

RELEASED: Friday, October 30, 2015

Played: Inside Australia's Failed World Cup Bid, with Leigh Sales

Screens on Tuesday, November 17, at 8.30pm on ABC

Billionaire Frank Lowy had a dream: to bring the world to Australia for the greatest sporting event on the planet. Football's World Cup would be Lowy's crowning achievement in an extraordinarily successful career and his greatest coup. History told him he was the man to do it. Instead, he was conned. He was completely played by the masters of dark politics and backstabbing. Along the way, Australia lost \$43 million.

Was it hubris or naivety from Frank Lowy. Or was one of the world's smartest businessmen simply an unsuspecting player in the high-stakes power game beyond his control? It was certainly embarrassing for Australia.

Now, for the first time, the inside story of what really happened is exclusively revealed by those close to the action – including Frank Lowy; former Prime Minister John Howard; disgraced FIFA President Sepp Blatter; former FFA CEO John O'Neill; Steven Lowy; Lowy's close adviser Mark Ryan; biographer Jill Margo; film director Phillip Noyce; and Australia's bid consultants.

Narrated by Leigh Sales, this one-hour documentary reveals just how Australia came unstuck in the treacherous international game of sport diplomacy, politics, money and intrigue.

Candid never-before-seen private footage lays bare the last three painful days of Australia's bid to host the 2022 football World Cup and reveals the heartbreaking moment when Frank discovers the truth.

Played: Inside Australia's Failed World Cup Bid goes behind the scenes, into an exclusive world that is rarely captured and almost never seen – joining Frank Lowy and the Australian bid team as what should have been the biggest triumph of their lives became their greatest public failure.

Frank Lowy was left wondering what had hit him – vowing that the last word had not been heard. Now the truth of how Australia was played can finally be revealed.

"We failed miserably and it would have been probably one of my biggest failures in my career, and I take it very hard. I love the success. People tell me at FIFA that I'm a sore loser. But in this instance, I am a sore loser because I thought that we had the credentials to have it". – Frank Lowy

For further information or interviews contact:

Kim Bassett, ABC TV Publicity

03 9524 2580 | 0409 600 456 | bassett.kim@abc.net.au