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31 May 2004

## Lord Nose

# Lord Nose!

Sport from the man who knows!



## Lewis hammered but still standing

Mon, 31 May 2004

Meet David Lewis, a soccer fan like no other.

The CEO of an international consultant-promotion company, with a catchcry of "IT Solutions to Corporate Problems"- Lewis is a life-long, and devoted, West Ham soccer supporter.

When he found out the Hammers-Crystal Palace first division playoff final, for promotion to the England Premier League, wasn't on free-to-air, cable, or satellite television, true-to-form David Lewis found the solution.

He brought the television rights for Australia – on his pat.

For an individual to branch out like that is unheard of in the first place, but negotiations of that kind normally take months of haggling.

But not-to-be-denied David Lewis did it in just five days – and that included the game itself, played early yesterday morning AET at the Millennium Stadium in Cardiff, packed with 72, 583 non-neutrals.

As a one-off lateral-thinking classic, grabbing the television rights was an outstanding success. As an affair of the heart, it was a heart break – West Ham lost 1-nil, and stay in first division, next season.

In the wash-up, Crystal Palace return to the Premier League for the first time in six years - \$46m richer for the promotion.

That's the huge financial benefit of being among the elite, as against first division – it's big, big, big bickies.

So the Nigel Shipperley goal in the 62nd minute was effectively worth \$46m – that's some goal.

We've all seen golfers sink a crucial putt that earned an additional \$150,000, even \$300,000 – but nothing like a whopping 46 mill.

Lewis is under a confidentiality agreement not to disclose what he paid for the rights, but it would have to be in the vicinity of \$400,000.

The final figures aren't to hand, but around 3,000 West Ham, and Crystal Palace, supporters paid \$25 each to view the game at selected venues in Cairns, Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, and Perth – a logistical nightmare to organise in such a short time, but a mighty handy return for the lateral-thinker.

Except for the result – David Lewis was devastated.

He would have been quite happy to lose on the deal – had West Ham won – it's as simple as that.

Hammers aside, the Australian Soccer Association should have a chat with this bloke, especially the new chief exec – John O'Neill.

The former Australian Rugby Union managing director-chief exec switched codes last

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month, after leaving the 15-man game well in the black with around \$60m stashed away – the bulk from hosting the most successful Rugby World Cup, in history.

O'Neill desperately needs lateral-thinking blokes like David Lewis – and he'd be keen to have a chat.

Lewis has made plenty of written suggestions to the ASA in the past – pre-O'Neill – but never received a reply - that's just plain rude.

From one DL to another, he should repeat the dose to O'Neill direct, who has far more sporting savvy than those around him – that's why he'll struggle in the round ball game, without switched-on support.

So step up to the plate David Lewis, and go to bat for your concepts – your code needs you.

Let's face it, anyone who is prepared to put his money where his mouth and heart are, is worth listening to – dedication is a priceless asset.

If only West Ham had won.

QUOTE OF THE DAY:

"Personally, I'm always ready to learn, although I do not always like to be taught." Sir Winston Churchill.

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