

# Devlin is ready to embark on the next stage of his football journey

After an eventful summer with the Socceroo's at the Olympics, before quarantine and a wait for a visa application, Cameron Devlin finally arrived at Tynecastle to join Hearts.

The midfielder came off the bench in Saturday's 2-2 draw with Ross County for his Hearts debut and admits he's loving his early life in Edinburgh.

Devlin said: "I'm loving it so far.

"It's a massive challenge coming here. I am a family man and to be away from my siblings and my mum and dad is tough, there's no point shying away from that, but I am here to live my dream, so that's never going to stop me or get in my way.

"I moved into my flat at the weekend, so that's really good to get my own place and space. I'm loving training, coming into work every day, being around the boys and having a smile on my face.

"I was buzzing to get my debut over the weekend, obviously it was a bit of a shame not to get the three points but I'm looking forward to more games and hopefully more game time."

The Scottish league is arguably one of the fastest leagues in

Europe with regards to intensity and energy levels and Devlin admits the busy schedule is also a big difference to what he has previously played in.

"It's been tough," the midfielder admitted.

"The games in the A-League, there's 26 games, plus finals, over here there's 35 plus, so the training schedule has to be in-line with how many games you play, so naturally it's going to be harder, and I've definitely found it a big step up.

"The gaffer has said to bring the attributes that got me here in the first place, to just play my own game.

"But obviously the speed of the game is a lot quicker than I have experienced back home.

"I only got half an hour last weekend, and it was the back end of the game, but the speed was quicker, it was a lot more frantic and there was a lot more pressing.

"For me that's going to make me a better player, it will make me move the ball on quicker, and think two steps ahead, which is something I need to do if I want to go to the next level, so there are parts I will have to adapt but I think it is also important to stick to what I do best and get around the park as much as I can.

"For me personally, I just love playing games. That's the most fun part of the week for any footballer."

Devlin explained Kilmarnock defender Dylan McGowan, formerly of Hearts, got in contact with his compatriot to give him the heads up of what to expect at Hearts.

"I've come over here alone. I've caught up with Dylan McGowan. He got in touch with me, which was really nice. He's been here before, so he was telling me about the club and what to expect, but for me just getting to know the boys is important.

"They're the ones I'm going to spending the most time with, so the more you get on off the pitch the better it's going to come together on the field, so that's something I want to do, but they've been class and I'm just really loving being around them on the field and off it as well."

Devlin turned 23 in June, but despite his age, he speaks with such confidence about the career path he wanted to embark on. Building his name in Australian football, before moving on to hopefully have a successful career in Europe, which would see international callups become a regular occurrence.

"I think growing up for any Aussie, Tim Cahill was a bit of a legend," Devlin laughed.

"Obviously he's not my position, so for me now seeing the sort of players that have come from similar paths to me, obviously I always wanted to play in Australia and make a name for myself over there, then make a move. That's something I've been lucky enough to do.

"Players like Tom Rogic, who have come over and done really well for himself. He's at a very big club and doing well.

"I've said before, if there were opportunities to come to Europe, come to Hearts, not any club, but to a nice pathway, I would've jumped at it. I think for any Australian, you just want to get into Europe, because of the market, not only for the national team, but you're in Europe.

"In Australia there are only 12 teams, no disrespect to the Australian League, because that's the only reason I'm here, it's done so much for me.

"You've got to jump at that opportunity though. I think I was one of the lucky ones that Hearts, a club I knew of, even before they came in for me.

"They're such a big club, with a massive history and a massive

fanbase. The boys that are here now, they're all good players, we train at such a high standard, the staff have been class with me as well and I just feel grateful to have the opportunity to be at Hearts."

It's clear how keen Devlin is to play for the Socceroo's in the near future and who can blame him. A good relationship with the current coach Graham Arnold, who is already aware of Scottish football, with players like Harry Souttar, Martin Boyle and Tom Rogic regular callups for his side.

"That's the plan," Devlin said.

"I was lucky enough to go to the Olympics with Graham Arnold. He knows me before from Sydney FC days when he was the head coach there.

"The only way I'm going to get there is to play well at Hearts, otherwise I won't have a chance, but the plan is to play well at Hearts when I get the chance and hopefully that warrants a Socceroo's call up."