



3 Things We Learned

WESTERN SYDNEY WANDERERS VS BRISBANE ROAR

Welcome to Wanderland; where Western Sydney just can't catch a break. It was a tough game to watch for neutral's but once again, the conversation has shifted to the technology.

Mitch Duke scored the opener inside five minutes courtesy of brilliant build up play from the captain.

Scott Neville haunted his former club with a goal before Brad Inman rifled home a sensational finish to win the match.

But VAR controversy once again follows the Wanderers wherever they go. It truly does stick around like a bad smell.

Brisbane Roar hoist themselves into ninth position but the Wanderers remain dangerously close to the bottom two.

VAR TAKES CENTRE STAGE

For years now we have complained about VAR. The explanations we get to convince us of its viability almost sound like political campaign slogans.

First it was 'clear and obvious', now we hear 'unnaturally bigger'. The thing about slogans is that people get tired of them very quickly.

The positioning of Tom Aldred's arm when Mohamed Adam's shot struck his hand in the first half was dubious.

Compared to Daniel Georgievski's handball last week that

sent the football community into certain oblivion, the decision is baffling almost everybody.

Every time we hear these slogans and cliches about the technology, supporters throw back the word consistency.

If Georgievski's was close enough for the referee to be called to the screen, supporters would probably feel comfortable if Alex King was called to the screen for Aldred's handball.

WANDERERS CRAVE CONSISTENCY

Beating a team on the bottom of the ladder at home, even when you've been in the form the Wanderers are in, is a red herring. In these cases form almost goes out the window.

It surely seemed like it wouldn't be a tough task when Mitch Duke scored his first goal since November in the fifth minute of the match.

Brisbane's poor defending cost them once again, but it was successive defensive errors from the Wanderers that let them back into the match.

Patrizk Wiegler was sidelined when Brad Inman scored

the eventual winner, but Western Sydney are seriously struggling with defensive errors and positioning.

It was a match between two teams that aren't just fighting for points, but coherence and consistency. They are unbelievably desperate for it, and it's a precious commodity for both.

MOHAMED ADAM'S GOT RHYTHM

The Wanderers winger's intelligence and quality tonight shows he should have been picked for the Olyroos tournament to qualify for the Olympics this month.

The squad holds commendable levels of creativity with Reno Piscopo and Ramy Najjarine in the squad. But Would Adam's ability be better suited for Arnie than say a player like Nick D'Agostino?

D'Agostino plays as a centre-forward or secondary striker and may offer a different kind of play going forward for Australia, but Adam has played much more football than the Perth attacker.

He'll certainly be on the hunt for a spot in the Olympics should Australia qualify.

PHOENIX EXTEND LEADERS' A-LEAGUE CONTRACTS

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Wellington have extended the A-League contracts of captain Steven Taylor and vice-captain Alex Rufer.

Taylor has signed for an additional two years and Rufer three, meaning both will be in Phoenix colours through at least the 2021-22 season.

Coach Ufuk Talay says the extensions are important because they mean the club now has 10 players signed beyond the current season.

"Taylor is a natural leader and a very influential player for us," he said of the veteran former Newcastle United defender in a club statement announcing the deals on New Year's Day morning.

"He leads by example both on and off the field, he brings an abundance of experience to the club and obviously he's an important player for us moving forward with the direction this club is heading."

Talay said 23-year-old All White Rufer was a player Phoenix looked to for his "captaincy qualities".

"He had a great season last year and this season he's been very good and influential for us," he said.

"And he's still a young player so it's great to have him committed to a three-year deal with us."

Talay said the timing of the two core player extensions was crucial in order to build consistency and direction.

