



a losing scoreline going down 1-0 to Wollongong Wolves.

Sydney United 58 has been without a head coach since the resignation of Jason Culina in April, while have also been without Panny Nikas for a few matches. Nikas made his return to action last week off the bench and the mercurial playmaker will surely slip back into the starting lineup for this match.

His addition is sure to create headaches for the Marconi defence while more is expected from their prized 2018 signing Patrick Antelmi who thus far has not been able to strike up a formidable partnership with striker Chris Payne.

The Stallions on the other hand have battled injury this season and have struggled to name their strongest team.

When fit, Mateo Poljak is the heart of the Marconi midfield and is the glue which holds the side together through the middle of the park. They are a much tougher side with the Asian Champions League winner in the line-up.

Still, the club does boost a number of quality in their camp as a number of rival NPL NSW Men's teams would love to have players such as Sean Rooney, Michael Beauchamp, Marko Jasic, James Andrew, Chris Nunes and keeper Nenad Vekic.

These historic clubs have always played out hard fought contests and expect this fixture to be no different.

Hakoah Sydney City East v Sydney FC, 3pm Sunday at Hensley Athletic Field

Nothing short of a win will be considered a good result when Hakoah Sydney City East host Sydney FC at Hensley Athletic Field on Sunday.

Hakoah come into the game after suffering their second loss in as many games, a 3-1 loss to reigning National Premier Leagues NSW Premiers APIA Leichhardt Tigers.

Sydney FC on the other hand come into the game after halting a 10 game run win less streak with victory against Rockdale City Suns.

Despite winning only three of eleven matches so far this season, Hakoah remain in the hunt for the finals sitting one win outside the top five. Victory against Sydney FC is vital to stay in touch with the pack.

Anthony Bouzanis has been the unspoken hero for Hakoah this season with the young glove man keeping the Eastgardens side in many matches with his incredible shot stopping ability.

Bouzanis will be put to the test against in-form Young Sky Blues striking duo Jeremy Cox and Hassan Jalloh.

Cox made his mark in round one with a hat trick against Hakoah and has continued his great play to notch seven goals going into Round 12. When Cox and Jalloh are on song, Sydney FC are

very difficult to defend.

Both young sides are fighting to stay in the hunt for finals football but have failed to make the most of their determined displays so far.

A win this round does a lot for team confidence and could be the building block for something greater in coming weeks.

Blacktown City FC v Wollongong Wolves, 3pm Sunday at Lily Homes Stadium

Perennial Premiership contenders Blacktown City have gone under the radar so far this season, but a win against Wollongong Wolves at Lily Homes Stadium on Sunday could be the result which makes other sides take notice.

Blacktown led the competition in the opening weeks but a three game run without a win meant they fell to third place.

Crittenden's side has rediscovered their winning ways and have won all their matches since to take them five points behind Sydney Olympic.

Their opponents this week Wollongong are sixth on the ladder and were last week narrow victors against Marconi Stallions.

Blacktown City is a side never to be written off with stars across all three lines. Mitch Mallia has taken his game to another level this season and has been a key difference maker in the Blacktown attack. The return of Danny Choi has

also given City another wrinkle in their attack which also boasts the talented Devante Clut and Joey Gibbs.

Wollongong on the other hand are perennial underachievers and boast one of the most experienced line-ups in the competition. With all their marquee names, The Wolves need to start getting results.

Former J-League striker Yuzo Tashiro found the net once again and will be the main target in attack for the Wolves. He will have plenty of pressure against a resurgent Blacktown defence.

Blacktown is firing on all cylinders and playing some impressive football. They will be short odd favourites against Wollongong but the Wolves do have the talent across the board to snatch a result.

It is sure to be an exciting contest.

APIA Leichhardt Tigers FC v Manly United FC, 4.15pm Sunday at Lambert Park

A Grand Final rematch between APIA Leichhardt Tigers and Manly United FC will close out Round 12 when the two sides face off at Lambert Park on Sunday afternoon.

Both sides have had contrasting fortunes throughout the first 11 weeks of the season and will be determined to make a statement with a big win this weekend.

South Melbourne bid gets political

South Melbourne has recruited a slice of government backing to its A-League bid in the hope of pushing their expansion case over the line.

The support includes the current Victorian Labor Party's Martin Foley and former Federal Government Sport's Minister, Andrew Thomson.

South believes these additions will boost their chances of an October announcement, with the club currently battling for the hearts and minds of Victorians alongside other notable bids in Dandenong, Geelong and West Melbourne.

"Attracting the best talent, who can make the best decisions for the game and for the club reflects the maturity and strength of SMFC," Bid Chairman, Bill Papastergiadis said.

"SMFC has a strong brand and almost 60 years of history. It has a strong reputation both on and off the field.

"Martin has worked closely with the club for over 8 years.

He was instrumental in SMFC achieving its 40 year lease deal.

"He regularly attends games. He is at many of our events. His presence on the bid team reflects his deep connection to the club. This appointment is not symbolic as he has been deeply involved in the club for many years."

Foley - who will soon be announced as the club's number one ticket holder - was keen to pump up the relative worth of South's bid.

"I'm proud to be part of the bid board, this club does not just have a proud history but has more than a fantastic coming together of boys, girls, men's and women's clubs today, it's got a fantastic future and that future is in the A League," Foley said.

"There is no greater honour as the State Member for Albert Park than to be the number one ticket holder of the South Melbourne Football Club."

