



## Around the Grounds

### State League One Round 6 Preview

Division One footballers will be keen to shed some of that Easter chocolate when the competition resumes this weekend, starting off with two matches on Saturday evening, both kicking off at 7-00pm. At CSI Sport Ground, Schofields Scorpions entertain the visit of Inter Lions with both teams absolutely desperate for the three points. In recent seasons, whenever these two clubs would meet it was normally a top of the table, match of round encounter. Even accounting for the fact that it is early in the 2011 season, it is far from a match of the round this time, with both sides propping up the ladder, and hoping for a change in fortunes. Look out for Inter striker Anthony Ucchino, who spent a few seasons at Schofields, and will be looking to get one over his old club and catapult the Lions away from the foot of the table. Balmain SC won't relish facing the might of Mounties Wanderers on Saturday at Hensley Athletic Field, given the leaders runaway form at present. The Mounties are a little short of a gallop, not having played over the past two weeks (washed out and Easter weekend), but may, on the other hand, be eager to get back on the paddock and make up for lost time. Balmain have had a similar break, and will be hoping for maximum points to steer away from the base of the ladder, so lookout for a more determined and offensive approach from the home side. All the remaining four matches are scheduled to be played on Sunday afternoon, all kicking off at 3-00pm. Fairfield Bulls welcome Mt Druitt Town Rangers to Hajduk Stadium, looking to stem the tide of the visitors in front of their home fans. The Rangers have started to gain some momentum of late, with three wins seeing them sitting second on the ladder, their aim of a swift return to the Super League well and truly on track. Young Hosyar Cakal is the man of the moment for Mt Druitt, grabbing a hatrick in last week's drubbing of Inter, on the back of his winner in the Rangers' 1-0 triumph over UNSW, so he'll be looking to continue his rich vein of scoring. An intriguing clash takes place at Hurstville Oval with Hurstville ZFC facing Stanmore Hawks. With the clubs in 4th and 5th positions respectively, a win for either side here will send a message to other title aspirants that they mean business in 2011. Stanmore have been scoring fairly regularly on the back of their attacking prowess, and will need to continue to do so if they are to take anything from the undefeated Hurstville. UNSW visit Magdala Park to meet Gladesville Ryde Magic in what promises to be an exciting clash on Sunday afternoon. The 'students' season is back on track after a disastrous opening couple of rounds, and skipper Andrew Harb will have his troops ready and motivated to topple the home side. The Magic are also back on track after an inconspicuous start, with two wins in succession, and they will be looking for win number three to take them into the top half of the ladder.

Norford Park No.2 is the venue for the final match of Round Six, with Fairfield City Lions meeting Camden Tigers. Fairfield are an ominous proposition at their home ground in front of their home fans, and they will throw caution to the wind and attack to try and dominate proceedings as per usual. Camden Tigers have hit a couple of speed humps in recent weeks after a great start to the season, but their success early on came away from home, so maybe they will be hoping for more of the same on their travels once more.

#### Division One Top Goalscorers Round Five

- 7: Nick PARADISIS (Stanmore Hawks)
- 5: Greg BALDOCK (Mounties)
- 4: Mark SYMINGTON (Mounties), Hosyar CAKAL (Mt Druitt), Matthew CROSS (Camden Tigers)
- 3: Chris SULTAN (Fairfield City Lions), Paul GAGRO (Hurstville ZFC), Daniel WILLOUGHBY (Mounties), NNathan RALPH (Mt Druitt)

-By Frank Speranza

### NSW Premier League Round 6 Preview

Round 6 NSW Premier League action kicks off with two fixtures on Saturday evening this weekend as the pre-season favourites Bonnyrigg White Eagles look for a change in fortune – and more importantly – their first win of the 2011 campaign, against Rockdale City Suns. Bonnyrigg has failed to take advantage of the monopoly on possession they have held in each of their League matches to date, as their opponents have constantly approached the White Eagles with a well organised defensive setup. Coach Brian Brown will welcome back Brad Boardman from suspension, the burly striker has been the most successful in the attacking third with goals arriving from the opening round. A further plus for Bonnyrigg will be their two consecutive clean sheets, signifying the uncharacteristic defensive lapses of the first two rounds seem to be out of the system. Rockdale City enter this clash at Bonnyrigg Sports Club full of confidence following their very hard fought win at Cromer Park against the previously undefeated Manly United FC in Round 5. The Suns too have a match in hand, following the rescheduling of their Round 4 clash with Marconi, though the signs are looking better for the side that was thumped by Sydney United in Round 3. The performance at Cromer Park shows a great character about the side, and along with the all important three-points that were sewn up, the Suns also managed to keep a clean sheet which augurs well for a tough clash like this one against the defending Premiers. In the second Saturday evening clash, League leaders Sutherland Sharks will be out to keep a sole-hold on top-spot as Bankstown City visit Seymour Shaw. The Sharks have been unyielding thus far, especially at home, and with a confident group that has found their stride already, expectation is for a Sutherland win. George Souris has again been monumental in defence for Robbie S-tanton's side, meanwhile Nick S-tavroulakis has enjoyed a very good start to the campaign. Panni Nikas' return to the club too has proven successful with his fine ability to create alongside Jim Bakis, whilst the goalscoring duties in this early part of the season have fallen to Chris Price, Todd Halloran, Matt Bailey and Sam Awad. Bankstown City have had a rather topsy-turvy start to the season with a mixed bag of results thus far. With so many changes at the club at the conclusion of last season, the Jensen Park side was expected to struggle in 2011. Blagoja Kuleski has obviously instilled belief amongst his players with the side securing wins at Rockdale City and South Coast Wolves, along with a draw against the defending Premiers, Bonnyrigg White Eagles. The worrying sign has been the two home defeats at the hands of Marconi Stallions and Blacktown City FC – two sides that have also undergone some big changes since last season. Against the Sharks, much weight will be placed on the shoulders of new signing Aman Hadid who has already proven a hit with his three goals in the last two matches. Ha-



did's speed, ball control and composure in front of goal will be vital to Bankstown City this weekend, if the side is to return from Seymour Shaw with anything to show for. On Sunday afternoon, South Coast Wolves and Marconi Stallions meet at John Crehan Park in a very important match for both sides. A win for either side will certainly make some noise amongst the Top-Five, with both these sides already proving this season they do have what it takes to play finals football. The Wolves have shown their ability across the park, though it has been the addition of experienced campaigner Sasho Petrovski that has brought that extra spark to the side's play. Petrovski, along with Mark Picciolini have proven a handful to handle for opposition defences, meanwhile in defence, Alex Mansueto and Jacob Timpano have shown positive signs of a developing defensive line. The Stallions will be without target man Matthew Mayora after his red card last weekend, though the Stallions do have Giosue Sama available for selection. Captain Nahuel Arrarte continues to prove his worth with instrumental performances out of midfield for the Stallions, alongside the likes of Keith Shevlin and Matt Gordon out of midfield. Coach Luke Casserly will be waiting on the fitness of Andrew Mailer for this clash, though he can take much confidence in confirming the Adel El Jamal-Wade Oostendorp partnership in the centre of defence following the strong showing by both players against Bonnyrigg last weekend. A very interesting clash is expected at John Crehan Park where the victors can certainly use the match as a springboard for a very successful 2011. At Lambert Park, A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt Tigers host Sydney Olympic in arguably the pick of the round as these two former NSL giants meet. The Tigers were good value against the Sharks last weekend though failed to seal the three-points on a wet pitch. Positives for the side do revolve around the good moment of form of the likes of Chris James, John Kelso and Anthony Hartshorn, though concerns do surround the fitness of the latter after he was forced to leave the field after 30' minutes last weekend with a hamstring injury following his opening goal. Sydney Olympic have shown they are genuine title contenders, sitting in equal second spot after five rounds. Peter T-sekenis has managed to get the ball rolling from the opening round despite a new team at his disposal, and the second placing on the ladder at this point is

well deserved. Much attention has been given to Alex Smith and his sensational goal scoring touch thus far, and rightly so, with the Blues' number 6 a real talent in the NSW Premier League competition. With both sides presenting strong defensive lines, the team to bring their 'a game' in the attacking third will prove triumphant on Sunday. At Lily Homes Stadium, Blacktown City FC will be out to kick-start their campaign after finally securing their first win of the season at Bankstown City last weekend. The defending champions have failed to find consistency

in the opening month of the competition, with some poor performances outweighing any good shown to-date. The win against Bankstown, along with the exceptional form of Travis Major, arrived at the perfect time with high-flying Sydney United the opponent this Sunday. The Reds have been in exceptional touch, with the side dropping points only in their opening match of the season where Manly United FC scored very late on to take a point. Since, the Reds have shown their defensive capabilities and attacking flair with coach Jean Paul DeMarigny not scared to throw three strikers out from the very start. The return of Mark Rudan proved very successful last weekend as the former A-League defender showed his composure and experience with a very polished performance. This clash is always a real battle between two very passionate sides, and Sunday's encounter promises to be no different. In the final match of the Round, both Parramatta FC and Manly United FC will be out to secure their first win of 2011 when the two sides meet at Melita Stadium. Both sides have proven they do have the ability to make the lives of their more fancied opponents difficult, though the victories have not been forthcoming thus far. Parramatta FC coach Brian Dene will be hoping to have captain Ben Delicata available from the opening whistle this weekend after a 5' minute cameo against Sydney Olympic following an injury. Delicata alongside Chris Camilleri has proven to be a very strong midfield pairing, and the two will need to be on their game to overcome Manly United. Upfront, the Eagles squandered a number of goal scoring chances, despite being on the back foot for large spells against Sydney Olympic. Parramatta FC has proven their ability to soak up much of the pressure of their opponents and hit on the counterattack, though their finishing will need to be much better this weekend if a first-up win is to eventuate. Manly United lost their first match of the campaign against Rockdale City Suns last weekend after four consecutive scored draws. The Cromer Park side too has been battling with some poor finishing in front of goal in recent weeks, despite showing their fighting spirit on three occasions to come from behind late-on and salvage a point. Robbie Cattanaach, Adam Foti and Justin Hayward will be looking for a return to the score sheet in a bid to get their side a first-up win for 2011.

-By Joseph Carlucci