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NPL 1 NSW Men's 2018 ROUND 14 Preview

Round 14 has arrived in the National Premier Leagues NSW competition and the time is now for all 12 teams to state their case for finals football.

Bonnyrigg White Eagles will be out to heap more pressure on Blacktown City FC when they host Mark Crittenden's side this weekend. Sutherland Sharks open the round with the early game on Saturday against Hakoah Sydney City East, while Wollongong Wolves host Sydney FC and Rockdale City Suns travel to Sydney United. Finally APIA Leichhardt Tigers take on rivals Marconi Stallions on Sunday afternoon in the last match of Round 14.

#Sutherland Sharks v Hakoah Sydney City East, 6.30pm Saturday at Seymour Shaw

Sutherland Sharks are on track to finish the season in the top five but they must keep up their winning ways when they host Hakoah Sydney City East on Saturday.

Sutherland edged Sydney FC 2-0 last week to move back into fifth spot on the competition ladder but they have a number of teams hot on their tail.

Hakoah is one of those sides chasing finals football and come into the match on the back of a hard fought scoreless draw with Manly United.

Ryoga Suyama made his mark for the Sharks last week with his first goal of the season. A new player at Seymour Shaw this season, he will be out to cement his spot in the squad with another great performance this round.

Hakoah will be without their star player Andre De Jong for the second straight week with the Kiwi away on international duty with the All Whites in India.

De Jong's absence puts extra pressure on Hakoah's other attacking players including Amaury Gauthier, Oliver Green, Anthony Frangie and Harry Jones.

Sutherland will be favourites for this game with the home crowd behind them, but Hakoah are a tough side that can take the match to whoever they are up against.

#Bonnyrigg White Eagles v Blacktown City, 7pm Saturday at Bonnyrigg Sports Centre

A stumbling Blacktown City could prove easy pickings for an inspired Bonnyrigg White Eagles when the two sides face off on Saturday night.

Bonnyrigg has slowly found their way this season and showed great fighting spirit to claim a 2-2 draw against Marconi Stallions in Round 13.

Their opponents Blacktown City are in desperate need of a win after two frustrating performances including last week's defeat at the hands of Sydney United 58.

The White Eagles had to play the majority of last week's clash without influential midfielder Ray Miller and it's been often said at the club, No Miller No Party. If Miller is unable to recover the pressure will be on Jewook Woo and Dean Bereveskos to create chances against a formidable Blacktown defence.

For City it is a case of déjà vu with their recent two game stumble familiar to a run of three games earlier in the campaign where nothing

would go right for the Seven Hills based side.

Third placed Blacktown would usually come into this match against ninth placed Bonnyrigg as the favourite, however recent form shows that Saturday's match could be the White Eagles chance to spring a major upset.

Blacktown will be desperate to fix up their recent stumbles but if Bonnyrigg play their cards right the White Eagles might become



a hurdle too high for City.

#Manly United v Sydney Olympic, 7pm Saturday at Cromer Park

Sixth placed Manly United are in touching distance of a finals spot but they must defeat league leaders Sydney Olympic on Saturday Night to break into the top five.

There was a shortage of goals last week as Manly settled for a scoreless draw at home against Hakoah Sydney City East.

Olympic were also forced to share the spoils as they failed to kill off a 10-man APIA Leichhardt side in a 1-1 draw in Round 13.

Manly Captain Brendan Cholakian was one player missing his shooting boots in round 13 but he will be fired up to lead his side to victory this time around. Cholakian is one of Manly's most dynamic players and he has the return of Scott Balderson to help share the load in attack.

Sydney Olympic striker Alejandro Sanchez has been an incredible addition to the side this season, but last week was one to forget for the Spaniard.

He will be fired up to deliver a bounce back performance and add to his season tally of eight goals.

Sydney Olympic will be favourites for the match but Manly at Cromer Park should never be written off.

#Wollongong Wolves v Sydney FC, 7pm Saturday at WIN Stadium

A return to their WIN Stadium home could be the perfect elixir for the Wollongong Wolves when they host Sydney FC on Saturday night.

The Wolves were handed a reality check last round as they fell to a 4-1 defeat at the hands

of Rockdale City Suns.

Their opponents this week, Sydney FC, also were on the wrong side of a losing scoreline as they lost 2-0 against Sutherland Sharks

Wollongong were off colour in Round 13 and did not look like a side desperate to play finals football. Peter Simonoski was a rare bright spot for Jacob Timpano's side proving to be their best outlet in attack and overshadowing his higher profile teammates.

The Wolves will need to aim up and deliver a significantly improved performance this week and the rest of the season if they have any hope of finishing in the top five.

Sydney FC remain rooted to the bottom of the table but they can't be blamed for a lack of trying.

The Young Sky Blues were once again missing that final polish to their play and it cost them another defeat. Captain Sam McIllhatton was

again a standout player in a losing side. The Central midfielder will play a major role this round with his box to box running a important aspect of his sides game-play.

At home Wollongong will be favourites to win but Sydney FC are a tireless side that rarely gives up.

If the Young Sky Blues can deliver a full 90 minute performance they will be able to claim victory.

#Sydney United 58 FC v Rockdale City Suns, 7.30pm Saturday at Sydney United Sports Centre

Momentum is building for Sydney United 58 and they will be determined to keep it alive with a win against rivals Rockdale City Suns on Saturday.

United 58 gave new coach Miro Vlastelica a perfect start to his tenure with a 1-0 win against Blacktown City last weekend.

Rockdale on the other hand have discovered their groove again after a horror first half of the season.

Matt Sim was the standout performer for United 58 against Blacktown City with the midfielder's early goal proving the difference. Sim's experience will play a big role in the run home for the Reds as they look to add consistency to their performances.

While Chris Payne was back to his best as he was one of the Reds' best players on the pitch alongside Panny Nikas with the duo hoping to do some damage yet again on Saturday.

The Suns have woken from their slumber over the past three weeks with back to back wins helping Paul Reid's side climb to within touching distance of the top five.

Defence has been the biggest weakness for Rockdale this season and they must show significant improvement if they are to keep out the experienced and dangerous attack of Sydney United 58.

Games between these two sides are always a tough contest and this match will be no different.

#APIA Leichhardt Tigers FC v Marconi Stallions, 4.15pm Sunday at Lambert Park

APIA Leichhardt Tigers will be determined to take home all three points when they host Marconi Stallions on Sunday.

Second placed APIA missed the chance to cut their three point lead of top team Sydney Olympic as the two sides settled for a 1-1 draw in Round 13.

Marconi also took home a point last weekend as they shared the spoils with Bonnyrigg White Eagles after a 2-2 draw.

Winger Sean Symons was a break out star for the Tigers in 2017 and has remained a key contributor for Billy McColl's side during this campaign. His ability to drive the ball past defenders ensures that opposition sides don't push up too high with Symons speed and strength easily able to punish his marker.

Marconi's Marc Warren, playing only his second game with his new club, makes a return to APIA only two weeks after making the move to join the Stallions.

The former Perth Glory and Sydney FC player had a great start to his time at Marconi Stadium with a man of the match performance against Bonnyrigg.

He will have extra motivation to prove himself against his former side.

Former Sydney FC rising star Hassan Jalloh will also look towards making his debut with the Stallions after joining the club this week.

APIA will be the favourites coming into this match with the side desperate for victory as they chase league leaders Olympic.

If the Tigers aren't careful it could easily be an upset with Marconi not a team which can be easily written off.

Current Ladder 13th Round

	Team	GP	Pts	W	D	L	GF	GA	+/-
1	Sydney Olympic	13	29	9	2	2	23	10	13
2	APIA Tigers	13	26	8	2	3	31	14	17
3	Blacktown City	13	24	7	3	3	20	11	9
4	Sydney United	13	20	6	2	5	19	16	3
5	Sutherland Sharks	13	17	5	2	6	19	18	1
6	Manly United	13	17	4	5	4	18	19	-1
7	Rockdale City Suns	13	17	5	2	6	24	27	-3
8	Hakoah Sydney	13	15	4	3	6	19	20	-1
9	Bonnyrigg WE	13	15	4	3	6	17	28	-11
10	Wollongong Wolves	13	15	4	3	6	12	23	-11
11	Marconi Stallions	13	14	3	5	5	15	21	-6
12	Sydney FC Youth	13	8	2	2	9	17	27	-10