



By George Stavroulakis

ROUND 7 REVIEW - NPL NSW MEN'S

Round 7 of the National Premier Leagues NSW 2018 season will be remembered as a weekend of shock results. League Leaders APIA Leichhardt Tigers met their match in Sutherland Sharks on Saturday night as they were forced to settle for a 3-3 draw..

Sydney Olympic had a chance to take top spot but they too couldn't get the job done as Rockdale City Suns fought back to snatch a 2-2 draw.

Sydney United 58 and Blacktown City both were on the wrong side of losing scorelines, while Bonnyrigg White Eagles tasted success for the first time this season.

Sutherland Sharks 3 - APIA Leichhardt Tigers 3 at Seymour Shaw

An Adrian Vranic penalty ten minutes from full time has helped Sutherland Sharks snatch a 3-3 draw with APIA Leichhardt Tigers at Seymour Shaw on Saturday night.

It was a topsy Turvy clash with both sides trading goals and the lead in a high scoring battle.

Themba Muata Marlow helped APIA to a perfect start when he found the back of the net less than 60 seconds into the contest, before Sutherland fired back only moments later through Vranic. Sutherland struck again midway through the opening stanza and were set to take the lead into the break before Sean Symons levelled the scores in the dying stages of the half.

A 62nd minute Jordan Murray goal had the visitors on track to collect the win

before the Sharks were awarded a penalty in the 78th minute which Vranic calmly dispatched to deny their opponents victory.

Hakoah Sydney City East 2 - Sydney United 58 FC 0 at Hensley Athletic Field

Hakoah Sydney City East have won a scrappy affair against Sydney United 58 FC 2-0 at Hensley Athletic Field

The result was three vital points for the home side who in recent weeks have been somewhat unlucky, while for losing side Sydney United 58 FC it was definitely one that got away.

A penalty from Mitchell Stamatellis 12 minutes into the contest and an Andre De Jong finish in the second half was the difference as Hakoah claimed a shock

upset.

The home side were rewarded for their dogged defence and rapid counters as United 58 struggled to find a breakthrough.

Blacktown City FC 0 - Marconi Stallions FC 1 at Lily Homes Stadium

Former Blacktown City fan favourite James Andrew has stung his former side after guiding a 10-man Marconi Stallions to a shock 1-0 upset at Lily Homes Stadium on Saturday.

The former Blacktown attacker arrived as a half time substitute for Mateo Poljak and put the visitors ahead with a lovely finish ten minutes after the interval to help snap a five-match winless run for the Stallions.

Andrew netted 11 league goals for Blacktown last campaign but proved to the

Sydney Olympic – Skopianoï 2-2

An incredible second half fightback has helped Rockdale snatch a 2-2 draw with Sydney Olympic at Belmore Sports Ground on Sunday.

Olympic had the chance to move three points clear at the top of the ladder at the end of Round 7 after APIA Leichhardt's draw on Saturday.

The Blues looked to be making the most of the opportunity as they went into the half-time break up 2-0 thanks to Max Burgess and Alejandro Sanchez. **Yet a** spirited fightback from the visitors saw Olympic clinging on for a point at the final whistle, as Jordan Figon and Alec Urosevski drew Rockdale level before pushing for a win.

Olympic threatened first as they drove at the Rockdale backline from kickoff, with Radovan Pavicevic sliding an effort wide after stretching to reach a skewed shot from Max Burgess.

Alejandro Sanchez was next to try his luck for the hosts and might have scored one of the goals of the season when he flicked the ball over his head and towards the goal with his back to the keeper, but Ante Covic was alive to the danger and scrambled back to touch the shot over the bar for a corner.

The Spaniard was in on goal again shortly after, this time shooting under Covic who couldn't get down in time to stop the ball from dribbling through to Max Burgess in front of an empty net.

Olympic were emboldened by a deserved opener, and continued to roll forward in numbers in search of a second. Sanchez was given an opportunity to double his side's lead five minutes after Burgess' goal, but swung at the bouncing ball in the penalty area and completely failed to make contact.

He would soon make sure that it was a miss of little consequence, pushing his way through on the edge of the box and scuffing a shot inside Ante Covic's far post to give Olympic a two-goal cushion as half-time approached.

Having offered little more than a few frustrated swipes at goal in the first half, Rockdale came out of the sheds with a new determination to get themselves back into the game. Bai Antoniou had a marvelous chance to pull one back for the visitors when he streaked down the left and drew Paul Henderson off his line, but the goalkeeper did enough to put the striker off his shot and the ball rolled agonisingly wide of the far post.

Rockdale continued to push forward and were rewarded just after the hour mark when Jordan Figon slid in to claim the final touch on a dipping ball from the left flank, diverting the ball past the keeper and giving the visitors a lifeline. They very nearly had a second immediately as Figon rolled a ball on for Jonathan Grozdanovski at the top of the box, but the young striker could only fire his shot wide.

A shellshocked Olympic struggled to regain their composure as Rockdale sensed blood in the water and pushed for an equaliser. Alec Urosevski was the man to deliver, picking up on a rebound after Covic spilled a shot on the edge of the six yard box and slamming the ball home to level the scores at 2-2.

Both sides went forward in search of a winner but there was little quality in the final third as the final whistle approached; a draw the most appropriate result in a game of two very distinct halves.

Sydney Olympic's Abbas Saad said that while he was disappointed in the way his side fell away in the second half, there were plenty of positives to be drawn from their performance in the first.

"We played World Cup football in the first half and park football in the second," he joked.

"We have to give credit to Rockdale, who really put us on the back foot in the second half and deserved a draw in the end.

"The game should've been over in the first half. We should've put them away in the first half, but they're a good team."

Rockdale's Paul Reid maintained a draw was the least his side deserved after pulling back a two-goal deficit against one of the top teams in the competition.

"First half they were in our faces but we changed a few things up at half-time and from then on I think there was only really one team in it," he said.

"Credit to the boys – it was a great fightback, and a great result for us and the club."

Match Stats

Sydney Olympic FC 2 (Max Burgess 19', Alejandro Sanchez 36')

Skopianoï Rockdale 2 (Jordan Figon



61', Alec Urosevski 67')

Referee: K. Griffiths-Jones,

Assistant Referees: N. Backo, K. Robinson

Fourth Official: C. Wright

Sydney Olympic FC: 11. AN Jinya, 10. BURGESS Max, 1. HENDERSON Paul, 6. KULESKI Nicola, 8. MADONIS Jason, 9. PAVICEVIC Radovan, 14. SANCHEZ LOPEZ Alejandro, 4. TIMOTHEOU George, 33. TSATTALIOS Nikolas, 2. WHITESIDE Thomas, 23. WOODCOCK Riley

Substitutes: 19. BURGESS Darcy, 20. CONSONI Ezequiel, 5. JIMENEZ Rafael, 26. PATRAMANIS Billy, 27. JUNG Taewoo

Yellow Cards: Madonis 55'

Red Cards: Nil

Rockdale: 1. COVIC Ante 17. ADAMEDDINE Toufic, 9. ANTONIOU Bai, 23. FIGON Jordan, 4. MCCLENAHAN Trent, 21. NEILL Michael, 2. PETKOVSKI Daniel, 5. REID Paul, 6. RICCIUTO Blake, 19. SAVOR Patrick, 7. UROSEVSKI Alec

Substitutes: 12. EL HAFIANE Idriss, 3. HESKETH Steven, 22. SORRAS Nicholas, 10. GAITATZIS Harris, 11. GROZDANOVSKI Jonathan

Yellow Cards: Antoniou 22', Petkovski 40'

Red Cards: Nil

Player Ratings

3 – Sanchez (OLY)

2 – Antoniou (RCS)

1 – Woodcock (OLY)