



By George Stavroulakis

Sydney FC's stars shine bright but marquee man suffers injury blow

Sydney FC couldn't have asked for a better start to life at their new home ground of the SCG on Saturday night.

A relatively comfortable 2-0 win over their fierce rivals Western Sydney Wanderers, with big guns Adam Le Fondre, Milos Ninkovic and Alex Brosque all firing. **With an** FFA Cup Final against Adelaide United to come on Tuesday night, it's been another ominous start to the season from the Sky Blues. **But Siem** de Jong's potentially serious hamstring injury was a sour note to an otherwise memorable night for Steve Corica's side. **The Dutchman** cut a forlorn figure on the touchline as he hobbled off in injury time clutching at his hamstring. De Jong, the Sky Blues marquee signing, has had a history of

injuries throughout his career so the sight of him almost in tears on the side line will be a concern for all associated with the Sky Blues. **Corica started** de Jong on the bench against the Wanderers with one eye on Tuesday night's final in Adelaide, but now it seems he could be without the classy attacker for a long period. **"We wanted** to rest him for the Cup. We have three games in six days which is difficult," Corica told Fox Sports after the match. **"We wanted** to give him the opportunity to play in the Cup on Tuesday. Unfortunately it didn't work out tonight. **"He was** devastated on the bench." **While de** Jong's absence is a blow, Sydney



FC showed against the Wanderers they have class all over the pitch. **Milos Ninkovic**, the Johnny Warren Medallist is Sydney FC's double-winning campaign of 2016/17, was back to his unplayable best. **At the** home of cricket in Sydney, it was a Bradman-like display from the Serbian whiz, which the majority of the 30,588 fans inside the stadium loved. **He was** at the heart of all of Sydney's dangerous attacking moves and set up Brosque's match-sealer after the break, his second assist in as many weeks. **Ninkovic's combination** with another of Sydney FC's shining lights in Le Fondre, looks like it could be a major weapon as the season

goes on. **Much was** made about what impact the loss of last season's golden boot winner Bobo would have on the Sky Blues. **But Le** Fondre, who opened the scoring inside four minutes, has now scored five goals in his last four competitive matches to look every bit a golden boot contender. **But it's** not just his goals which are impressive. The Englishman's running off the ball is a nightmare for defenders to deal with and he's always looking to get in behind his marker. **"Adam loves** making forward runs and he is good outlet for us," Corica said of Le Fondre. **"He has** settled in well and there is not much more we can ask from him."

FFA Cup 2018 Final Adelaide United - Sydney FC

In an intriguing precursor to the October 30 decider, the two sides meet at Coopers Stadium with the chance to land an early psychological blow. **The Reds** won't only be hoping to make an early statement in front of their home fans but will also be intent on spoiling new Sky Blues coach Steve Corica's debut Hyundai A-League appearance in the dugout. **Sydney FC's** league dominance in recent years has set the bar sky-high for Corica, but can Adelaide steal the show and issue a statement of their own? **KEY OPTA STATS**

- **73%** of all Sydney FC's goals (48/66, including own goals) scored in 2017/18 directly involved either Bobo or Adrian Mierzejewski, both of whom have now departed the club.
- **The Reds** are undefeated in their last six season openers (W3, D3), and haven't conceded multiple goals in a Round 1 game since 2007.
- **Sydney FC** are undefeated in their last six games against Adelaide United, keeping a clean sheet on each occasion (W4 D2).

performance, beat them down there in front of their own crowd, psychologically that can do a lot to them heading into the final.» - Sydney FC skipper Alex Brosque

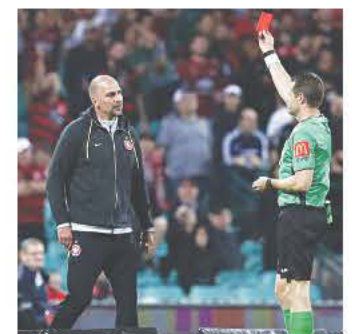
INS AND OUTS
Adelaide United Squad: 2.Michael MARRONE, 3.Scott GALLOWAY, 4.Ryan STRAIN, 5.Taylor REGAN, 6.Vince LIA, 8.Isa as S NCHEZ (c), 9.Baba DIAWARA, 10.Ken ILS, 11.Craig GOODWIN, 16.Nathan KONSTANDOPOULOS, 20.Paul IZZO (gk), 22.Michael JAKOBSEN, 23.Jordan ELSEY, 26.Ben HALLORAN, 27.Louis D'ARRIGO, 30.Isaac RICHARDS (gk), 31.Mirko BOLAND, 32.Carlo ARMIENTO
Unavailable: nil
Sydney FC squad: 1.Andrew REDMAYNE (gk), 2.Aaron CALVER, 4.Alex WILKINSON, 5.Jop van der LINDEN, 6.Josh BRILLANTE, 7.Michael ZULLO, 8.Paulo RETRE, 9.Adam LE FONDRE, 10.Milos NINKOVIC, 13.Brandon O'NEILL, 14.Alex BROSQUE (c), 20.Alex CISAK (gk), 21.Charles LOKOLI-N'GOY, 22.Siem DE JONG, 23.Rhyan GRANT, 24.Cam DEVLIN, 25.Joel KING. **one to be omitted**

THEY SAID IT
"For us, we are happy we can start the first game in the season against the best team from last year. It's a good feeling if you get the points but you have another 26 games to play a good season.» - Reds boss Marco Kurz
"This is round one, you want to start the season off well, you want to get the three points. But looking towards the [FFA Cup] final as well, we can send a bit of a message to them. If we were to put a dominant

Unavailable: 3.Ben WARLAND (foot - 8 weeks), 11.Daniel DE SILVA (1 week - hamstring), 12.Trent BUHAGIAR (ACL - indefinite), 19. Chris ZUVELA (knee - indefinite)
HOW TO WATCH
Tune in to FOX SPORTS 505 to catch the Hyundai A-League 2018/19 season curtain raiser, with kick-off at 7.50pm (AEDT). You can also stream the match live on the MyFootball Live App, Live Fast and Data Free for Telstra mobile customers.

A-League Results ROUND 2

Melbourne Victory - Perth Glory 2-3
 Brisbane Roar - Wellington Phoenix 0-0
 Sydney FC - WS Wanderers 2-0
 Central Coast Mariners - Melbourne City 1-1
 Adelaide United - Newcastle Jets 1-1



A - League table ROUND 2

	Team	GP	Pts	W	D	L	GF	GA	+/-
1	Sydney FC	2	4	1	1	0	3	1	2
2	Perth Glory	2	4	1	1	0	4	3	1
3	Melbourne City	2	4	1	1	0	3	2	1
4	Wellington Phoenix	2	4	1	1	0	2	1	1
5	Adelaide United	2	2	0	2	0	2	2	0
6	Central Coast Mariners	2	2	0	2	0	2	2	0
7	Brisbane Roar	2	2	0	2	0	1	1	0
8	Newcastle Jets	2	1	0	1	1	2	3	-1
9	WS Wanderers	2	1	0	1	1	1	3	-2
10	Melbourne Victory	2	0	0	0	2	3	5	-2

A-League ROUND 3

DATE	HOME	AWAY	VENUE	Kick-Off (AEDT)
Friday, 2 November 2018	Melbourne City FC	Sydney FC	AAMI Park	7:50PM
Saturday, 3 November 2018	Wellington Phoenix	Western Sydney Wanderers FC	Westpac Stadium	5:35PM
Saturday, 3 November 2018	Newcastle Jets	Melbourne Victory	McDonald Jones Stadium	7:50PM
Saturday, 3 November 2018	Perth Glory	Brisbane Roar FC	nib Stadium	10:00PM
Sunday, 4 November 2018	Central Coast Mariners	Adelaide United	Central Coast Stadium	5:00PM