

# Qatar-bound Devlin admits the World Cup with the Socceroos is a dream come true

Cameron Devlin revealed the longest 15 minutes of his life so far was waiting for a call to confirm that he was one of seven Scottish-based players, including three from Hearts, named in the Australian World Cup squad for Qatar.

The 24-year-old admitted he stared at the phone during that agonising wait and was in tears after the call came through. Then he phoned his mum and dad in the middle of the night in Oz, waking them up.

Sydney-born Devlin is joined in the world's top football competition by team-mates, defenders, Nathaniel Atkinson and Kye Rowles.

Also named was Hibs winger Martin Boyle and Edinburgh-born forward Jason Cummings, now playing Down Under with Central Coast Mariners but a product of Capital side Lothian Thistle and formerly of Hibs who was twice capped by Scotland.

Midfielder Keanu Baccus (St Mirren), defender Aziz Behich (Dundee United) plus Celtic midfielder Aaron Mooy will also be travelling to Qatar.

Devlin, who signed a three-year deal at Tynecastle in 2001 after 50 A-League appearances, faces two tough cinch Premiership clashes with Rangers at Ibrox on Wednesday (19.45) and at home to Livingston on Saturday (15.00) before he prepares for the World Cup.

He stressed that his concentration right now was 100 per cent on Hearts, while his mother and father scramble for flights and hotels to watch their son in the World Cup and Devlin

said: "I'm sure they will get there even if they are sleeping on the ground if they have to."

The Socceroos face a massive task in the World Cup, Group D, opening against France on Tuesday, November 22 (19.00), then facing Tunisia (November 26, 10.00) and closing against Denmark (November 30, 15.00), but he told a pre-match briefing at The Orium how he heard he would be on the plane to the Middle East.

The competitive midfielder (pictured by **Nigel Duncan** at a press briefing at The Orium) said that it was at mid-day on Monday the Australian manager, Graham Arnold, texted asking if he could call in 15 minutes. He said: "I said of course and it was probably the longest 15 minutes of my life.

"I sat there looking at my phone. It felt like an hour but when he told me that I was in it was the best moments of my life and I was grateful when it was over."

He added: "I do not get emotional and don't cry that often but if there is ever a time when it is acceptable is when you are told you are going to a World Cup for the first time that's different. As soon as he said: 'Congratulations, you are going to the World Cup,' I broke down in tears. I am not afraid to admit that as I was so happy and so delighted. It is a dream come true."

He added: "You obviously dream of it (going to the World Cup) and you want to be there, you dream of it. Think of it all the time, When I came here I knew we had the World Cup next year and thought how good would that be.

"I wanted to be involved in the qualifiers but never got the chance as I got injured. Then I was lucky enough to get a call-up a month or so ago and I got my debut which was unreal and so special for me and my family.

"You think how good it would be to get to the Word Cup and you

talk about it but you don't think you are going to go. That's so surreal and the pinnacle. To now be able to say I am going is so surreal."

There will be millions watching the world's leading football tournament and Devlin described that as unreal. He added: "We've got France and it is a pinch yourself moment. I do have two games to get through for Hearts and that is obviously my focus now."