorian Government plan.

The plan, released on Wednesday 5 October, includes a \$25 million innovation fund to finance pilot projects that will provide services targeting different groups, including women and children fleeing family violence and elderly people.

It also recognises the need to move to a system where outcomes for people are funded rather than services.

Housing Minister Wendy Lovell said the plan focused on helping vulnerable people before they became homeless.

"This action plan differs from earlier approaches in that the emphasis is on getting results, as opposed to short term

stop-gap measures," she said.

Council to Homeless Persons chief executive Jenny Smith said she looked forward to the government releasing its housing strategy around the end of the year.

She said the plan provided a positive way forward towards broader reforms.

"The models that it will explore are really important because for homelessness, at the more challenging end of it, it really is about housing and support together, it's not just housing," Ms Smith said.

Victorian Council of Social Service policy manager Kate Colvin welcomed the fact the government had recognized a lack of integration between services had been a persistent problem.

Almost 37,000 people are on the public housing waiting list in Victoria.

Ms Lovell said the government would acquire 1,600 new public and social houses by the middle of next year.

A homelessness ministerial advisory council would also be set up to advise her on the implementation of the plan and longer term reform, she said.

Opposition housing spokesman Richard Wynne dismissed the advisory council as a bunch of bureaucrats and politicians talking.

"Ms Lovell has the dubious distinction of providing not one dollar for building new housing, not one dollar for acquiring new stock and no new ideas," he said.

Mr Wynne said the plan did not address issues such as adequacy of pay and training opportunities for people in the sector or what tailored support would mean for those with a disability or mental illness.



The sign says it all

Photo: Creative Commons/Ed Yourdon

## From falling auctions, to buy-it-now and bidding wars, we take a look at the internet innovations getting you more bang for your buck

The last 12 months has seen an explosion in online shopping, both in the number of sites and the amount of shoppers around the country that are turning to the internet for a cheaper, more convenient and enjoyable shopping experience.

From electronics to books, wine and even groceries, there are quite literally hundreds of new websites offering an enormous range of goods and services that the general public can take advantage of with the click of a mouse.

In the past many such websites focused on the city market with delivery rates for those outside the major centres making online shopping less attractive, but that is no longer the case with many sites now offering very competitive delivery pricing nationwide on a huge range of goods.

One of online retail's greatest advantages over its bricks and mortar competition is the sheer variety of offer, especially when you are comparing the range to what is generally available outside of the capitals.

Now even the remotest country communities can buy from a massive range of goods and services.

For many people though, it's the fun and excitement that comes with shopping online that's the key attraction.

For example, at sites like eBay, buyers from all around the country bid against each other to secure the items on offer.

Crackawines.com.au, an online wine retailer, has taken the thrill of buying online one step further with its unique Falling Price auction system.

Based on the model used at the Sydney Fish Markets, the prices start high (typically the RRP) and then keep falling until all the stock has been sold. Buyers can buy at any time by accepting the price shown on the screen, provided there's stock still left. Obviously the longer you wait, the cheaper it gets but wait too long and you risk missing out altogether.

The wines offered through Cracka Wines range from premium offerings to cheap and cheerful mixed cases, ensuring that there's something to suit ev-

eryone's taste and budget. In any case their unique system, which lets everyone set their own price, practically guarantees buyers never pay full price again.

If auctions aren't your thing the company also allows consumers to buy excess wine directly from hundreds of wineries at fixed (but still discounted) prices, often up to 70 per cent off the RRP.

Another key factor driving the growth of the internet's popularity for online sales is the wealth of information available, and its ease of access. It makes

sense then that Cracka Wines is packed with plenty of information on wine and the industry - wine reviews from leading authorities, video reviews, interviews with winemakers as well as facts and figures.

This is just one example of thousands of websites that are bringing everything you could possibly want, at a great price, direct to your door, regardless of where you live. The biggest issue now is just deciding what to buy next!