

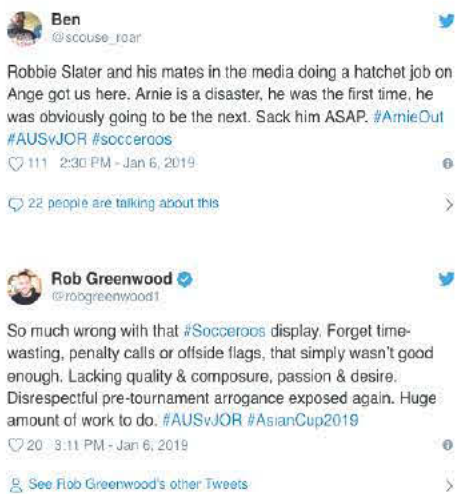


By George Stavroulakis

## SOCZEROOS FAN REACTION: 'ARNIE IS A DISASTER'



Socceroos fans were ruthless in their assessment of Australia's 1-0 loss to Jordan in the 2019 Asian Cup opener, with the majority of the vitriol directed at



The Socceroos faced their first true test under Arnie after going a goal down to Anas Bani Yaseen's powerful header at the near post, but couldn't create many chances as they scuppered to an opening match loss.

It was a case of returning nightmares for Arnold, whose Socceroos side scraped a 1-1 with Oman in the opening match of the 2007 Asian Cup, before losing 3-1 to Iraq in their next match.

They eventually lost to Japan in a penalty shootout in the tournament's quarterfinal.

But despite the Socceroos scoring a whopping 13 goals in four matches under Arnold preceding the Asian Cup, fans were sceptical of the 55-year-old's ability to lead Australia forward.

In addition to jabs at Arnie, there were plaudits given to the Jordanians, who offered more than just a counter-attacking display.

Vital Borkelman's side looked dangerous throughout, defended resolutely with strong organisation, and offered plenty of attractive attacking threat, largely through impressive individual skill.

# SOCZEROOS VS JORDAN PLAYER RATINGS

THE SOCZEROOS TITLE DEFENCE KICKED OFF IN THE HAZZA BIN ZAYED STADIUM, AL AIN AGAINST JORDAN IN UAE.



**The Asian** Champions started well, shifting the ball around, with a couple of chances through an Awer Mabil shot and a Jamie Maclaren wide header.

**But Jordan** punished the Socceroos for awful making in the eight-yard area, Anas Bani Yaseen's powerful header putting them in front at half-time.

**Graham Arnold's** men were guilty of being caught in possession too easily and lacking pace and purpose.

**The second-half** was much better and was all about the Socceroos, but they just couldn't break down Jordan's stoic defending. Jamie McLaren summing up Australia's frustration, with a last-gasp goal disallowed for offside.

### Mathew Ryan – 7

**Good save** early on from a fierce strike. Couldn't do anything about Anas Bani Yaseen's powerful header on the 25th minute. Fantastic save from Ryan from Jordan's free kick just outside the box, created by Trent Sainsbury's lazy tackle.

**Another straight** forward save, getting his body behind the ball in the second half.

### Aziz Behich – 7

**Defended well**, enjoyed going forward trying to create width, couple of decent crosses into the area. Overall, he worked hard for his team

### Trent Sainsbury – 6

**Sloppy in** his distribution of the ball, twice putting the ball into no man's land. Looked rattled with Jordan's fast attacking style.

**A very** poor tackle just outside the box early, forced Mat Ryan into a brilliant save. But eventually rescued his blushes with a much better second half.

### Milos Degenek – 7

**Going about** his defensive duties, held his ground well. Looked solid in the second period. The only shining light for the Socceroos

### Joshua Risdon – 6.5

**Started with** good intent, closing down well, pressing forward, decent deliveries out wide into the goal area. Appear tired towards the end of the first-half. Subbed at half-time.

### Massimo Luongo – 5.5

**Late tackle** and poor pass early, caught in possession too many times. Should have been jumping to stop the free header for Jordan's opening goal. Poor performance. Subbed 72 minutes

### Tom Rogic – 6.0

**Too casual** when in possession, needs to move the ball quicker. Dropping way too deep to collect the ball. Couple of efforts on goal in the second half.

**Had a** fantastic chance to equalise but not enough composure in front of goal. Was not at all at his best, looked off the pace and tired all game.

### Mark Milligan – 7

**Like some** of his teammates, getting caught in possession but throughout the match he did work hard in the midfield and showed good defensive duties.

### Robbie Kruse – 5.5

**Kept quiet** in the first half, poor control in the final third. No impact at all. Subbed on the 55th minute.

### Jamie Maclaren – 7

**Worked hard.** One attempt on goal, but his header went over the cross-bar. Wasn't getting the service he required. His late goal was disallowed for off-side. Overall, had a good game.

### Awer Mabil – 7

**Poor early** touch, maybe nerves, but showed good endeavour and pace. Decent shot on goal.

**Mixed bag** when crossing the ball, some too short or too long. Another player guilty of getting caught in possession. Had a brilliant strike hit the upright, but felt he could off laid off a neat pass to Jamie McLaren instead

### Rhyan Grant – 6.5

**On for** Joshua Risdon in the second-half. Looked lively after coming on, getting forward well, trying to create space to give Australia more width, crossing the ball with purpose into the box. Showed good energy.

### Chris Ikonomidis – 6

**On for** Robbie Kruse. Tried to make a difference when he came on, created space, looked lively.

**Appeared rushed** when trying to control the ball but he will learn from this experience in the national set-up

### Jackson Irvine – 6

**On for** a poor Luongo. Garnered a free header but just didn't have the control or direction to test the keeper. Another player who tried to change things when he came on the pitch.