



By George Stavroulakis

NPL NSW Men's competition leaders Sydney Olympic underlined their Premiership credentials with a commanding 2-0 victory over 10-man Sydney United 58 at Sydney United Sports Centre on Saturday evening

Sydney United 58 - Sydney Olympic 0-2

Abbas Saad's side entered the encounter riding the crest of an eight-match unbeaten run and extended their advantage at the top of the table after cruising to another three points in what was a heated clash with their fellow competition heavyweights at Edensor Park.

The damage was done in a sensational opening half came from the Blues who opened the scoring through Spanish star Alejandro Sanchez before Thomas Whiteside's volley gave the visitors breathing space on the cusp of half time.

Peter Markovic's dismissal early in the second half for an altercation with Sanchez ignited a savagely fought second half between the two former NSL rivals, and although the home side matched Olympic in the battle the visitors proved too streetwise and trotted to their ninth win of the season. **The result** ensures the Blues will finish the first half of the regular season in pole position while opening up a 12-point gap over United 58 on the table.

United 58 had won four of the previous six encounters with Olympic but the coach-less outfit were unable to match the speed and intensity of the league leaders and will lament their poor opening half showing in which the likes of Sanchez, Max Burgess and Jinya An controlled proceedings for the visitors.

Sanchez, who had already flashed a warning shot across goal in the match's fledgling moments, made no mistake with his next opportunity in the 19th minute, dinking the ball past Thomas Manos for his eighth goal of the campaign after Radovan Pavicevic had robbed Yianni Fragogiannis on the edge of the box and slipped the forward through on goal.

The Spaniard's effort established a foothold for the league leaders who drew several good stops from Manos before doubling their advantage shortly before half time through Whiteside, who fired home a superb left-footed volley at the back post after a poor headed clearance from Adrian Vlastelica.

It was Whiteside's second goal in successive weeks as the defender stole the headlines in round 10 for scoring a memorable 'scorpion goal' that awarded the Ultra Football Goal of the Week.

The uphill battle facing the Reds prior to the second half was complicated further five minutes into the second stanza when defender Markovic received his marching orders following a dispute with Sanchez. It was an uncharacteristic response from the defender as the match seemed to slip after the experienced campaigners dismal.

Markovic's send-off provoked the Reds' best spell of the match but despite the aggression and intensity on show from the hosts, Olympic showed excellent control to weather the storm and grind out a hugely valuable away victory.

In a tactical switch Patrick Antelmi was sacrificed for Jordan Roberts to keep the score-line down as United 58 battled hard in the second stanza which to their credit held their own keeping the Blues at bay.

Panni Nikas made his return to the NPL NSW Men's competition after missing three weeks and he tried to spark a Reds revival but the Blues defended in numbers as they rolled on to a deserved victory.

Having overseen his side's latest masterclass, Olympic



coach Abbas Saad was glowing following the match and eagerly highlighted the caliber of football the competition leaders are currently playing.

"I thought we were absolutely superb," said the Blues coach.

"In the first half we played them off the park and it should've been all over in the first 45, we had enough chances to win two games.

"The boys are so confident – I've told them that if you want to be a good footballer, you have to go out there and express yourself. You can't play football with handcuffs, you have to let them play in a system and that system suits them well.

"There's a great togetherness in the team."

Match Stats

Sydney United 58 0

Sydney Olympic 2 (Sanchez 19', Whiteside 38')

Saturday 19th of May 2018

Sydney United Sports Centre, Edensor Park

Sydney United 58: 21..

Thomas Manos, 9. Patrick

Antelmi (3. Jordan Roberts

50'), 22. Yianni Fragogiannis,

2. Cristian Gonzalez, 20..

Peter Markovic, 6.

Christopher Payne, 11.

Yianni Perkatis, 8. Matthew

Sim, 14. Nicholas Stavroulakis

(23. Panagiotis Nikas 55'),

18. Glen Trifiro, 4. Adrian

Vlastelica

Substitutes not used: 17.

Kyle Cimenti, 13. Sam Perre,

1. John Hall

Yellow cards: Roberts 57'

Red cards: Markovic 50'

Sydney Olympic: 1. Paul

Henderson, 11. Jinya An, 7.

William Angel, 10. Max

Burgess, 6. Nikola Kuleski

(19. Darcy Burgess 75'), 8.

Jason Madonis, 9. Radovan

Pavicevic (27. Taewoo Jung

Results 11th Round

Hakoah Sydney - APIA Tigers	1-3
Wollongong Wolves - Marconi Stallions	1-0
Sydney United - Sydney Olympic	0-2
Bonnyrigg WE - Manly United	2-1
Sutherland Sharks - Blacktown City	1-2
Sydney FC Youth - Rockdale City Suns	2-0

83'), 14. Alejandro Sanchez Lopez (33. Nikolas Tsattalios 54'), 4. George Timotheou, 2. Thomas Whiteside, 23. Riley Woodcock

Substitutes not used: 20. Ezequiel Consoni, 26. Billy Patramanis

Yellow cards: Kuleski 26', Woodcock 67'

Red cards: N/A

Player Ratings

3 – Max Burgess (OLY)

2 – George Timotheou (OLY)

1 – Thomas Whiteside (OLY)

Fixtures Round 12th

26.05.2018		
18:30	Sutherland Sharks	Rockdale City Suns
19:00	Bonnyrigg WE	Sydney Olympic
19:30	Sydney United	Marconi Stallions
27.05.2018		
15:00	Blacktown City	Wollongong Wolves
15:00	Hakoah Sydney	Sydney FC Youth
16:50	APIA Tigers	Manly United

Current Ladder 11th Round

	Team	GP	Pts	W	D	L	GF	GA	+/-
1	Sydney Olympic	11	28	9	1	1	22	8	14
2	APIA Tigers	11	25	8	1	2	30	12	18
3	Blacktown City	11	23	7	2	2	19	9	10
4	Sydney United	11	16	5	1	5	16	14	2
5	Sutherland Sharks	11	14	4	2	5	17	17	0
6	Wollongong Wolves	11	14	4	2	5	10	18	-8
7	Manly United	11	13	3	4	4	17	19	-2
8	Marconi Stallions	11	12	3	3	5	11	17	-6
9	Hakoah Sydney	11	11	3	2	6	16	19	-3
10	Rockdale City Suns	11	11	3	2	6	19	26	-7
11	Bonnyrigg WE	11	11	3	2	6	14	26	-12
12	Sydney FC Youth	11	8	2	2	7	16	22	-6