

GRAHAM ARNOLD ANNOUNCES SQUAD FOR 2020 AFC U-23 CHAMPIONSHIP QUALIFIERS IN CAMBODIA

Australian U-23 National Team Head Coach Graham Arnold today named a 24-player* squad to venture to Kuala Lumpur and onto Phnom Penh for Australia's 2020 AFC U-23 Championship Qualification matches against Cambodia, Chinese Taipei, and Korea Republic.



A mix of Hyundai A-League-based players and eight professionals currently contracted abroad will convene in Southeast Asia next week as Australia prepares to compete in Group H of qualification from March 22 to 26.

Following the week-long camp in Kuala Lumpur – which will include friendly fixtures against Malaysian Super League side Petaling Jaya City FC (14 March) and the Malaysian U-22 National Team (17 March) – Australia will shift its base to Phnom Penh where a first place finish in Group H would seal a place at the 2020 AFC U-23 Championship.

Australia would also qualify for the 2020 AFC U-23 Championship should the squad finish as one of the four best second-placed teams in qualifying. The fifth-best second-placed team from the 11 groups will also qualify should Thailand – who have qualified automatically for the tournament as hosts – finish as either Group K winners or runners-up.

Arnold said that with many Asian nations rapidly improving across the continent, the time spent together ahead of the qualifiers will be critical to Australia's aim of securing a place at the 2020 AFC U-23 Championship – a tournament that will serve as Asia's qualification path for the 2020 Summer Olympics in Tokyo.

"We have had three short camps in Canberra with the squad and during that time we have looked at 38 players," Arnold said.

"The week that we have together in Kuala Lumpur will be vital in preparing us for the challenges that we will face in Phnom Penh, and we certainly appreciate the support of all the clubs that are releasing their players to participate in what is an important tournament for Australia."

"While we are in Malaysia we will develop our key principles of play and focus on how we believe we can successfully navigate Group H and secure our place at next year's AFC U-23 Championship in Thailand.

"Our three matches in Cambodia represent our first step on the path to next year's Olympic Games, and everyone involved with our squad is eager to help Australia return to the men's football tournament for the first time since Beijing in 2008," he said.

Hyundai A-League-based players in Arnold's squad will miss only one round (22) as the 2020 AFC U-23 Championship Qualifiers are being held in a FIFA window.

*One player from the 24-player squad listed below will be omitted prior to the qualifiers in Cambodia.

Name	Club, Country
Nathaniel ATKINSON	Melbourne City FC, Australia
Keanu BACCUS	Western Sydney Wanderers FC, Australia
George BLACKWOOD	Adelaide United, Australia
Jake BRIMMER	Perth Glory FC, Australia
Joseph CHAMPNESS	Newcastle Jets FC, Australia
Nicholas D'AGOSTINO	Brisbane Roar FC, Australia
Thomas DENG	Melbourne Victory FC, Australia
Denis GENREAU	PEC Zwolle, Netherlands
Alex GERSBACH	NAC Breda, Netherlands
Thomas GLOVER (Gk)	Tottenham Hotspur, England
Jordan HOLMES (Gk)	St Mirren, Scotland
John KOUTROUMBIS	Newcastle Jets FC, Australia
Abraham MAJOK	Western Sydney Wanderers FC, Australia
Daniel MARGUSH (Gk)	Adelaide United, Australia
Riley MCGREE	Melbourne City FC, Australia
Tass MOURDOUKOUTAS	Western Sydney Wanderers FC, Australia
Aiden O'NEILL	Central Coast Mariners FC, Australia
Sebastian PASQUALI	Ajax Amsterdam, Netherlands
Reno PISCOPO	AC Renate, Italy
Harry SOUTTAR	Stoke City, England
Ivan VUJICA	Newcastle Jets FC, Australia
Lachlan WALES	Melbourne City FC, Australia
Pierce WARING	Cerezo Osaka, Japan
Brandon WILSON	Perth Glory FC, Australia

Upcoming Matches | Australian U-23 National Team

Petaling Jaya City FC v Australia U-23 (Friendly)

Date: Thursday, 14 March 2019

Venue: TBC, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Kick-off: 9.00pm (local); 12.00am +1 (AEDT)

Malaysia U-22 v Australia U-23 (Friendly)

Date: Sunday, 17 March 2019

Venue: Shah Alam Stadium, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Kick-off: 8.45pm (local); 11.45pm (AEDT)

Australia U-23 v Cambodia U-23 (2020 AFC U-23 Championship Qualification – Group H)

Date: Friday, 22 March 2019

Venue: Phnom Penh Olympic Stadium, Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Kick-off: 6.30pm (local); 10.30pm (AEDT)

Chinese Taipei U-23 v Australia U-23 (2020 AFC U-23 Championship Qualification – Group H)

Date: Sunday, 24 March 2019

Venue: Phnom Penh Olympic Stadium, Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Kick-off: 3.30pm (local); 7.30pm (AEDT)

Korea Republic U-23 v Australia U-23 (2020 AFC U-23 Championship Qualification – Group H)

Date: Tuesday, 26 March 2019

Venue: Phnom Penh Olympic Stadium, Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Kick-off: 3.30pm (local); 7.30pm (AEDT)