

# NSW PREMIER LEAGUE ROUND 20 – PREVIEW

Joseph Carlucci

Four rounds remain in the 2011 NSW Premier League regular season as Round 20 action opens with a blockbuster on Saturday evening at Bonnyrigg Sports Club.

Fourth meets fifth in a replay of last season's grand-final between the White Eagles and Blacktown City FC. The defending champions took the win in the reverse fixture earlier in the season, though Bonnyrigg's second-half of the campaign has certainly improved following a slow start.

Brian Brown's men left it late to take a point from the South Coast last Saturday, though the signs of the White Eagles outfit returning to their best are certainly there. New recruit Jared Lum has played his way into some very good form in midfield, meanwhile the work ethic of Shane Webb, Blake Powell and Nathan Elasi has been phenomenal. Add this to a Brad Boardman and Jamie McMaster combination, both players who have found the net consistently over the past month, and the Bonnyrigg side is a definite shot to go one better than last season where they finished runner-up.

Blacktown City will be no push over for the home side as Mark Crittenden's men continue to grind out results with some workmanlike performances. The win in difficult conditions at Rockdale proved just how hard the team plays for one another with captain Luke Roodenburg again leading his troops by example. The Seven Hills side other true leader on the field has been Milorad Simonovic who has played a huge role in getting his side into the top-five with some very consistent performances.

This match promises many fireworks, as per all clashes between these two sides, with the winner making a mark for a late push towards the top-two.

At Melita Stadium, Sydney United will be expected to make light work of a Parramatta FC side that has slipped up in recent weeks following a mid-season charge off the foot of the table. The Reds proved they are the real deal this season with a tremendous showing to see off Sydney Olympic in Round 19, despite playing over half of the match with ten-men following Mitchell Thompson's dismissal.

Coach Jean-Paul DeMarigny will be delighted with his side's form in the front-third, meanwhile defensively, goalkeeper Vedran Janjetovic has continued to prove his worth with a number of man of the match performances in recent weeks. Parramatta FC's run has hit a wall following successive losses against South Coast Wolves and Bankstown City over the past week. Coach Manny Spanoudakis will be asking his players for more of the same fight shown following his appointment, as the team battles to move off the foot of the table.

Sutherland Sharks host Rockdale City Suns at Seymour Shaw in the final Saturday evening clash this weekend, with the home side expected to produce the goods as they remain in the hunt for a top-two finish. A late draw at Marconi Stadium saw the side miss a good chance of closing the gap on the top two sides, though the Sharks' recent form, espe-



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cially at home, has been very impressive. Panni Nikas' creativity and goal scoring prowess has certainly paired well with the hard work of striker Matt Bailey and Sam Awad up-front. A well-balanced side with Nick Stavroulakis' midfield experience and the explosive pace of Todd Halloran and Yianni Fragogianis on the two wings, the Sharks never fail to create goal scoring opportunities. Rockdale City's faint chances of reaching the finals series took a massive battering last weekend with the home loss to Blacktown City FC. Coach Wally Savor was hit with the absence of a number of key players from the match, almost certainly now eliminating the side from finals football. Irrespective of the side's finals chances, experienced campaigners Mirko Jurij and Peter Apolevski will be keen to get the side back to winning ways on Saturday.

On Sunday afternoon at Belmore Sports Ground, former NSL heavyweights Sydney Olympic and Marconi Stallions lock horns. The League leaders need to bounce back quickly following the loss against Sydney United last weekend, with the Reds now three-points adrift in second spot. Coach Peter Tsekens will be looking for his defence to lift their game and eliminate the lapses in concentration against the Stallions, something that will be necessary with the likes of Giosue and Nico Sama lurking. The Stallions' hopes of finals football have been dented following recent results, with the sides chances of a top-five finish very unrealistic.

Coach Luke Casserly will still be eager to see his troops get as many points from the remaining matches, and there would be no bigger scalp than that of Sydney Olympic to give Marconi supporters something to cheer about.

South Coast Wolves will be aiming to keep their impressive fortnight of results rolling as Manly United FC visits John Crehan Park. The Wolves are still seething following the loss against the Northern Beaches side in the Waratah Cup at the same venue last month, further motivation for the South Coast side to get a result on Sunday. Trevor Morgan's men have played some beautiful football, though will need to ensure their solid defensive performances last


the full 90' minutes against Manly United. The side was unlucky to concede late on against Bonnyrigg last weekend, though the general feel around the club at the moment is very positive, with the Wolves a definite chance of hunting down the teams above them for the sixth spot – what would be a huge achievement for the side even without finals football to play.

Manly United's season has been tremendous with a fine League run and Cup victory. Craig Midgley's side however has gone off the boil somewhat since the Cup win, and losses against Sydney United and A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt Tigers have pretty much ended the side's chances of a top-five finish.

In the final match for the weekend,

A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt Tigers return to Lambert Park full of confidence following their long awaited return to the winner's list last weekend. The Tigers overcame Manly United at Cromer Park in a very well worked performance by the Inner West side. The Tigers' victory in Round 19 saw the side move off the foot of the table, something the players and supporters will be hoping to stay well clear of for the remainder of the season.

Bankstown City visits Lambert Park, and Blagoja Kuleski's side too will enter the encounter with confidence after securing an emphatic win against Parramatta FC. The Lions too are coming off a difficult run of poor results though the win against the Eagles will serve them well to take on A.P.I.A. this weekend.



**SYDNEY OLYMPIC FOOTBALL CLUB**

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**Fundraiser for the Triantis family**

Sydney Olympic Football Club would like to thank all patrons for their monetary donations received in the first week of the fundraiser.

In the first 6 days since announcing the fundraiser, the Club has collected the amount of \$5,549.30.

A reminder that all patrons that requested and received a receipt for their donations, can either come to the SOFC office during the week or at the front gate next Sunday 14 August 2011 to receive their raffle tickets and they will be entered into the draw to receive one of the many prizes that will be drawn after the end of game against APIA Tigers on 4 September 2011, with the top prize being 2 tickets to Auckland offered by Nick Theodorakopoulos from Majestic travel and O KOSMOS newspaper.

Finally the Club would like to note that donation boxes and raffle tickets will be available from the office throughout the week and also on match days at Belmore Sports Ground.

**Sydney Olympic Football Club**

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