

Sydney Olympic crowned NPL 2 NSW Women's Champions

Sydney Olympic FC put the cherry on top of their 2018 season as the Blues ran out 3-1 winners over Central Coast Mariners in Sunday's twilight National Premier Leagues NSW 2 NSW Womens Grand Final at Valentine Sports Park.

A first half strike to Lieke De Bever opened the proceedings for the Premiers then Lily Chen turned home the ball from close range to put Olympic in a dominant position at half-time. Chen added a second to snuff out the contest. The trophy rounded out a perfect season from Sydney Olympic as they were crowned back-to-back premiers and collected the Champions in a massive year for the club.

For Central Coast Mariners, they had their chances.

Iona Snape grew into the contest and drilled home a late consolation goal in the 88th minute.

Jordan Evans earlier had a chance from the spot but a superb double save denied her as Central Coast couldn't crown their season.

Mariners coach Dan Barrett did concede that this was a learning experience that the squad will take in line for the 2019 season.

On a crisp evening both teams looked to assert themselves early in the contest.

Melissa Swinfield almost carved out a shot before Olympic stopper Amanda Horafios gathered then Madelaine Costanzo tried to direct a header that bounced wide.

It was almost set to script.

The first goal fell to Sydney Olympic's main striker, Dutch born Lieke De Bever, who found enough space at the edge of the area to fire a powerful effort that sailed past Mariners keeper Rhiannon Hines, making it 1-nil.

Sydney Olympic looked to make the most of the early running, another precise ball found De Bever in space but the striker couldn't find the target.

It was quickly followed by another De Bever effort from some neat interplay with Madelaine Costanzo then Madeleine Mirkovic nodded

a header wide.

The Mariners woke up from their slumber as Jordan Evans thrashed wide then they were denied by the crossbar as frustration started to set in. Although the Mariners did start to find both Iona Snape and Evans more space on the ball.

Just before the break, Sydney Olympic doubled their advantage.

A delightful cross from the right was turned home by Lily Chen in stride, as the premiers took a 2-nil lead into the break.

Central Coast started brighter in the second half.

They started to find more urgency on the ball, racking up the corners and delivering some dangerous crosses but they continued to sweep the ball wide of the goal-frame.

Chen buoyed by her earlier goal, dribbled into the area before she smashed an effort into the net and it was 3-nil for Olympic.

Football seems to throw up surprises when you least expect them though.

Snape was fouled in the box which gave them a route into the contest.

Mariners' Evans stepped up, and was denied twice by Horafios as Olympic looked hungrier to avenge their previous Grand Final defeats.

Deflated but not defeated, the Mariners continued to find some late joy. Snape continued to hustle down the wing, created a chance for Gabrielle Blanch, the player slide her effort wide.

Olympic continued to look for some insurance as Danielle Calvi shot wide from a slick one-two with De Bever then Snape got some reward for her energy late in the piece. She rallied past a pair of defenders before slotting home calmly to make it 3-1. Her goal brought a late flurry of chances for Mariners but their woes in front of goal continued.



Afterwards Sydney Olympic coach George Beltsos was lost for words in his excitement for finally getting the Grand Final victory he savored but commended his side on their professional effort.

"It's an unbelievable feeling. I can't explain it. We've finally won the Championship. With the team I have, and the effort they have put together all season, I wasn't worried, even before kick-off.

"I also am happy for the girls who have been in the club for a long time to finally taste success. We got unlucky last year but finally delivered this season."

Star striker Lieke De Bever echoed Beltsos' sentiments.

"It's what we've all been hoping for.

"It was good to score early then add some more goals."

She added that she didn't expect to receive the player of the match but was overjoyed to finish a magnificent season with the award.

For Central Coast Mariners Barrett stated that Sydney Olympic were more clinical but it will serve as an important lesson for his side heading into the future.

"We had some really good chances but we couldn't find the back of the net. We got beat by three clinical strikes from Olympic and that was the difference tonight.

"It wasn't the prettiest of games and Grand

Finals never are. It was a good contest but their clinical nature was the difference.

"We'll get better for this. The girls will come back bigger and better, hopefully next season we're having a different conversation." finished Barrett.

Match Stats

Sunday 2 September 2018

Valentine Sports Park #1, Glenwood

Sydney Olympic FC 3

Central Coast Mariners 1

Sydney Olympic FC: 3. MIRKOVIC Madeleine (43. DOWSE '57), 4. BARHAM Deidre (15. TSOUPIS '61), 6. HALASKA Kate, 7. CALVI Danielle, 9. COSTANZO Madelaine, 10. DE BEVER Lieke, 11. ROHRER Kristy, 12. CHEN Lily (21. HOWARD '86), 14. AMBERG Amanda, 18. KUNOVSKI Kristy, 20. HORAFIOS Amanda,

Unused subs: 17. KHOURY Hanna Lee, 36. SAADE Sihaem

Central Coast Mariners: 1. HINES Rhiannon, 2. BLANCH Gabrielle, 3. SWINFIELD Melissa, 7. EVANS Jordan, 8. LITTERICK Kirby, 9. EYERS Haylie (5. OLIVEIRA '72), 10. MCATEMNEY Jade, 11. SHORTER Elizabeth, 13. MURPHY Kaitlin (32. BRYANT '60), 25. SNAPE Iona, 35. DAVIS Georgia

Unused subs: 21. TUCKER Mikala, 23. DEARIE Cheyenne, 50. BRADBURY Maddison

Yellow cards: Swinfield '85



NATIONAL PREMIER LEAGUES
NSW MEN'S

GRAND FINAL

SUNDAY 9 SEPTEMBER
LEICHHARDT OVAL • 4PM

2018 National Premier Leagues NSW Men's Grand Final

Sydney Olympic v - APIA Leichhardt Tigers 4pm Kick-Off
Official NPL NSW Men's Grand Final Kick-off times:

U18 - 10am Kick-Off
Sydney FC v Rockdale City Suns FC

U20 - 12:30pm
Sydney FC Sutherland Sharks

1st Grade - 4pm Kick-Off
Sydney Olympic v APIA Leichhardt Tigers



VS

