



## Around the Grounds

### Premier Youth League Round 3 Review

We were fortunate that all the grounds were open this weekend and that meant all the matches were played, very good news indeed, especially after the mid-week showers potentially placed some of the venues in doubt.

#### Overview

Sutherland Sharks had another very good day as they collected three points from their matches against Sydney Olympic while Bankstown City earned nine points when they faced Bonnyrigg White Eagles. Marconi Stallions and Manly United split the points at seven apiece when they met on Saturday while APIA Leichhardt Tigers picked up ten points from their clash with South Coast Wolves. Parramatta Eagles pocketed eight points when they faced Blacktown City and Sydney United earned twelve points from their encounter with Rockdale City Suns.

Grade 13 Bankstown City made it three wins from as many games when they produced a 2-0 success over Bonnyrigg White Eagles while Sutherland Sharks remained unbeaten following their 1-1 draw with Sydney Olympic. Parramatta Eagles came up with their second win in a row when they defeated Blacktown City 3-0 and Marconi Stallions also collected maximum points for the second time in as many matches when they posted a 3-1 victory over Manly United. APIA Leichhardt Tigers registered their first three-pointer of the season with a 2-1 result when they met South Coast Wolves and Sydney United made their first win a 5-2 success over Rockdale City Suns.

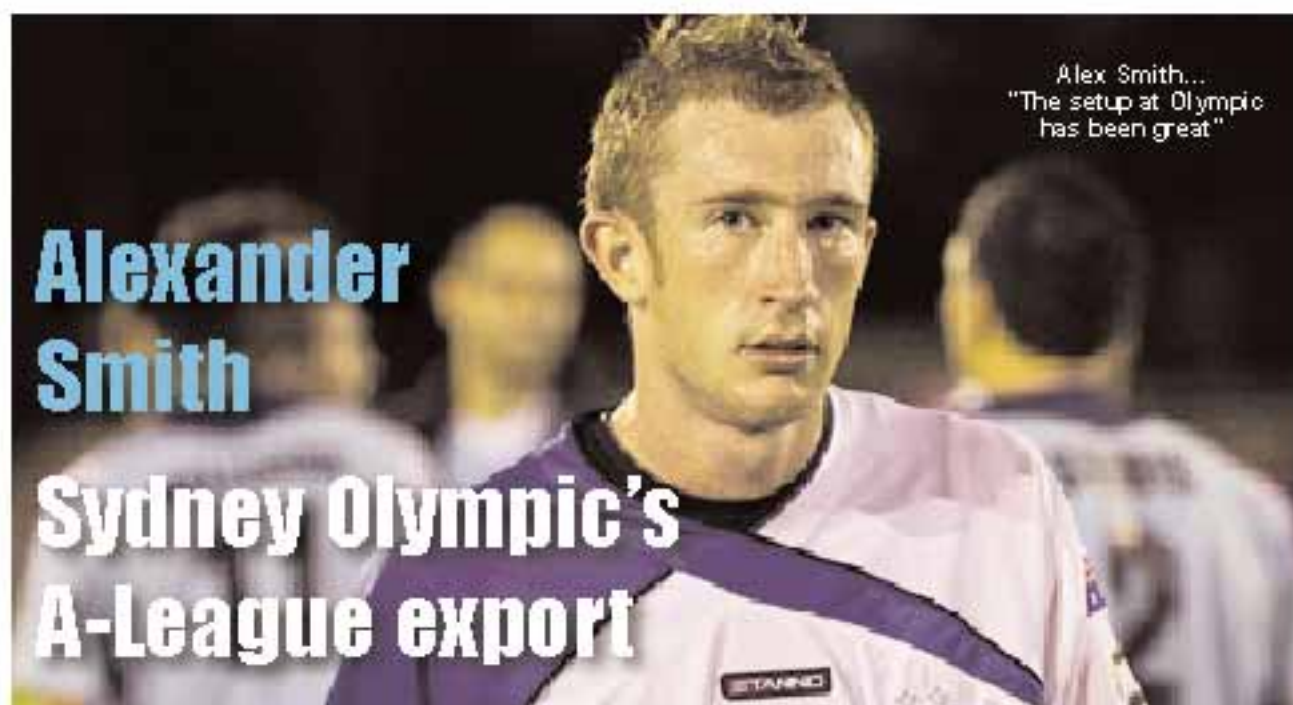
Grade 14 Marconi Stallions recorded their third successive win with a 7-2 result over Manly United while Sutherland Sharks maintained their unbeaten status with a win by the odd goal in five over Sydney Olympic. Parramatta Eagles are yet to be beaten after they were held to a 2-2 draw by Blacktown City and Rockdale City Suns recorded their second win from as many games when they were 3-2 winners over Sydney United. Bankstown City took maximum points for the first time with a 1-0 result over Bonnyrigg White Eagles and South Coast Wolves celebrated their first win of this campaign, a 1-0 success over APIA Leichhardt Tigers.

Grade 15 Sutherland Sharks retained their perfect record of three wins from three games when they accounted for Sydney Olympic with a 2-0 scoreline while Parramatta Eagles remained unbeaten following their scoreless draw with Blacktown City. Bonnyrigg White Eagles had their first win when they produced a 2-0 result from their match against Bankstown City while Manly United came up with a very solid 4-0 win to end the two match winning run of Marconi Stallions. Sydney United were far too good for Rockdale City Suns, winning the encounter by a handy 4-0 while the match between APIA Leichhardt Tigers and South Coast Wolves was scoreless when the final whistle sounded.

Grade 16 Sutherland Sharks have now recorded three wins from three outings following their 1-0 victory over Sydney Olympic and Parramatta Eagles are yet to taste defeat after they scored the only goal of their match against Blacktown City. APIA Leichhardt Tigers followed last week's draw with a very respectable 5-0 win over South Coast Wolves while Bankstown City shaded Bonnyrigg White Eagles with a 2-1 result. Manly United overcame the disappointment of last week's loss to defeat Marconi Stallions with a 3-1 scoreline and Sydney United claimed maximum points for the first time this season when they were 3-0 winners over Rockdale City Suns.

Grade 18 Manly United have maintained the unbeaten status after they were held to a scoreless draw by Marconi Stallions while Bonnyrigg White Eagles earned their first points for the season when they were 1-0 winners over Bankstown City. Sutherland Sharks took maximum points for the first time thanks to their 2-1 success over Sydney Olympic while APIA Leichhardt Tigers and South Coast Wolves shared the spoils when their match ended at 1-1. Blacktown City bagged the points by the odd goal in five when they faced Parramatta Eagles and Sydney United were a bit too good for Rockdale City Suns, taking the points with a 4-1 result.

-By Barry Davis



Alex Smith...  
"The setup at Olympic has been great"

### Alexander Smith

### Sydney Olympic's A-League export

After just two matches in the NSW Premier League Sydney Olympic's Alexander Smith has already cemented a contract in the Hyundai A-League for season 2011-2012 after winning himself a one-year deal with Gold Coast United. "I'm delighted that I have managed to win myself an A-League contract. I've signed a pre-agreement with Gold Coast for one year but hoping to impress to win an extension." Smith's connection with Gold Coast United started via his player agent Ante Alilovic who recommended him to coach Miron Blieberg last year. "Ante was a huge help as he recommended me to Miron last year and sent me to the Gold Coast for a one-week trial. 'I impressed Miron but I was unable to sign at the time as the club had already recruited all their Visa players. 'Miron then told me that I should sign in the NSW Premier League and that he would watch him during the A-League off-season which then developed from there with me signing a one-year deal.' Gold Coast United narrowly missed out on playing in the Grand Final this year but finished off strongly in the competition. The club however lost the likes of Jason Culina and look likely to lose Shane Smeltz and Dino Djubic but Smith believes the club will still be ultra-competitive for the new season. "The club is in good hands under chairman Clive Palmer and coach Miron Blieberg. I am sure we can shake up the competition. "The club has re-signed a fair few players from last year's squad and have quite a number of talented youngsters moving up but I know everyone cannot wait for the league to commence." The 25-year-old English born but American raised attacking midfielder has set the NSW Premier League alight after notching up four goals in two matches, an amazing start to anyone's career in the competition. "I couldn't have asked for a better start to my career with Olympic, it has been a dream run so far but it's still early days. "It's been a great start on a whole for the team as we have collected six points in our first two matches but we want to continue our march towards cementing a top spot in the league." Smith held nothing but praise for the current setup at Sydney Olympic after the club went through a new transitional phase recruiting a new coaching staff with Peter Bekenis at the helm along with several other new recruits boosting the team's ranks. "The setup at Olympic has been great - 'Beka' and the boys have been really good to me. "We've all trained really hard and are pushing ourselves to the limit as we want to finish as high up the NSW Premier League ladder as possible. "Our President George Giannaro gives us what we need, our trainer Effrem has been brilliant so things from that level are terrific." The Blues have a number of quality players in their ranks for 2011 and Smith believes that a number of them can make the step-up to the Hyundai A-League very soon. "There is a lot of quality in our side and I believe many of them are capable of playing in the A-League. "We have players like Brett Stidman who just came back

from the North Queensland Fury that would slot into a side then the likes of Chris Tristantis, Robbie Milecki and Phil Makrys to name a few can hold their own. "There are also a number of good young players coming through the system which can only be a good asset for the club's future. With his career in the Hyundai A-League now a reality the question was whether Smith would complete his playing duties with Olympic before moving up the border to Queensland in commencing his career with Gold Coast United. "That's the plan as I want to play as many games as possible for Olympic. "This benefits both Olympic and Gold Coast as I am keeping match fit and playing competitive football. "I want to do whatever I can to assist the club in repaying them for the faith they had in signing me up for this season." Prior to signing for Olympic, Smith starred in the NSW Super League in 2010 for Fraser Park collecting the 'Player of the Year' plaudits at the annual awards evening conducted by Football NSW. It was via friend that Smith selected Fraser Park as the choice of a club after he spent some time holidaying in Cairns early last year. "A friend of mine in Cairns knew someone in Sydney who was connected with the club. "He asked me to come down and train with the squad and they signed me from there. "The club was extremely good to me and it was where I got my start in NSW and I thank them for giving me that opportunity - I wish them all the best this season and hope that they can finish as high up on the ladder as possible." Smith's background is a story in itself as the attacking star was born in Windsor, England but moved to the United States in Oregon at the age of 1 where he completed his educational studies majoring in history. "I was born right across from the famous Windsor Castle in the U.K. but moved to Oregon at the age of 1 with my father and spent the rest of my time in Texas which included growing up, playing football and completing my University degree." Soon after his schooling, Smith had the opportunity to play in the MLS when he signed for FC Dallas for a season. "I spent a year in the MLS but I was a lot younger and immature and didn't work as hard as I should have - I really wanted to stay longer at the club but it didn't work out for me. "This move however led me to where I am today which I am forever grateful for so the sky is the limit from here on." The Olympic recruit remembered that a holiday in 2005 to Australia was what prompted him to change scenery when he touched these shores in 2010. "I came to Australia for holiday in 2005 as I wanted to experience new places and I really had a good feel for the place. "After things didn't work out for me in the U.S. for football I made the decision to move to Australia and I've been here ever since and have held no regrets."

\*All articles courtesy of Football NSW. To visit the website log onto [www.footballnsw.com.au](http://www.footballnsw.com.au) as well as [www.nswpl.com.au](http://www.nswpl.com.au) for your NSW Premier League fix.