



Around the Grounds



Special Feature:

Phil Zabaks

under the microscope

Football NSW Media Manager Mark Stavroulakis interviews Bonnyrigg White Eagles' heroic goalkeeper Phil Zabaks and puts the talented shotstopper under the microscope with questions relating to his future in the game and much more.

MS: We hear that you won't be playing football at all for Bonnyrigg this season, tell us a bit about that?

PZ: I sat down with the coaching staff and various members at Bonnyrigg and after much consideration they advised me that they believe I should take the rest of the season off to rest and recover.

Hearing their decision broke my heart because when I commit to a club I intend to give my personal best each and every session and the day that I don't is the day I give the game away.

MS: Your feelings towards this - as I know you have football running in your blood?

PZ: You never want someone else to tell you that you can no longer do something you love but I do not hold that against anyone at the club because I respect and understand their decision as there is more to life than football.

MS: I take it you will remain the fitness freak that you are in continuing to train?

PZ: I will continue to be involved with football until I no longer enjoy it.

For now I'll continue to train so I can stay fit, healthy and keep the mind active. It's important for me to keep fit and keep my skills up for the remainder of the season so come 2012 should I decide to return I know that I'll be capable of a bigger and better season.

MS: Like me and hundreds of other avid NSW Premier League members, our hearts went out to you when we heard that you were injured again against the South Coast Wolves, did you remember how the whole incident went down?

PZ: The last thing I remember is Seva scoring our third goal.

I cannot recall any of the lead up play to the incident and somewhere between that and coming to in the ambulance, I recall being in the air facing the ground - but that felt like I was dreaming.

MS: The tough question here is will you ever play competitive football again?

PZ: I will reassess the situation based on how I'm feeling and training as the season continues.

Football is my passion and I'm always grateful that I'm able to play competitive football at the level I do. I feel it brings out the best in me as a player and person. I believe that if I'm meant to play again that God will open up the doors otherwise they will stay shut.

MS: Has coaching up and coming keepers crossed your mind?

PZ: Definitely - I've always wanted to give back to the football community and I would like to get involved with coaching when I call it a

day as a player.

Like anything I commit to, I want to be able to give 100% and I'm not sure if I'm ready to go down that avenue just yet but I haven't ruled it out as a possibility.

MS: We understand you have a strong faith in the big man upstairs, has this assisted with your situation?

PZ: Every day! I always give thanks to God for this talent and career he has given me because I know it can all be taken away in a second.

God has blessed my football with many accomplishments and friendships each and every year, most recently a wife, Brooke and a father-in-law, Cliffy. I try to the best of my ability to walk the path that has set aside for me and to give the deserved praise along the way.

MS: Your biggest fans throughout this?

PZ: Firstly my number one fan would be my amazing and beautiful wife. She always supports me and there is no question she is my rock.

Without her I wouldn't be the person I am today.

My family and friends have always supported me and stood beside me - in the good times and hard times. Also the football community as a whole have been nothing but amazing and encouraging.

MS: Your best memory to date as a footballer?

PZ: This is a difficult one to answer. The 2008 season with Sutherland is still my highlight year; I came into the season with a niggling injury and struggled to get a start.

A door opened for me to play and I took the opportunity with both hands and the rest is history. A close second is the 2010 Grand Final with Bonnyrigg - that game represented all the hard work and effort I'd put in behind the scenes to get back to top form.

MS: Finally, do you believe Bonnyrigg has what it takes to be involved in the finals series come September?

PZ: I still believe that Bonnyrigg have put together a very strong side and I love being a part of that.

I have no doubts about the coaching staff and the players have the capabilities to go all the way.

The uphill task we all face is that every week needs to be like a grand final for us.

Everyone wants to beat Bonnyrigg and therefore everyone lifts that little bit more against us. It's like we are playing 22 grand finals.

MS: Thank you for taking out the time Phil on this, we wish you all the best in your future endeavours and hope to see you back on the pitch soon.

PZ: I want to thank you for your help on this and want to thank everyone involved who have supported me through these times.

-By Mark Stavroulakis

Premier Youth League Round 11

Considering the amount of rain that fell from the heavens last week it is surprising that four of the fixtures made it onto the grounds on the weekend and that three of those managed to get all the matches played. This will be causing some headaches for the clubs and the competitions department at Football NSW all these games need to be rescheduled and that can and will play havoc with the tables as we have seen many times already that catch-up matches frequently produce "up-set" results.

Let's have a look at what happened this weekend.

Overview The fixture between Rockdale City Suns and Parramatta Eagles was washed out on Saturday as was the fixture between Sydney United and Bankstown City while South Coast Wolves managed to play the first three matches against Sutherland Sharks before the last two games were washed out. In that case, the Sharks had grabbed seven points from those three matches. Sydney Olympic visited Bonnyrigg White Eagles and went home with nine points in their collective pockets while Marconi Stallions took nine points from the home clash with APIA Leichhardt Tigers. Manly United hosted Blacktown City with the four matches played on Saturday giving the home club nine of the points and on Sunday the northern beaches added three more points to their tally. In Round 6 catch-up action Bonnyrigg White Eagles earned ten points from their matches against Rockdale City Suns.

Grade 13 ..Marconi Stallions remained on the top rung of the competition ladder and their tenth consecutive win extended the Stallions' lead to nine points when they produced a 4-1 result over APIA Leichhardt Tigers who have slipped back one place to fourth.

Bankstown City have held onto second spot after they were washed out against Sydney United who have tumbled back three places to seventh while Bonnyrigg White Eagles have climbed two places up the ladder to third thanks to their fourth win on the trot, a 3-1 victory over tenth placed Sydney Olympic.

Sutherland Sharks bounced back from last week's loss and they have moved up one place to fifth following their 1-0 success over ninth placed South Coast Wolves while Manly United have now gone three games without loss after they accounted for twelfth placed Blacktown City with a 2-0 scoreline.

A washed out match has caused Parramatta Eagles to drop back one place to eighth and left Rockdale City Suns at eleventh.

In Round 6 catch-up action Bonnyrigg White Eagles suffered a 2-1 loss when they faced Rockdale City Suns.

Grade 14 ..Top-of-the-table by a margin of seven points, Marconi Stallions have recovered from the shock of dropping points for the first time this season with last week's draw and maintained their unbeaten record with a 2-0 result over twelfth placed APIA Leichhardt Tigers.

Sydney Olympic stayed in second spot when they came up with a 3-0 victory over eleventh placed Bonnyrigg White Eagles while Sutherland Sharks remained at third thanks to their scoreless draw with sixth placed South Coast Wolves.

Parramatta Eagles are still in fourth place despite their match against eighth placed Rockdale City Suns being washed out and Manly United are fifth following their 1-0 loss to seventh placed Blacktown City, an outcome which broke Manly's four match winning streak.

Sydney United and Bankstown City remained at ninth and tenth respectively after their encounter was washed out.

In Round 6 catch-up action Bonnyrigg White Eagles were 3-0 winners over Rockdale City Suns.

Grade 15 ..Sutherland Sharks took their unbeaten run to six matches and they have a lead of two points at the top of the table after they produced a 3-1 success over eleventh placed South Coast Wolves while Manly United have now won four in a row following their 3-0 victory over eighth placed Blacktown City.

Sydney Olympic climbed one place to third when they were 2-1 winners over Bonnyrigg White Eagles who have slipped back one place to sixth and APIA Leichhardt Tigers moved up one spot to fifth with a 2-0 result when they faced Marconi Stallions who have fallen back one position to fourth.

Sydney United and Bankstown City remained at seventh and tenth respectively after their clash was washed out and Parramatta Eagles are still ninth and Rockdale City Suns twelfth after they were also washed out.

In Round 6 catch-up action Bonnyrigg White Eagle defeated Rockdale City Suns with a 4-1 scoreline.

Grade 16.. After going seven matches without loss Manly United have extended their competition lead to five points when they were 4-1 winners over Blacktown City who have slipped back one place to fifth while Sutherland Sharks have hung onto second spot after their match against eleventh placed South Coast Wolves was washed out.

Marconi Stallions are placed third following their 3-0 success over eighth placed APIA Leichhardt Tigers and Sydney Olympic climbed one place to fourth thanks to their 3-0 result over ninth placed Bonnyrigg White Eagles.

Parramatta Eagles have retained sixth spot after their match with twelfth placed Rockdale City Suns was washed out while Sydney United are seventh and Bankstown City are tenth after they also suffered a wash out.

In Round 6 catch-up action Bonnyrigg White Eagles and Rockdale City Suns battle out a scoreless draw.

Grade 18 Manly United extended their lead at the top of the table to five points when they accounted for second placed Blacktown City with a 1-0 scoreline.

Sutherland Sharks remained at third after their clash with seventh placed South Coast Wolves was washed out and Sydney Olympic are still fourth following their 2-0 loss to Bonnyrigg White Eagles who have climbed one place to eighth.

Parramatta Eagles retained fifth position after they were washed out against twelfth placed Rockdale City Suns while Marconi Stallions are still sixth despite their 1-0 loss to tenth placed APIA Leichhardt Tigers.

Sydney United slipped back one place to ninth and Bankstown City remained at eleventh when their match was washed out. In Round 6 catch-up action Bonnyrigg White Eagles were 4-1 winners over Rockdale City Suns.

-By Barry Davis