

## news

## NSW PREMIER LEAGUE PRELIMINARY FINALS PREVIEW

*Marconi Stallions take on Blacktown City FC this Saturday evening with the winner to earn a spot in the 2012 NSW Premier League Grand Final to take on Premiers Bonnyrigg White Eagles on Monday 1st October.*

-BY JOSEPH CARLUCCI

**Marconi Stallions v Blacktown City FC, Saturday 22nd of September, 6:00 pm Marconi Stadium**

**Last Week:  
Bonnyrigg White Eagles 1 Marconi Stallions 0  
Sydney Olympic 0 Blacktown City FC 1**

A blockbuster clash awaits us on Saturday evening as Marconi Stallions and Blacktown City FC faceoff in Bossley Park for a grand-final shot against Bonnyrigg White Eagles.

Both sides have been in tremendous form in the run home to the end of the regular season, and both sides have performed very well thus far in the finals series to be within one match of the showcase final.

Marconi Stallions enter this encounter with the bonus of hosting the Preliminary Final, an advantage that coach Luke Casserly will be looking to make the very most of.

The Stallions played a brilliant second-half to defeat Sydney Olympic a fortnight ago and even though the side went down last weekend in the Major semi-final against Bonnyrigg White Eagles, Marconi pressed until the final whistle, going within a whisker of forcing the newly crowned Premiers into extra-time.

Casserly will be looking at the in-form Joey Gibbs to continue his fabulous performances, meanwhile the likes of Nathan Ela-



si, Sean O'Connell and the ever reliable Nahuel Arrarte have been of the very highest order.

Defensively the Stallions have been sharp, with goalkeeper James Chronopoulos in exceptional form since returning from his foot injury.

Standing in the Stallions way of a grand-final berth, and a sec-



ond shot at Bonnyrigg White Eagles, will be Blacktown City FC. The 2010 champions have ridden a bumpy ride this season with some mixed results, however the side's run over the past two

months has been near perfect.

Blacktown City has scored the scalps of both South Coast Wolves and Sydney Olympic in the finals series, both wins coming away from home with only one goal conceded in the process, ensuring confidence is high ahead of the Saturday night encounter.

Captain Luke Roodenburg continues to impress in his new found role in the backline alongside the equally notable Zac Cairncross. Blacktown's engine room has been driven by Travis Major and Matt Lewis on the two flanks, with James Monie coming of age in recent weeks with some very selfless performances where the number 10 has run his socks off

for his team.

Japanese imports Ryuji Miyazawa and Yuchi Yamauchi have been the finds of the season for the club in 2012, and both players will be needed at their best if Blacktown City is going to make it three-from-three wins to secure a spot in this season's grand-final.

## Premier Youth League The Finals Series

*The fantastic spring weekend produced some fabulous football at Lily Homes Stadium on Saturday and Seymour Shaw on Sunday for the Minor and Major Semi Finals.*

-BY BARRY DAVIS

### Grade 13 Minor Semi Final

Marconi Stallions had beaten Manly United 2-0 when they met in the first round and then the second round match had ended in a 1-1 draw. This time the Stallions produced another 2-0 success and that has given them a place in the Preliminary Final while Manly United have now completed their commitments to the finals series.

### Major Semi Final

The first round meeting between Sydney Olympic and APIA Leichhardt Tigers was locked at 0-0 when the final whistle sounded and then Olympic had claimed all the second round points with a 2-0 result.

The form guide proved to be a good indicator as Olympic produced a 2-1 result and that has given them the direct route to the Grand Final while the Tigers will play in the Preliminary Final.

### Grade 14 Minor Semi Final

Sutherland Sharks had claimed all the points from their competition clashes with Rockdale City Suns, winning the first round match 2-1 and the second round game 2-0.

Once again, the Sharks were just a bit too good for the Suns, winning this match 3-1 and progressing to the Preliminary Final while Rockdale have bowed out of the finals series.

### Major Semi Final

The first round match between APIA Leichhardt Tigers and Marconi Stallions was a 1-1 draw and then the Tigers bagged all the second round points with a 3-1 win.

When the teams faced off this time the match was locked up at 2-2 at the completion of normal time and when there was no answer to the deadlock to be found in extra time, it was off to the penalty spot for a decision. It was here that the Stallions came to the fore as they won the shootout 4-3 and claimed their place in the Grand Final as a result while the tigers will play in the Preliminary Final.

### Grade 15 Minor Semi Final

Blacktown City posted a 3-0 victory when they faced Parramatta FC in the first round and then the teams battled out a 0-0 second round draw.

In another close match, the scores were locked up at 1-1 when the final whistle sounded and so extra time was needed. On this occasion Parramatta found the telling goal and that has allowed them to move forward to the Preliminary Final while Blacktown City have completed their commitments to the finals series.

### Major Semi Final

Marconi Stallions and Sydney Olympic finished their first round match locked up at 0-0 but then the Stallions registered a 4-1 victory in the second round encounter.

This time the Stallions produced a 2-0 victory and that has put them through to the Grand Final while Olympic will now play in the Preliminary Final.

### Grade 16 Minor Semi Final

Blacktown Spartans accounted for Sydney Olympic with a 3-0 scoreline when they met in the first round and then the teams fought out a 0-0 second round draw.

The Spartans once again came up with the goods when they were 2-0 winners and that has allowed them to move forward to the Preliminary Final while Olympic have bowed out of the finals series.

### Major Semi Final

Blacktown City had bagged all the points from their competition clashes with Marconi Stallions, winning the first round match 3-0 and then producing a 1-0 result in the second round.

In a very tight match the scores were locked up at 1-1 at the final whistle sounded and when there was no solution to be found in extra time, the penalty spot was called upon. In a marathon effort, Blacktown City gained the place in the Grand Final when they won the shootout 10-9, an outcome that has forced Olympic's into the Preliminary Final.

### Grade 18 Minor Semi Final

Parramatta FC were 3-0 winners over Manly United when the teams faced each other in the first round and then Manly squared the ledger with a 1-0 second round win.

As expected, this was yet another tight match with Parramatta edging out Manly with a 3-2 scoreline and that has put them into the Preliminary Final while Manly have bowed out of the finals series.

### Major Semi Final

Sutherland Sharks produced a 3-1 victory when they met Blacktown City in the first round and then the second round match ended in a 2-2 draw.

This time Blacktown City produced a 1-0 result and they have claimed the first spot in the Grand Final while the Sharks will now play in the Preliminary Final.