

news NSW PREMIER LEAGUE ROUND 22 REVIEW

The 2012 regular season drew to a close on Sunday afternoon as five teams remain heading into the finals series next weekend.

Premiers Bonnyrigg White Eagles were second best at Blacktown City though still managed to secure a win, securing 53-points this season with fifty goals scored in the process. Marconi Stallions added a final blow to Sydney United's season with a 1-0 win in the local derby, securing third-spot in the process. Sydney Olympic has sealed second spot with a draw against Manly United FC, meanwhile Rockdale City Suns sent captain, and club legend, Peter Apolevski out with a win in the side's come-from-behind 2-1 defeat of Parramatta FC – the loss for the Eagles condemning Lee Sterrey's men to bottom-spot on the ladder. At Lambert Park, APIA-Leichhardt completed five wins on the trot defeating Blacktown Spartans – the day a significant one for the Tigers, and the League, as it was the last Premier League match to be played on the natural grass. Lambert Park will have a new synthetic playing surface for season 2013.

Blacktown City FC 1 Bonnyrigg White Eagles 2
Newly crowned Premiers Bonnyrigg White Eagles snatched a late goal to secure a 2-1 win over Blacktown City on Sunday afternoon at Lily Homes Stadium, despite the home sides dominating the encounter for large spells.

It was arguably a sluggish performance by Bonnyrigg, though the sign of a great side is one that can still secure a result without playing its best football.

Blacktown City squandered a number of first-half chances to go into the break at 0-0, before Chris Payne latched onto a Chris Tadrosse delivery to head the White Eagles into the lead on 58' minutes.

Blacktown City deservedly drew level courtesy of Yuchi Yamauchi. The Japanese import was well-positioned to slot home from Travis Major's marvellous cut-back from the left.

Just as the match seemed destined to finish level, Harris Gaitatzis blasted a powerful drive past Brody Crane in injury-time to secure his side three-points.

Despite the loss, Blacktown City has done enough to hold on to fifth-spot on the ladder and set-up a shot at South Coast Wolves in the first weekend of finals football.

Sydney Olympic 0 Manly United FC 0

Sydney Olympic's 0-0 draw at home against Manly United FC secured the Blues second-spot on the ladder heading into the finals series.

The Blues looked dangerous throughout the encounter, mostly via the boot of captain Phil Makrys.



Premiers Bonnyrigg White Eagles

Manly United went close to snatching the win late-on in the encounter as Colin Iley picked out Scott Balderson inside the penalty-area. The latter however diverted his header wide of goal.

The match, otherwise, failed to provide too much of a spectacle for the supporters present as Manly United FC signed off NSW Premier League duty for 2012.

Sydney Olympic has secured a home final against Marconi Stallions next weekend.

Marconi Stallions 1 Sydney United 58 FC 0

Marconi Stallions ended Sydney United's painful 2012 campaign with a 1-0 defeat of the Reds at Marconi Stadium. Nathan Elasi proved the hero just shy of the hour when he looped a fine finish over goalkeeper Daniel Nash to secure the win.

The Reds did press for an equaliser and were denied by some fabulous goalkeeping by Stallions' shot-stopper James Chro-

nopoulos. Mirjan Pavlovic's chance in particular seemed destined to finish in the back of the net if not for Chronopoulos' exceptional intervention.

South Coast Wolves 2 Sutherland Sharks 0

South Coast Wolves recorded a much needed win ahead of the finals series with a 2-0 defeat of Sutherland Sharks. The Wolves were coming off four consecutive losses and the quick-fire double early on against the Sharks proved enough on Sunday.

Joseph Lavalle was on hand to convert from close-range following a scramble inside the penalty-area on 19' minutes before Sasho Petrovski doubled the score 1' minute later with a low-driven effort from the edge of the penalty-area.

Despite Sutherland's late charge led by Matt Bailey, the Wolves administered proceedings to seal the win and secure fourth-spot on the ladder.

APIA-Leichhardt Tigers 2 Blacktown Spartans 0
APIA-Leichhardt sent Danial Cummins out with a win in his last Premier League match – the Tigers veteran calling it a day on his playing career.

The Tigers sealed a 2-0 win against Blacktown Spartans, the visitors also pleased with its efforts in its debut season in the Premier League despite the loss.

Mun Soo Gil was on hand to drive home a parried Carlos Saliadarre penalty on the hour to hand APIA-Leichhardt the lead, before Mark Byrnes headed home a late goal to seal the 2-0 win. APIA-Leichhardt's victorious finish to the season – five wins in the last five matches under caretaker coach Billy McColl – should be a starting point for the Tigers to build on for 2013. The Tigers

impressive final five weeks saw the side finish only one-point behind fifth-placed Blacktown City FC.

Parramatta FC 1 Rockdale City Suns 2

Rockdale City Suns overturned a one-goal deficit to return to winning ways at Melita Stadium against Parramatta FC, the perfect send off for captain Peter Apolevski following twenty-five years of service to the club.

Aaron Peterson headed home Daniel Rezo's pinpoint delivery in the 7' minute to give the Eagles the lead.

Lee Sterrey's men had chances to go two goals up, though the Suns drew level in the 66' minute. Huseyin Jasli's pace gave him the room to play the ball into the path of Sash Tirovski to net.

The Suns completed the win 8' minutes later as substitute Alan Kovacevic converted with a powerful header to seal the three-points. The win moving the Suns up to seventh-spot on the ladder.

Mark Rudan hungry to remain a first grade coach

Former Sydney FC captain Mark Rudan is hungry to make a career as a first grade coach after leading the Rockdale City Suns in the NSW Premier League this season.

Rudan was thrown into the role only a few weeks into the season after the departure of Wally Savor. A late season slump only halted Rudan's Rockdale side who claimed the scalp of NSW Premier League Premiers Bonnyrigg White Eagles through a purple patch of form.

After having his first taste of coaching Rudan told Football NSW he was eager to continue.

"I thoroughly enjoyed myself," Rudan said.

"Rockdale is a fantastic club with fantastic people attached to it as well. In that respect I couldn't have asked for more.

"I guess I am fortunate enough to do it as a full time role and anything I do I put everything into it.

"I think there are a lot of positives (to come out of this season), there's also a couple of things that transpired that you learn from.

"But those things can only make you a better person and a better coach.

"All in all it was a fantastic experience."

"There were a lot of positives to come out of (the season) including giving a lot of youngsters the opportunity to play week in week out."

Rudan's future has been the centre of speculation in the NSW Premier League of late with rumours persisting he will re-join former club Sydney United as a coach from next season.

The former defender admitted he had heard from Sydney United

but no decision had been made yet.

"I'll be making a decision sooner rather than later. Whether they come back to me it is totally up to them."

Rockdale City Suns coach Mark Rudan

