



## Around the Grounds

### NSW Premier League Round 13 Review

Sydney Olympic ensured their four-point lead at the top of the League ladder remained intact following a 1-0 defeat of Blacktown City FC at Belmore Sports Ground on Sunday. Following Sutherland Sharks win against Manly United on Saturday evening, and with Blacktown City closing in on third heading into Round 13, the Blues needed one goal to secure maximum points and it arrived via the feet of Chris Triantis. Triantis had the Blues ahead after only 4' minutes of play as Sydney Olympic stretched the Blacktown City defence for the opener. A fine interchange of passes between William Angel, Robbie Mileski and Todd Bamber setup the opening as Chris Triantis drove his diagonal effort into the bottom left-hand corner of goal. Blacktown City did have momentum on their side in the second period as Mark Crittenden's men squandered a number of chances to draw level. Despite playing most of the half on the back foot, Sydney Olympic held off Blacktown City FC's challenge to secure maximum points. Sydney United moved into equal third-spot following a much needed win over Marconi Stallions at Sydney United Sports Centre. The Reds, coming off a rather lean spell in recent weeks in terms of results, had the match wrapped up with Luka Glavas' late first-half strike. Glavas slipped his way past the challenges of both Brenton Rhodes and Ali Haydar before slotting the ball past James Chronopoulos for the match winning goal. The Stallions best efforts to salvage a draw fell to Andrew Mailer and Josh Sama late on, though the Reds remained composed to administer the final stages of the match and secure three vital points to keep the side's final ambitions well on track. At Jensen Park, Bankstown City claimed their first home win of the season as the side grabbed bragging rights over stern rival Rockdale City Suns in the local derby. In a match of few chances, it was a late goal to Frederick Graham that secured the points for Bankstown City. The match could have taken a different shape had Peter Apolevski converted his 8' minute penalty – denied by a strong save by Lions' goalkeeper Zlatko Joseski. Apolevski's afternoon took an additional negative turn when he was shown a straight red card in the 64' minute for a poor challenge on Peter Peralta. The Suns played the final 25' minutes with ten-men as the Lions winner arrived in the 85' minute. Bonnyrigg White Eagles' return to form continued with a strong showing in their 1-0 defeat of A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt Tigers at Lambert Park. Tigers' goalkeeper Jose Bello-Arnigo was forced into three impressive saves in the first period as Bonnyrigg pestered the A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt defence from the opening whistle. The Tigers too created their own chances as Anthony Harthorn nearly headed home from a set-piece before Sam Messam was thwarted by a brave Andrew Bazi save. A Chris Tadross corner in the 56' minute provided Alex Canak with a headed opportunity that he coolly took, heading home for what proved to be the match winner. The win sees Bonnyrigg White Eagles move into equal third place on the League ladder, the side's highest placing this season. On Saturday evening, Sutherland Sharks momentarily cut Sydney Olympic's lead at the top of the table to one-point as the Seymour Shaw side defeated Manly United FC 3-1 in another very tight encounter. Following a scoreless first-half, a Matt Bailey double and a Nick Battalios goal were too much for Manly United FC who pulled a goal back through Scott Balderson. With 20' minutes of play remaining, Manly United FC threw all caution to the wind in search of a second goal that would have certainly re-opened the encounter, though Nathan Denham's post and crossbar continued to prove an obstacle too difficult to climb for Manly United as the side slumped to defeat. The second Saturday evening clash between Parramatta FC and South Coast Wolves was called off due to the heavy rain in Sydney during the week. Visit the Football NSW website for updates on when this fixture will be played.

-By Joseph Carlucci



### Early Sydney Olympic goal enough to see off Blacktown City

Sydney Olympic restored a four point lead at the top of the NSW Premier League ladder following Round 13 action with a very hard fought 1-0 defeat of Blacktown City FC. In a match of two halves, the Blues managed to survive a second-half onslaught from the visiting Blacktown City side as Chris Triantis' well taken 4' minute goal proved to be the difference. The Blues opened the scoring with their first real forward foray on 4' minutes as the home side stretched their opponent's defensive line. Will Angel's pace down the left opened up some space as Robbie Mileski and Todd Bamber played two sublime first-time passes to release Triantis into space as he drove his low diagonal effort into the bottom left-hand corner of Symon Jaeger's goal. The visitors tried to react to the early set-back though a Blues midfield led expertly by Phil Makrys and Chris Triantis proved too strong in the opening exchanges. Blacktown City carved out their first opening in the attacking third as Patrick Gatt rose highest to head a set-piece delivery on target in the 13' minute. Gatt's headed attempt was precise though lacked any real power as Paul Henderson made a routine save. Chris Triantis again showed his fine ability in the 17' minute with a long-range effort. The Blues midfielder left three markers in his wake following a slick slalom effort before rifling his effort inches wide of Jaeger's post. Sydney Olympic kept the pressure on their opponents 1' minute later as Angel showed some fine skill, and pace, down the left-flank before cutting the ball back across goal from the byline. Despite two Blues players closing into the penalty-area, Angel failed to pick out a teammate as the chance went begging. On 25' minutes, Blacktown City created an opening when Mitchell Duke centred from the right byline, though his effort sailed too far over the penalty-area, out of the reach of Luke Roodenburg who made a timely run into a promising position. Blacktown City scuffed a great chance to draw level in the 32' minute as Roodenburg, Mitch Long and Travis Major combined to send the latter through on goal. Major's perfectly timed run beat the offside trap as the young winger centred for Roodenburg who, off his weaker boot, blasted the effort over the crossbar. At the other Jaeger was called upon to deal with a towering Todd Bamber in the 38' minute as the shot-stopper showed strength and composure to claim a centred free-kick by the Blues into the penalty-area. Blacktown City closed the half on the front foot, though clear cut chances were limited by a very compact Sydney Olympic defensive line. Travis Major's short free-kick into the path of Matt Lewis amounted to nothing as Lewis' first-time effort on goal finished well over the crossbar. The Blues created two late chances in the half, both involving Angel, though a second goal was not forthcoming. The first arrived in the 43' minute as Angel appeared to be brought down after Jaeger dropped a ball following a challenge from Bamber. Jaeger got down to thwart Angel's attempt to round the shot-stopper, though as the Sydney Olympic midfielder went to

ground, the referee produced a yellow card for simulation. In the final minute of the half Mileski played an exceptional through ball into the path of Angel down the left, despite being taken out by Gatt on halfway. Angel used his pace to close in on the byline and cross into the centre, despite his effort failing to pick out Bamber, the Blues players appealed for a handball as the ball struck a retreating Blacktown City defender. Blacktown City came out of the gates all guns blazing after the resumption of play as Duke, under the watchful eye of two Sydney Olympic defenders, shot wide from a promising position in the opening minute after being sent through on goal. In the 48' minute, Kain Rastall's pinpoint delivery into the penalty-area again picked out the head of Duke, though the striker failed to get any power behind his effort as Henderson made a routine save. Duke turned provider 1' minute later as his centre from the left picked out Roodenburg. The Blacktown City captain positioned himself nicely to head on goal, though failed to keep his attempt down as the ball finished over the crossbar. The visitors kept the foot on the accelerator for the early second-half exchanges as Zac Cairncross got onto the end of a delivery from the right-flank. The central defender hit his shot on the turn nicely, though only just sent the ball wide of Henderson's up-right. Sydney Olympic playmaker Robbie Mileski got more on the ball as he attempted to get his teammates forward following the dominant start to the half by Blacktown City, though no real venture into their opponents' penalty-area came about. The Blues did finally make a visit into the Blacktown City penalty-area in the 63' minute as Bamber's neat pass into the path of Mileski was cleared by some very astute defending from the visitors. Blacktown City threatened the Blues rearguard again in the 66' minute as Major's free-kick from the left picked out Cairncross, who saw his looping header hit the top part of the crossbar before finishing over the goal line. With both sets of midfielders working hard, goalscoring chances did slow down. A series of hard challenges from both sets of players illustrated just how important a victory Sydney Olympic created their best chance of the half in the 84' minute as Robbie Mileski picked up a loose ball at the back post before crossing into the penalty-area. Amidst a sea of legs, Blacktown City somehow managed to clear the danger.

Paul Henderson then produced a tremendous one-handed save to deny Lewis' curling free-kick from the right in the 86' minute. The Blues defenders kept their nerve to then deal with the resulting corner as the chance went begging for the visitors. Sydney

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