

wait 3-0

FIFA World Cup



that would have put Lionel Messi to sleep, but he put it to better use than any other Aussie and set the tone for what ultimately proved a dominant display.

Adam Taggart - 5

Since Tim Cahill retired the Socceroos have struggled to field a striker for more than just symbolic reasons.

But there's definitely room for optimism that after 16 goals in 23 appearances this season, Taggart could bring the flooding rains. Optimism more in our minds than on the pitch after that performance, but optimism nonetheless.

Who knows, maybe the position is cursed? Maybe the only way the Socceroos can get a goal return from their striker is from reinventing attacking midfielders?

Long shot sure, but that's the only good reason we can think of for Tags wearing the number 10.

Mathew Leckie - 8

Remember when Leckie couldn't buy a goal?

26 caps of hitting the post and tripping over the penalty spot and now all he needs to do is stand in front of the goalkeeper and the ball will literally ricochet in off his shins.

If only we'd known it took Aussies so long to find their scoring boots and left Scott McDonald in the striking lineup he might have been our leading goalscorer by now. As it happens, our leading scorer now is now Leckie, on a cool 11 goals.

All he needs to do is keep scoring braces every match for the rest of qualification and we might actually have a respectable tally for a leading marksman by 2022!

Brandon Borrello - 7

It would have been a little easier to ignore the fact that they rarely play and get right on the 'both our wingers are in the Bundesliga' party had Borrello not tripped over the ball so many times in the opening stanza.

But, true to his electric potential, the tidy midfielder warmed his way into the match and was soon giving Behich a reason to live again down the flanks, combining well and actually keeping possession under pressure.

Awer Mabil - 7

Dynamic, a little over-zealous, popped up wherever the Socceroos needed him and was always quick to counter out-wide. For bonus points, never forgot to throw his feet in the air like a ballerina whenever he felt contact.

Apostolos Giannou - 6

He had precious little to do as Australia wore the game down to a sleepy conclusion (or is that just us?) after doing the hard yards in the first half.

Still, he managed to impress himself upon the game a little more effectively than Taggart, despite getting tangled up in own legs after a beautiful lay off from Aaron Mooy.

Watch this space. It will be interesting to track how he and Tomi Juric play this season for their respective clubs, as that 'big man' backup role will likely be key heading into the World Cup.

Mustafa Amini - 6

How you miss a giant red afro running around we're not so sure, but barely saw him come in contact with the ball during his short spell on the pitch. A nervously unprepared six for Mustafa.

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do any damage to Behich, who had one of the more confident, exciting performances than we've seen in quite a while.

If you're going to play second fiddle Aziz, might as well do it to a world-class left-back rather than some Dutch upstart at PSV, we reckon.

Trent Sainsbury - 7

Quite a straightforward day at the office for Maccabi Haifa's newest signing, who was low-key even by his own inconspicuous standards. Perfect prep for Europe's lowest-key league.

Milos Degenek - 6

Unnervingly spun in circles by his Kuwaiti opposition a few too many times for our liking. Hopefully can settle back into life in Belgrade, because when he's at his best he's desperately needed to settle our own backline.

James Jeggo - 7

Simon Hill quipped in the commentary that Jeggo had never had a bad game.

We've definitely seen him register a few nasty tackles (this game included) but broadly speaking, we reckon Simon's bang on there. So it's a solid seven from Jeggs without the midfielder doing a whole lot to earn it.

But the real question Simon, is that good enough to keep out Luongo, who definitely has had bad games for the Socceroos, but can also get your heart in your mouth for all the right reasons?

This time, we'll let you be the judge.

Aaron Mooy - 8

If a picture tells a thousand words, then a grainy Twitter clip should be able to tell about 10 numbers (give or take).

Jackson Irvine - 7.5

Ripper first half from action-Jackson in which Australia's most dangerous player wasn't the bloke who scored a brace, but the hirsute midfielder who barely got a shot on target.

He was allowed an amount of time on the ball in the box