



By George Stavroulakis

**Sydney Olympic kept their three point lead at the top of the NPL NSW Men's competition with a hard-fought win over Wollongong Wolves in Round 10, on a dismal afternoon in Belmore that was lit up by several spectacular goals.**



**Sydney Olympic FC - Wollongong Wolves FC 5 - 1**

The hosts went ahead early through Radovan Pavicevic before extending their advantage with a stunning scorpion flick from Thomas Whiteside which will surely go down as one of the goals of the season. Wollongong pulled one back on halftime to go into the break with real hope of overturning the deficit, but were finished off by Alejandro Sanchez Lopez, who scored twice and set up another for Pavicevic as Olympic ran out 5-1 winners.

Making his return to the club he left as a youth player nearly two decades ago, Luke Wilkshire took little time to get into his rhythm, striding up the right flank and swinging a promising ball into the box for Olympic to clear. His teammate Yuzo Tashiro had an early chance when he broke through on goal, but had his shot blocked away.

Sydney Olympic might have been on the back foot in the opening exchanges, but their ability to make their chances count would prove to be the difference all afternoon. Radovan Pavicevic opened the scoring in the 12th minute with a well-taken strike from the left side of the box as the rain started to come down in sheets at Belmore, threatening to disrupt the flow of the match.

If anyone had been worried that the weather might have ruined the spectacle, they needn't have worried. A corner floated in from the right dropped just behind Thomas Whiteside, who flicked his heel out and sent the ball over his head and looping into the far top corner of the net, a truly world class finish putting Olympic into a 2-0 lead.

Wollongong refused to be rocked by the goal, and went chasing one to pull them back into the game at halftime. After a sustained period of pressure following a free kick, the ball fell to Nicholas Montgomery charging in at the top of the box, the Wollongong player burying his first-time drive past Paul Henderson to give the visitors hope of a comeback in the second half.

Still, Olympic came out of the sheds looking the more likely of the two sides to add to their lead, and very nearly did when Jinya An played a one-two with Nikolas Tsattalios on the edge of the box before dragging his shot wide.

Pulling the strings behind the striker, Alejandro Sanchez Lopez shifted up a gear as the match entered the final hour, and won a freekick at the edge of the area after a strong run through the midfield. Stepping up to take the set piece, he whipped a fierce shot across the goalkeeper and into the top right corner – a goal that might've been the outstanding highlight of any game if not for Whiteside's earlier effort.

Wollongong had two fantastic chances to make it 3-2 and put real pressure on the hosts in the final stages of the match, but were perhaps unfortunate to come up against an Olympic side for whom everything seemed to be going right. Sanchez Lopez broke down the left after being played through near the halfway line, squaring for Pavicevic who let the ball run into his stride as he shot into an unguarded net.

Two minutes later, Sanchez Lopez had his second of the afternoon, scrambling the ball over the line from close range after a difficult ball dropped in an awkward area for Justin Pasfield. The Spaniard rounded out the win for the league

leaders, a result that appears more comfortable on paper than it was on the pitch.

Eager to get out of the rain and enjoy his side's win, Abbas Saad said that Olympic's clinical finishing was the difference between the two sides at the end of the day. He also pointed to Alejandro Sanchez Lopez, who turned in a man of the match performance in difficult conditions.

"Sanchez Lopez is on a different level," he said. "His workrate, his appetite, he's a great team player but he's also a great individual, and you saw all of that today."

Wollongong Wolves coach Jacob Timpano could only agree with his counterpart after a second half which saw the visitors let in three quick goals against the run of play.

"To be honest, in the second half they were just more clinical than us. They caught us on the counter three times and we conceded three goals.

"When you cop a couple of world class goals like they scored, it makes it difficult. It'd be nice if they went in for us. It's a hard one – we lost 5-1 but to be totally honest I think we outplayed them for the best part of the match."

**Match Stats**

**Sydney Olympic** FC 5 (Radovan Pavicevic 12,' 84', Thomas Whiteside 22', Alejandro Lopez Sanchez 65', 86')

**Wollongong Wolves** FC 1 (Nicholas Montgomery 45')

**Sunday May 13 2018**

**Belmore Sports** Ground, Belmore

**Referee:** K. Ams

**Assistant Referees:** S. Edeling, J. Adabjou

**Fourth Official:** S. Kelly

**Sydney Olympic** FC: 1.

HENDERSON Paul, 11. AN

Jinya, 7. ANGEL William,

19. BURGESS Darcy (27.

JUNG Taewoo), 8. MADONIS

Jason, 9. PAVICEVIC Radovan,

14. SANCHEZ LOPEZ

Alejandro, 4. TIMOTHEOU

George, 33. TSATTALIOS

Nikolas (20. CONSONI

Ezequiel), 2. WHITESIDE

Thomas, 23. WOODCOCK

Riley

**Substitutes Not** Used: 25.

FITZPATRICK Callum, 21.

ATHANASERIS Stephen, 32.

HRISTODOULOU Adam

**Yellow Cards:** Nil

**Red Cards:** Nil

**Wollongong Wolves** FC:

1. PASFIELD Justin, 5.

BALDACCHINO James, 8.

GRIFFIN Brendan (3.

MADDEN Darcy), 10.

MACDONALD Joshua (17.

ENSOR Ryan), 6.

**Results 10th Round**

Rockdale City Suns- Hakoah Sydney 3-0

Sydney Olympic- Wollongong Wolves 5-1

Blacktown City- Sydney FC Youth 1-0

Bonnyrigg WE- APIA Tigers 1-5

Manly United- Sydney United 1-1

Marconi Stallions- Sutherland Sharks 0-2

MONTGOMERY Nicholas, 40. NOZAWA Takuya, 4. ROBINSON Michael, 30. TASHIRO Yuzo, 7. PRICE Christopher, 28. STOJANOVSKI Michael, 26. WILKSHIRE Luke

**Substitutes Not** Used: 23. HAYES Steven, 16. KAIRIES Luke, 12. NIKLOVSKI Jordan

**Yellow Cards:** Nil

**Red Cards:** Nil

**3** – Alejandro SANCHEZ LOPEZ

**2** – Radovan PAVICEVIC

**1** – Thomas WHITESIDE

**Fixtures Round 11th**

19.05.2018		
18:30	Sutherland Sharks	Blacktown City
19:00	Bonnyrigg WE	Manly United
19:30	Sydney United	Sydney Olympic
19:45	Sydney FC Youth	Rockdale City Suns
20.05.2018		
15:00	Hakoah Sydney	APIA Tigers
15:00	Wollongong Wolves	Marconi Stallions

**Current Ladder 10th Round**

	Team	GP	Pts	W	D	L	GF	GA	+/-
1	Sydney Olympic	10	25	8	1	1	20	8	12
2	APIA Tigers	10	22	7	1	2	27	11	16
3	Blacktown City	10	20	6	2	2	17	8	9
4	Sydney United	10	16	5	1	4	16	12	4
5	Sutherland Sharks	10	14	4	2	4	16	15	1
6	Manly United	10	13	3	4	3	16	17	-1
7	Marconi Stallions	10	12	3	3	4	11	16	-5
8	Hakoah Sydney	10	11	3	2	5	15	16	-1
9	Rockdale City Suns	10	11	3	2	5	19	24	-5
10	Wollongong Wolves	10	11	3	2	5	9	18	-9
11	Bonnyrigg WE	10	8	2	2	6	12	25	-13
12	Sydney FC Youth	10	5	1	2	7	14	22	-8