

## THE SKY'S THE LIMIT For Aspropotamitis



**OK: You've been capped for the Australian U20 and U23 sides, tell us your experiences and what's coming up with your Young Socceroos duties?**

JA: At any level, representing your country is a huge honour and something that will stay with me for the rest of my life. Singing the national anthem sends chills down your spine and being able to play with the best young talent in Australia makes you proud to be apart of. For the Under 20s, I played under Paul Okon and was fortunate enough to play against USA, Brazil and Mexico in some friendlies, which were a fantastic experience.

For the Under 23s, we had Josep Gombau and we were successful in the qualifying stage of the AFC 23s Asian Cup. Going forward, provided I am selected, we have the Under 23s Asian Cup in China in January 2018 against some of the biggest nations in Asia.

**OK: You've also captained the U23's recently, a huge honour, tell us a bit about that**

JA: Representing your country is a huge honour in itself but being able to lead your country out is something not many people can say they have done.

Being able to represent my family and friends back home was a huge achievement and something that will stay with me for the rest of my life.

With a lot of the Australian footballing community watching back home, the opportunity to lead the team was something I was very grateful for.

**OK: You have played for a couple of NPL clubs in NSW with the likes of APIA Leichhardt Tigers, Sydney Olympic and Parramatta FC to name a few, how important is the NPL and its development with the Australian game overall?**

JA: For me, the NPL is of huge importance to the development of young players in Australia.

Being able to play against the best talent in the state growing up was a massive benefit. Talk now of the national second division coming into play means the NPL clubs have a chance to stake their claim to be full time and provide a different perspective for the game with possible promotion and relegation.

At Sydney Olympic, I was lucky enough to play in reserve grade side at the age of 17, these experiences playing

I have been lucky enough to go to Greece a few times and every time I go back, I appreciate my heritage more and more

against some seasoned professionals fast tracks a players development and prepares you for senior football.

**OK: As a young promising footballer what is your advice to any budding youngster coming through the ranks?**

JA: For young players growing up, there isn't one specific piece of advice that leads to success because it's a mix of many different factors, but the one piece of advice that I would pass on simply focusing on the things that you can control and nothing more can be a massive benefit for any young player. Not worrying about what other players are doing, just worrying about your pro-