



By George Stavroulakis



Former Wanderers coach Tony Popovic has signed a three-year deal.

Glory sign former Western Sydney Wanderers boss Tony Popovic as new coach

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It will also raise the club's profile as it goes into the player market to improve its squad for next season.

Popovic, who has signed a three-year deal with Glory, controversially quit Wanderers on the eve of last season to chase his dream of coaching in Europe at Turkish club Karabukspor.

But the move was ill-fated and he lasted just 10 weeks after eight losses.

In another move former Sydney FC chief executive Tony Pignata will replace the outgoing Peter Filopoulos who has taken charge of Football Federation Victoria.

Popovic is expected to arrive in Perth next week to begin his new role.

Western Sydney FC facing a major upheaval

After becoming the first A-League club to secure the Premiership double, Sydney FC are now facing an uphill battle to retain their key players.

The club have 10 players coming off contract and are currently hunting for a new coach after Graham Arnold was picked to take over the Socceroos after the World Cup.

Bobo, Milos Ninkovic, Jordy Buijs, Alex Wilkinson, Alex Brosque, Fabio Ferreira, David Carney, Luke Wilkshire, Matt Simon and Patrick Flottman are all off-contract by June 30 this year.

Anthony Kalik is also scheduled to return from his Sydney loan to Croatian club Hadrjak Split.

Jordy Buijs is rumoured to already be on the outer and has been linked with Western Sydney Wanderers, as Sydney attempt to maintain their key attacking trio of Bobo, Ninkovic and Adrian Mierzejewski.

Luke Wilkshire has recently been linked with NSW National Premier League club, Wollongong Wolves, while captain Alex Brosque is yet to commit his future to the club, recently announcing that he's considering retirement.

Bobo's performances this season – a record breaking tally of 27 goals – have already triggered an extension to his marquee contract. Ninkovic, however, is yet to sign a new deal.

At the request of Graham Arnold, Sydney intentionally delayed contract negotiations until after the Grand Final, which now puts further pressure on the club to quickly resolve the player-list before the appointment of a new coach.

Optus eye up Champions League TV deal



Telecom giant Optus are eyeing up a bid for Australian broadcast rights to the UEFA Champions League as they aim to expand their football streaming.

The Singapore-owned company have just renewed their groundbreaking EPL deal which saw them snatch the rights from Fox Sports two years ago.

They followed that up by sealing a deal with SBS to stream every game of the World Cup.

Now Optus Sport executive producer Richard Bayliss has revealed they're not done yet... and a bid for the UEFA Champions League could come soon.

«**There are** some high quality football tournaments and competitions out there that we are looking at,» he told the 442FM podcast.

«**When you** look at the Premier League obviously, and the World Cup – that's the upper echelon of football... and you have to get things to match that.»

He admitted the Champions League was in that bracket and added: «I believe that's available at some point soon.»

BeinSport currently shares the Australian TV rights for the UCL with Optus's World Cup broadcast partner SBS.

But Bayliss warned: «I think that the bidding for that will start quite soon.»

«**Whether that's** something we can get, I'd love, love that to be the case, to obviously complement what we have already.»

He added: «We don't want to be pigeonholed into one league, or one competition.»

«**We talk** about other leagues anyway, so we'll grab that opportunity with both hands if other competitions do come up.»