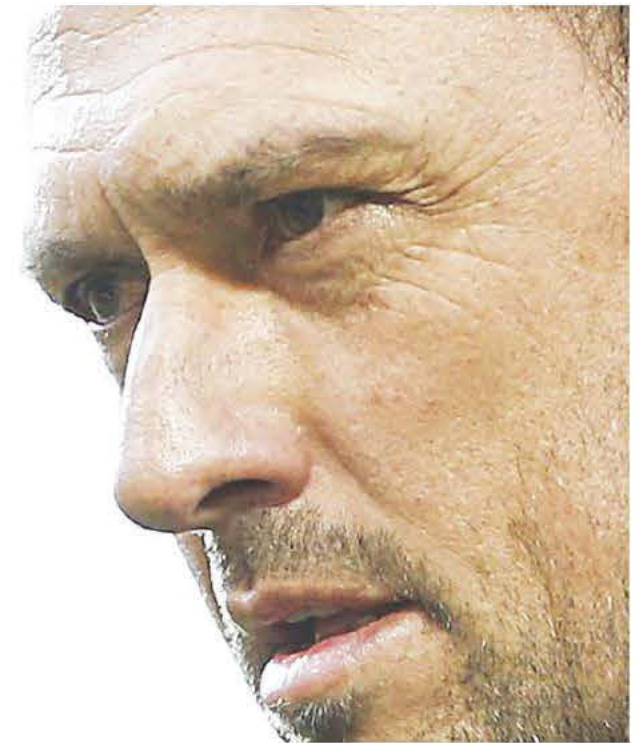
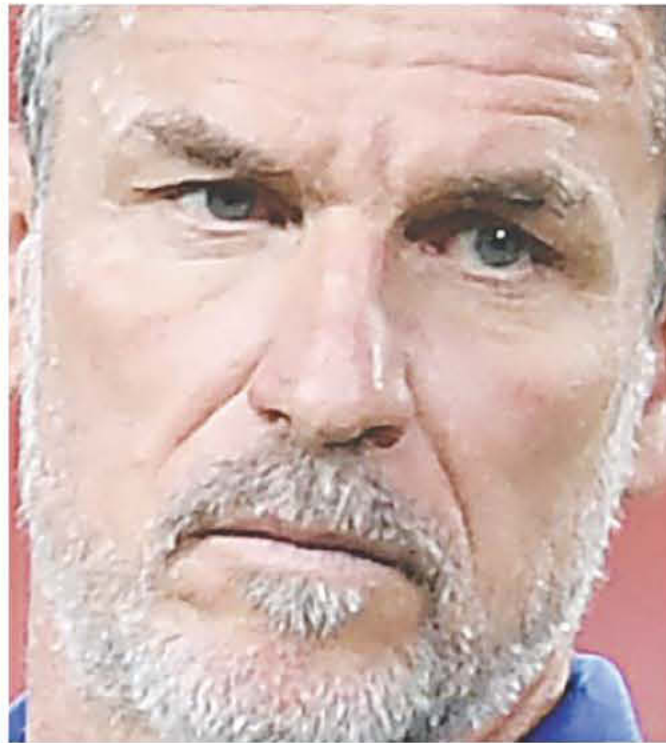




By George Stavroulakis

## HEAT ON COACHES IN A-LEAGUE

Pressure continues to mount on Melbourne Victory coach Marco Kurz and Perth Glory counterpart Tony Popovic after their A-League sides slipped further down the ladder with losses in round seven.



**Two of** the top three clubs last season, Glory went down to Sydney FC 3-1 while Victory copped the same scoreline against Adelaide United.

**Coaching against** former club Adelaide for the first time, Kurz watched his side slide to a loss at Coopers Stadium, where he was once so admired.

**Victory have** one win from seven games and slumped to the bottom three after a third loss in their last four games.

«**This can't** continue, not for Melbourne Victory, if this continues, they won't even make the top six because that tonight was pathetic,» former Socceroo Mark Bosnich said on Fox Sports.

**Last season's** Premiers Plate winners Perth have just one win from six and none from three at home, after falling to the Sky Blues in the grand final rematch at HBF Park.

**German Markus** Babel was another coach feeling a trifle warm under the collar following Western Sydney Wanderers' 3-2 home loss to ladder-leading Melbourne City.

**Questioned about** a contentious penalty award to City,

Babel said «Is this a serious question? Serious question? F\*\*\*'s sake. No comment.»

**Pressed further** on whether he thought Melbourne's Denis Genreau dived, Babel said: «You have two eyes. Do you understand the game a bit? F\*\*\*ing have a look.»

**The penalty** awarded by Chris Beath was the most controversial decision of the round, though Sydney benefited from two line-ball offside calls.

**Sydney strikes** Adam Le Fondre and Kosta Barbarouses each scored for a third straight game as Perth's abysmal historical record against the Sky Blues continued.

**Glory's Uruguayan** striker Bruno Fornaroli became the fastest man in A-League history to score 50 goals with his clinical finish against Sydney.

**He reached** the milestone in just 76 games, three faster than Shane Smeltz and Besart Berisha and had a second rubbed out by a marginal offside call.

**Sydney remained** second, a point behind City, whose prolific marksman Jamie Maclaren netted twice against Wanderers,

for who Kwame Yeboah also scored two.

**Maclaren's late** winner increased his season haul to nine goals in four games and he's the first player to score at least twice in four successive A-League matches.

**Suspended Olyroos** captain Riley McGree also bagged a double in Adelaide's win over Victory to give him six goals from as many games.

**It was** a successful end to a difficult week for McGree, who on Tuesday was suspended from internationals until April next year after an incident involving a Cambodian woman, while he was captaining Australia's under 23 side last March.

**Victory captain** Ola Toivonen scored for a fourth straight game and has netted all but two of his side's seven goals this season.

**Coming off** their worst start to any campaign with a solitary draw through five games, Wellington opened their win account with a 2-1 home victory over Brisbane.

**Phoenix captain** Steven Taylor and fellow import Ulises Davila scored for the home team, with the former also making a vital goal-line clearance.

## RUDAN CALLS FOR VAR PUBLIC EXPLANATIONS

Western United coach Mark Rudan wants VAR officials to make public explanations of their decisions on potential penalty incidents in games.



**Western United** coach Mark Rudan has called for VAR officials to publicly explain penalty decisions and claims his club is the only one in the A-League yet to get a favourable call from the controversial system.

**Rudan said** based on new interpretations of handball explained by referees to his club in the pre-season, United should have been awarded two penalties in the second half on Sunday, when they lost 1-0 to Central Coast in Gosford.

**He wanted** more clarification regarding VAR decisions.

**Rudan was** both passionate and measured in his argument, but joked he wasn't going to get as fired up as Western Sydney counterpart Markus Babel, who let rip with a couple of F-bombs after his team had a contentious penalty awarded against them two nights earlier.

«**I'm not** going to answer like my colleague on Friday night did, but I'm right behind him and I'm right behind all the other coaches that have been on the wrong side, I'd love a please explain,» Rudan said.

«**It's important** that if us coaches and players are out in the public, making comments like this and sitting here, it's important the people who sit out in that VAR room come out.

«**I would** love some clarification on what is and what isn't and I think the people who are making these decisions, who are hiding in a box somewhere in the country, need to come out and publicly explain each incident.

«**The coaches,** the players and the fans can understand exactly what warrants a penalty and what doesn't.»

**His Mariners** counterpart Alen Stajcic doubted whether there could be any more clarity regarding natural and unnatural handball actions.

«**Handball has** changed 50 times in the last 20 years and every time you change it it just moves the grey area so it doesn't solve any problem,» Stajcic said.

«**We've already** been stung by a couple of handballs in the box, in round one and round two, so we've probably been at the brunt of more of those decisions more than anyone else, so it is what it is.»

**Rudan was** clearly frustrated by the VAR calls in matches involving his club throughout their first season.

«**Not one** VAR decision has gone our way this year, not one,» Rudan said.

«**Every team** has had it go their way this year except for us.»