

Just to keep you well informed before our leagues get under way, the story below is no different to what happens anywhere in the football world.

HONEST PLAYERS ARE THE VICTIMS

English footballers involved in an international match-fixing scam in Australia feared they would be caught because the local ringleader would shout instructions during the matches, a court has heard.

Segaran "Gerry" Gsubramaniam, 46, would be told over the phone how many goals were to be conceded, then try to "get the message" to players by yelling instructions from the sidelines, prosecutors said.

The Malaysian national acted as a facilitator between players at Victorian Premier League club the Southern Stars and overseas syndicate bosses. "The boss was ringing constantly," Gsubramaniam said in a record of interview read in the Victorian county court on Friday.

"He called saying: 'This better fucking happen.'"

Prosecutor Peter Rose SC said about \$64,000 passed through Gsubramaniam for the payment of players, and to arrange hotels and cars for them.

He said Gsubramaniam played an important local role in the syndicate which "had tentacles in other parts of the world". "There has to be someone like him doing this," Rose said. "It's the leadership role of the system in Victoria."

Defence lawyer Ian Hayden said Gsubramaniam earned as little as \$2,000 a month from the scheme.

"The lack of sophistication was such that he was calling out from the sidelines," Hayden said, describing it as absolutely chaotic.

He said players were worried about the way the instructions were given.

"They were saying, 'does he want to be caught?'"

Two players [convicted of fixing matches at the Southern Stars](#) – Joe Wooley and Reiss Noel – were fined \$1,200 and \$2,000, but Rose said a custodial sentence was necessary in the case of Gsubramaniam.

Gsubramaniam has pleaded guilty to one match-fixing charge, an offence that carries a prison term of up to 10 years.

Hayden said Gsubramaniam was a man of good character with no prior convictions.

Judge Michael Bourke said it wasn't just those who lost money betting on the game who were **the victims in the crime, but the honest players at the club.**

"The supporters of this club must be very, very angry," Bourke said.