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Y'all listen up: this Wollongong-based American has a message for the 'Soccoalas'



By [Agron Latifi](#), and [Tyler Welch](#)

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- *We put American Tyler Welch and Australian Agron Latifi into battle over who will win [the Socceroos v USA battle](#). Here's their theories about boring cricket, spelling, Donald Trump and the world game.*

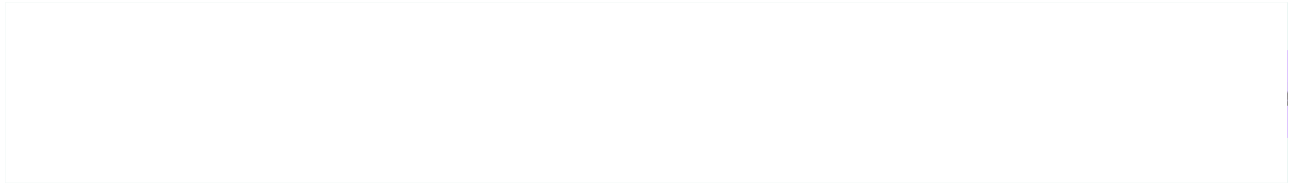


Will the Socceroos win or will America walk away with another home ground victory? Footage by Grace Hamilton, video by Maddy Fogarty.

In the month I've spent in Australia, I've found it to be a pleasant country. The locals are friendly and the beaches are pristine. The State of Origin is electric.

Too bad none of those things will save [the Socceroos on Saturday](#).

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You've heard [Mike Grella's tirade against the Socceroos](#) all tournament. Australians have been quick to call him a nobody, a non-factor in the world of soccer. I'll admit that I'd never heard of my fellow American before, but then again, Australia is not exactly the gold standard for soccer relevance either.

The fact of the matter is that the United States, with a commanding win over Australia this weekend, is going to run away with Group D. We toyed with Paraguay, and we'll do the same to Australia.

Let me tell you exactly why.



📷 Agron Latifi and Tyler Welch go head to head about the Socceroos. Main picture by AP

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Allow me to introduce you to Seattle Stadium, home of the Seattle Seahawks and the location for Saturday's battle. Americans affectionately refer to it as "Home of the 12th Man." Why?

Unlike the professional sporting venues in Australia, which hardly pass for mid-major American college football stadiums, we go big, and it gets loud. Seattle Stadium once set a world record for crowd roar with a sound of 137.6 decibels.

One may argue that the Melbourne Cricket Ground is comparable. I'd agree, if cricket didn't last an eternity and put its viewers to sleep.

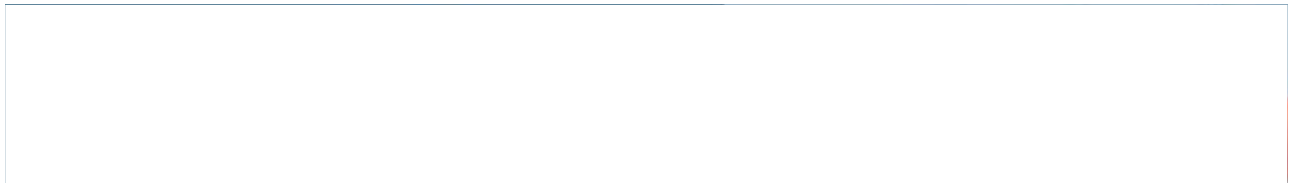
So when Folarin Balogun scores his third goal of the tournament at the start of the match, just know [that the Socceroos will hear a crowd](#) roaring louder than any Australian crowd has ever cheered for them.

Speaking of Balogun, it's important to emphasise just how much better American soccer players are than the Aussies.

It doesn't matter that soccer's our fifth-most popular sport, nor that many of our top athletes decide to dominate Australia in other sports like basketball and baseball. After all, when the state of Texas has a larger population than your entire country, there's plenty of ass-kicking to go around.

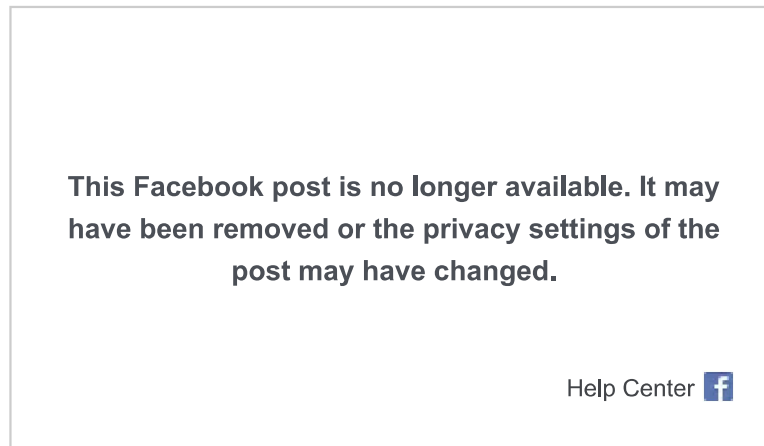
The United States brought players like Balogun, Christian Pulisic and Weston McKennie home from top-of-the-line clubs like AS Monaco, AC Milan and Juventus. Tyler Adams is stout in the midfield, and Chris Richards is elite in defense. In total, 13 members of the USA team play for what [Global Football Rankings](#) considers a top-five league.

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The Socceroos? Five players in the 'Big Five', and that's counting the soon-to-be-relegated St. Pauli midfielders Connor Metcalfe and Jackson Irvine. It would be forgivable if the A-League was at least ranked higher than the United States' Major League Soccer, but y'all couldn't even beat us at that.

I can even back it up with history. The last time Australia faced off against the United States was in a friendly this past October. To little surprise, we won 2-1. You would have to go back to 1992 to find a time that the Socceroos beat the United States men's national team.



If there's one thing I respect about Australia's national team, it's that you at least accepted that the US got the sport's name right. Footballeroos would sound ridiculous, not to mention it could get confused with the dozen other versions of "footy" and "football" y'all have down here.

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I will be generous and predict that the United States will win 2-1 again. Pulisic will recover from his calf injury in time for the game and score a goal, and Balogun will keep his hot streak up with a score of his own.

That 28 per cent time of possession that the Socceroos squeaked by on versus Turkey will crumble when facing the American offence (side note: y'all spell offence and defence wrong. It's okay to use an 's' or a 'z' every now and then). Simply put, our forwards will make the Australia defence look more like Soccoalas than Socceroos (soccer plus koala rather than soccer plus kangaroo. Get it?)

Australia and the States have their similarities: barbecues, passionate sport fans, a far-right political leader with a fiery hairstyle and disposition towards journalists. By every working definition of the word, the two of us could be considered allies, perhaps even good friends. That all comes to an end on Saturday, at least from 5am to 8am.

Try to enjoy the soccer match on Saturday, Aussies. I expect that the Americans will.

Agron's response: What a surprise, Tyler. But you're wrong

Fighting words there from my American colleague, Tyler Welch.

What a surprise it is to have an American telling Australians just how good they are, and how rubbish we peasants from Down Under are. Not.