



By George Stavroulakis

Max Burgess ready to lead Olympic in 2018



BEFORE securing a professional contract with Portugal's Uniao de Madeira in July last season, Max Burgess was without doubt the form player of the National Premier Leagues NSW men's competition.

The attacking midfielder was scoring goals for fun and providing assists most weeks as Sydney Olympic FC charged to a top five finish.

Playing professionally abroad was always the dream, so after agreeing to terms, Burgess packed his bags and prepared for his next life adventure.

Football doesn't always go according to plan, so when the former Newcastle Jets utility decided to return to Australia, Olympic was always going to be his destination.

"I never entertained the thought of playing for someone else," Burgess told Football NSW.

"I rate the coaching staff very highly as well as the vision and vibe at the club.

"Having my brother (Darcy) at Olympic is great, as kids we always dreamed about playing first grade together somewhere.

"We have recruited well, I'm very confident we will hold our own this season."

Burgess is equally talented away from the pitch, studying a degree in political economics and social sciences at Sydney University.

"It is a mouthful to say, and the content is equally as tough," he said with a laugh.

"I'm in my first year, hopefully I can finish this course, it just depends what happens with football I guess."

Burgess is tipping crafty midfielder Hagi Gligor to be a standout at Belmore Oval this year as well as evergreen goalkeeper Paul Henderson.

"I've always rated Hagi and Hendo, he offers so much experience," he said.

"Riley Woodcock has also slotted in well, he is a quality player and Will Angel offers that x-factor we need.

"Every team will have their strengths, there is a real air of anticipation with the season just a few weeks away."

Sydney Olympic FC host Bonnyrigg in a juicy first up encounter on Sunday, March 11 from 3pm.

The summer drought is over and it's time for football to reign once more

NATIONAL
PREMIER LEAGUES2018
NPL 2 NSW MEN'S

Fans of the National Premier Leagues 2 NSW Men's competition

have had Sunday the 4th of March marked down in their calendars the moment Football NSW released the fixture list in January.

It marks the beginning of a new season, one free from the Marconi Stallions monopoly that dominated 2017.

It marks the debut of Rydalmere Lions, a club who continue their meteoric rise through the ranks of the NPL NSW Men's divisions.

It marks the return of old friends in Parramatta FC, after a three-year stint in the top-tier of football in NSW.

But ultimately it marks the day all 14 teams start equal, ready to fight their way to Championship and Premiership glory.

Let's take a look at how your club is shaping up ahead of another

spectacular season in the NPL 2 Men's competition.

Canterbury Bankstown FC Last season: 10th place - 9 wins, 6 draws, 11 losses - 33 points

Canterbury Bankstown FC captured the hearts of all football fans last season during their dazzling FFA Cup run. But while they were dreaming of

nutmegging Matt Simon and sending Graham Arnold home with his bushy tail between his legs, the Bankstown boys only picked up one point from their final four league games to crash out of the finals' race.

Perry Moustakas explains that his squad have learnt big lessons from last season's failure.

"We've added many players to our roster - last year our squad was too small."

But the club haven't just added depth. They've added quality with the likes of free-kick gun Huss Jasli, silky skills of Aaron D'Mello and

the Andricopoulos brothers Costa and Nikita all ready to pull their weight for the club.

"Competition for a starting place is higher than ever. With the additions of Huss Jasli, Costa and Nikita Andricopoulos, Evan Patramanis, Richie Darko, Dylan Deep-Jones and Aaron D'Mello, we have a squad capable of anything".

After the last season's late collapse, Moustakas is reluctant to make grand predictions for how his team will fare this year.

"I never look further than our next game. We are very capable and we will be giving our best throughout the whole season."

Come on, Perry, give us a prediction...

"We want finals football".

Major Ins:
Huss Jasli
Costa Andricopoulos
Nikita Andricopoulos
Evan Patramanis
Richie Darko
Dylan Deep-Jones
Aaron D'Mello