



By George Stavroulakis

KAWASAKI FRONTALE VS SYDNEY FC PLAYER RATINGS

Sydney FC's valiant defensive display has ended in heartbreaking fashion, going down 1-0 to Kawasaki Frontale through a solitary late goal at the Todoroki Athletics Stadium.

The night began in curious circumstances, with Sydney leaving stalwart Josh Brillante out of the squad. The club announced via social media that the midfielder had had his head turned by interest from an overseas club, and "wasn't in the right frame of mind" to play.

Instead, the workmanlike Paulo Retre filled his midfield role, as Steve Corica's men set up behind the ball and attempted to grind out a result away from home.

Andrew Redmayne came to the rescue on several occasions, but the dominant Kawasaki eventually got their reward, with substitute Manabu Saito popping up in a crowded penalty area to score the winner in the 83rd minute.

Andrew Redmayne – 8.5

Good save to turn Damiao's effort behind, but flapped at the resulting corner, and was lucky not to concede. At full stretch on the hour mark to stop Morita's powerful volley, before making himself big to deny Tanaka. Could do nothing about Saito's winner.

Rhyan Grant – 7

Burned by Hasegawa early on but adapted, and Frontale found few openings down his flank for the rest of the half. A fluffed clearance in the second half went straight to Hasegawa, but the winger could only toe-poke tamely at Redmayne.

Alex Wilkinson – 7.5

Was alert to sweep and clear the danger on multiple occasions, notably from Nakamura through balls. What he lacks in pace, he makes up for in judgement and reading of the game.

Ben Warland – 6

Clumsily turned the ball over in a dangerous position, but thanks to his defensive partner the chance came to nothing. A rugged (if inelegant) display, as Sydney battled but ultimately fell short of a clean sheet.

Got a toe on the crucial cross, but could only deflect it into the path of Saito, who coolly side-footed home.

Michael Zullo – 7

Good combination play with Ninkovic led to Sydney's best opening of the first half, but he couldn't pick out a teammate. The theme continued in the second half, as he frequently overlapped to good effect, but his delivery was disappointing.

Anthony Caceres – 5

Lucky not to be booked after intentionally clipping heels to stop a counter attack. Gave away a silly free kick on the wing from which Kashima nearly profited. Found Grant late on with a lovely diagonal, but the full back's touch eluded him.

Paulo Retre – 6

Hard running off the ball but got very few touches on it. Replaced by Ivanovic for the last 15 minutes.

Brandon O'Neil – 7.5

Few opportunities to impact the first half in possession, but defended superbly, closing off central corridors and counter attacking chances with energy and smart positioning.

Losing his marker from one set piece was the sole blot on a near immaculate copybook.

Milos Ninkovic – 8

Of all Sydney's players, the Serbian looked most at home at this level. The Sky Blues' brightest attacking outlet throughout, consistently making space in tight areas with positive intent and silky close control.

Alex Brosque – 5.5

Good opportunity in the seventh minute following the second phase of a corner, but headed straight at the keeper. Ran doggies back and forth in front of his midfield, but Kengo Nakamura always seemed to elude him. Substituted with 25 minutes to go for

Adam Le Fondre – 5

Virtually anonymous throughout the 90 minutes, largely due to lack of service. Found



some space on the left flank on the stroke of half time, but couldn't beat the first man with his cross.

SUBS

Reza Ghoochannejhad – 5

Possibly affected by a neck injury, his ineffective cameo showed why he was benched.

Luke Ivanovic – 7

His pace and energy was a welcome addition, but didn't have enough time to make a meaningful impact.

A LEAGUE Results 21 ROUND

Melbourne City-Perth Glory 2-2
Melbourne Victory-Newcastle Jets 0-2
Sydney FC-Adelaide United 2-0
WS Wanderers-Perth Glory 1-1



A - LEAGUE Table 21 Round

Team	GP	Pts	W	D	L	GF	GA	+/-
1 Perth Glory	21	48	14	6	1	45	20	25
2 Sydney FC	21	42	13	3	5	36	22	14
3 Melbourne Victory	21	38	11	5	5	42	27	15
4 Adelaide United	21	31	8	7	6	27	26	1
5 Melbourne City	21	30	8	6	7	26	25	1
6 Wellington Phoenix	20	28	7	7	6	26	27	-1
7 Newcastle Jets	21	26	7	5	9	26	25	1
8 WS Wanderers	20	17	4	5	11	30	42	-12
9 Brisbane Roar	20	15	3	6	11	28	46	-18
10 Central Coast Mariners	20	7	1	4	15	22	48	-26

A-League 22 Round

DATE	HOME	AWAY	VENUE	Kick-Off (AEDT)
Friday, 15 March 2019	Melbourne Victory FC	Brisbane Roar FC	Marvel Stadium	7:50PM
Saturday, 16 March 2019	Newcastle Jets	Central Coast Mariners	McDonald Jones Stadium	5:35PM
Saturday, 16 March 2019	Sydney FC	Melbourne City FC	Sydney Cricket Ground	7:50PM
Sunday, 17 March 2019	Wellington Phoenix	Western Sydney Wanderers FC	Westpac Stadium	5:00PM
Sunday, 17 March 2019	Adelaide United	Perth Glory	Coopers Stadium	7:00PM