



By George Stavroulakis

NPL 1 NSW Men's 2018 ROUND 12 Preview

The second half of the National Premier Leagues NSW season is upon us starting with this week's Round 12 fixtures.

Sydney Olympic reached the half way mark of the competition in top spot and have a three point lead ahead of second placed APIA Leichhardt Tigers. Third placed Blacktown City remain in touch with the top two trailing Olympic by five points. There is a log jam in the middle of the table with only five points separating fourth to tenth spot on the table. With eleven weeks to go until the finals, time is running out for teams to find form and every competition point will be vital.

Sutherland Sharks FC v Rockdale City Suns, 6.30pm Saturday at Seymour Shaw

Clinging onto their spot inside the top five, Sutherland Sharks will be determined to consolidate their chance at finals football with a win when they host Rockdale City Suns on Saturday in what will be a fiery derby.

Sutherland are currently fifth in the standings, ahead of Wollongong only on goal difference.

Last week Grant Lee's side suffered a 2-1 loss at their Seymour Shaw home ground to Blacktown City.

Their opponents Rockdale City Suns were also on the wrong side of a losing scoreline as they went down 2-0 to bottom side Sydney FC.

Sutherland has proven to be a solid team across the park with defender Jacob Tratt developing the Sharks defence into one of the league's toughest units.

One player that has been a little quiet after starting the year like a house on fire has been striker Adrian Vranic. The young attacker has not hit the back of the net since round 7 but will be hoping to change his fortunes by upping his scoring tally from seven for the year.

Rockdale City Suns have struggled this season being plagued with inconsistency and poor performances – this was further put to the test as they lost 2-0 to Sydney FC last Saturday further putting pressure on player/manager Paul Reid.

The Suns sit only one win off the bottom of the table despite boasting the league's third best attack not to mention some quality players at the club's disposal including Ante Covic, Blake Ricciuto, Alec Urosevski, Jordan Figon, Daniel Petkovski and Trent McClenahan to name a few.

This game will come down to discipline

and which team remains mistake free. **Both sides** have plenty to play for so it certainly won't be lacking excitement.

Bonnyrigg White Eagles FC v Sydney Olympic, 7pm Saturday at Bonnyrigg Sports Club

Three points off the bottom of the table but still in sight of finals football, Bonnyrigg White Eagles will be desperate to turn their season around starting with Saturday night's clash against Sydney Olympic.

Bonnyrigg has struggled this season but are high on confidence after a impressive win against last season's grand final winners Manly United in Round 11.

This week they take on the league leaders Sydney Olympic and will need to bring nothing short of their best performance if they are to stand any chance of claiming an upset.

Olympic come into the game off a solid victory against Sydney United 58 and hold a three point lead at the top of the table.

White Eagles off-season recruit Dean Bereveskos finally hit the target for 2018 after slotting one home against Manly United last Saturday. The skilful attacker could prove to be a key contributor for Bonnyrigg over the second half of the season starting with the clash against Olympic.

He alongside Shervin Adeli could slowly form a deadly partnership should the two continue to work together with the absence of striker Aaron Peterson.

The White Eagles will need to back up from its round 6 FFA Cup clash against St George FA on Wednesday so Brian Brown's men will be certainly put through the litmus test.

Thomas Whiteside has been the breakout star for Olympic this campaign with the defender in incredible form. He scored his second goal in as many weeks in round 11 and will be looking to make it three from three against Bonnyrigg.

Nothing more can be said about the club's Spanish star Alejandro Sanchez. The former La Liga player has been in fine form for the Blues and it his link-up play with Max Burgess that has been a sight to see for the Blues.

While the odds will be stacked against Bonnyrigg this week, they should not be written off especially at their cauldron.

Sydney United 58 FC v Marconi Stallions, 7.30pm Saturday at Sydney United Sports Centre

Beware of the wounded animal.

This will be evident for both teams as

NATIONAL PREMIER LEAGUES **LIVESTREAM**
SUNDAY 27 MAY
 LILY HOMES STADIUM
 3PM
 BLACKTOWN CITY FC VS WOLVES
 FACEBOOK.COM/NPLNSW

ULTRA FOOTBALL **TEAM OF THE WEEK** ROUND 11
 GIBBS MURRAY ADELI
 S. SYMONS CHOI McILLHATTON BURGESS
 NUNES ROBINSON TIMOTHEOU
 COVIC
 NATIONAL PREMIER LEAGUES #NPLNSW

two former NSL rivals go toe to toe on Saturday.

Sydney United 58 will be determined for a bounce back performance when they host Marconi Stallions at Sydney United Sports Centre on Saturday night. **United 58** have had some impressive performances this season to lift them to

fourth position on the table, but have also been let down by inconsistency.

A loss to league leaders Sydney Olympic last round was their fifth defeat of the campaign and took their record to five wins, five losses and a draw.

Their opponents this week, Marconi Stallions, were also on the wrong side of

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