



By George Stavroulakis



Chris Ikonomidis.. «I've had that dream since I was a young boy»

Chris Ikonomidis is keeping any ambitions of returning to Europe close to his chest, as he seeks to return to the A-League with as much force as he left it.

Alongside fellow Socceroos winger Awer Mabil, Ikonomidis was one of the sole bright spots in Australia's disappointing quarter-final exit from the Asian Cup.

But the 21-year-old insists he hasn't had any offers to return to Europe since the tournament and will put a hold on any ambitions until the end of the season.

"At the moment I'm not really sure (about a transfer)," Ikonomidis said.

"I haven't had any offers, I haven't had any contact really with my agent so I'm just wanting to focus on my football, I find that's better for me and to keep that stuff out of my head and maybe think about it in the off-season."

Ikonomidis has been arguably the standout Aussie development of the 2018/19 campaign, with Glory coach Tony Popovic able to breathe new confidence into the former Lazio man in a more aggressive, forward role.

"I told my mates in the team to stay in top spot for the time I'm gone and they did just that, they've been doing fantastically and I'm just raring to go," he said.

"It was fantastic [Asian Cup], for me it was a dream to play in a major tournament with the Socceroos.

"I've had that dream since I was a young boy so doing that over the past month has been a dream come true and a really good learning experience for me, I think I can take a lot of positive experiences away from it."

'Can Stajcic take the Socceroos?': Fan reactionboy»

While Australian football fans aren't renowned for their cool heads under pressure, there is a growing swell of momentum on social media for Graham Arnold to relinquish the Socceroos role, less than a year after succeeding Bert van Marwijk.

The defending Asian Cup champions slumped out at the quarter final stage against a valiant United Arab Emirates, who despite a determined and largely dominant display by the Aussies, will feel they deserved the victory.

But while the Socceroos performances throughout the competition - a 1-0 loss to Jordan, 3-0 win against Palestine, 3-2 win against Syria, a penalties progression against Uzbekistan after a 0-0 draw and finally a 1-0 loss to the UAE - will take longer to properly analyse, the reaction from many on social media was swift and merciless.

Melbourne City sign Tottenham forward

Melbourne City have signed promising Tottenham Hotspur youngster, Shayon Harrison, on loan for the rest of the season.

Harrison joins City with an excellent pedigree for his age, having played for Spurs against Liverpool in the League Cup and trained with the England national squad.

Harrison has also made 27 appearances for Yeovil Town and Southend United over the past two seasons, scoring one goal.

The 21-year-old will bolster City's attacking stocks for the remainder of 2018/19, complementing the signing of Socceroo Jamie Maclaren.

"I've been aware of Shayon for a few years and followed his development. He's a young player with pace and creativity, and a bright future ahead of him," Warren Joyce said.

"Shayon's energy and talent will give the boys a good lift for the back half of the season, and we're confident we have the right environment to allow him to continue his impressive development this season."

Whether Harrison's deal will mean a reduced role for City young-gun Lachy Wales remains to be seen, with makeshift forward Ritchie de Laet expected to return to a defensive role.

Harrison's transfer is the latest in a growing trend of A-League loan deals for younger, foreign players, alongside Adelaide United loanee Jordy Thomassen, who is expected to provide stiff competition for young United forward George Blackwood.



A LEAGUE Results 17 ROUND

5 games, 23 goals: An A-League round to remember

Sydney FC - Melbourne City 2-0
Perth Glory - Wellington Phoenix 3-0
Adelaide United - Brisbane Roar 4-3
Central Coast Mariners - Melbourne Victory 2-3
WS Wanderers - Newcastle Jets 1-1



A - LEAGUE Table 17 Round

	Team	GP	Pts	W	D	L	GF	GA	+/-
1	Perth Glory	17	40	12	4	1	36	16	20
2	Melbourne Victory	17	36	11	3	3	39	21	18
3	Sydney FC	17	35	11	2	4	31	19	12
4	Adelaide United	17	29	8	5	4	25	20	5
5	Melbourne City	17	27	8	3	6	21	18	3
6	Wellington Phoenix	17	26	7	5	5	24	24	0
7	Newcastle Jets	17	18	5	3	9	20	23	-3
8	WS Wanderers	17	10	2	4	11	24	40	-16
9	Brisbane Roar	17	9	1	6	10	21	38	-17
10	Central Coast Mariners	17	6	1	3	13	18	40	-22

A-LEAGUE 18 ROUND

DATE	HOME	AWAY	VENUE	Kick-Off (AEDT)
Friday, 15 February 2019	Newcastle Jets	Melbourne City FC	McDonald Jones Stadium	7:50PM
Saturday, 16 February 2019	Wellington Phoenix	Melbourne Victory	TBC	5:35PM
Saturday, 16 February 2019	Adelaide United	Western Sydney Wanderers FC	Coopers Stadium	7:50PM
Saturday, 16 February 2019	Perth Glory	Brisbane Roar FC	nib Stadium	10:00PM
Sunday, 17 February 2019	Sydney FC	Central Coast Mariners	Leichhardt Oval	5:00PM