



By George Stavroulakis

ROUND 13 PREVIEW – NPL 3 NSW MEN'S

We're here already? A scintillating start to the 2019 campaign sees us mark the halfway point of the National Premier Leagues 3 NSW Men's competition this weekend.

Buckle up for a jam-packed Saturday with all seven fixtures set to be rolled out throughout the day, kicking off at dusk in Bathurst.

Inter Lions FC will be looking to make it four wins in a row when they face Western NSW Mariners at Proctor Park this Saturday at 5pm.

Disappointing defeats against bottom half outfits Camden Tigers and Hawkesbury City has seen the Mariners remain rooted to the bottom of the table.

Inter have enjoyed a spectacular run of results over the last month and they are currently at an all-time high 5th place on the league ladder.

The visitors have tightened up their defence of late with only three goals conceded over their last three games while captain Domenico Tripodi and Dom Di Mento have been instrumental to their side upfront.

Hawkesbury City FC welcome Dulwich Hill FC to David Bertenshaw Field on Saturday afternoon with the game set to kick off at 5:30pm.

Hawkesbury returned to the winner's circle last week with a 2-1 win over Western. The Hawks coped well without leading goal scorer Kwadwo Boamah-Addai and would no doubt have been pleased to see Daniel Morsillo return to the scoresheet.

Dully sit only two places above their opposition in 7th place and have endured a topsy turvy run of results of late.

The visitors are winless from their last three encounters and a trip to Hawkesbury will provide another stern test.

An intriguing battle looks set to take place at Arlington Oval on Saturday night as Stanmore Hawks FC host Bankstown United FC at 7pm.

Stanmore could not have responded any better from their first defeat of the season a fortnight ago when they tore apart Sydney University last time out, with leading goal scorers Peter Yannopoulos and Jovan Blagojevic registering six goals between them in that triumph.

The Hawks duo are the deadliest partnership in the league with a combined 23 goals between them so far this season.

Bankstown arrive into this fixture on the back of two victories and sit in 6th position, with goal difference the only thing separating them from 5th place.

United will have happy memories from Arlington Oval with a 2-0 victory against Dully two weeks ago still at the front of their minds.

A high-profile clash will take center stage at Ernie Smith Reserve on Saturday night as SD Raiders FC welcome



Gladesville Ryde Magic at 7pm.

Both 4th placed Raiders (23 points) and 3rd placed Magic (24 points) will be thirsty for all three points from this contest as they look to keep the pressure on the top two.

Prior to last week's draw against Camden, Raiders had managed to score a blistering 15 goals in their previous four matches, with their most recent loss arriving three weeks back when they fell 4-3 to Stanmore.

Magic began the campaign in red hot form however a recent run of draws has seen them overtaken by Bankstown and Stanmore.

The visitors do not hold the best of records against teams in the top half of the table and will have to be at their best in defence as they look to contain the league's leading goal scorer Anthony Proia.

Two teams looking to bounce back from heavy defeats last week will go head to head at Garside Park on Saturday night, with Granville Rage taking on Sydney University SFC at 7pm.

Rage suffered a gob smacking 7-0 defeat at the hands of Bankstown City last time out and are currently on a winless run that dates back seven weeks ago.

The home side have scored the least amount of goals out of any team this season and sit in second last, only three points above the Mariners.

Uni's form has not made for pretty reading either and they too were put to the sword last round as the Hawks smashed eight past them without reply.

The 'students' have shipped a startling 16 goals in their last three fixtures so if there is any time for Rage to improve in the goals department you would have to say that this is the weekend for that to happen.

Bankstown City FC will be hoping to make it eight from eight when they face off against Dunbar Rovers at Jensen Park on Saturday night at 7pm.

The Lions backed up their 2-1 victory over the previously unbeaten Hawks a fortnight ago with a 7-0 thrashing of Rage last Saturday.

They currently sit top of the table, equal on points with Stanmore with their goal difference only one better off than their nearest rivals.

With only three defeats to their name, Dunbar have suffered the least defeats out of any side outside the top two.

What has let the away side down this season has been consistency. They have secured draws against high flying Stanmore and Magic but have fallen short against the likes of Dully and most recently Inter.

One can never know what Rovers side will show up on the weekend, so this fixture will by no means be an easy three points for the hosts.

This round signals a welcome return home for Camden Tigers FC as they entertain at Ron Dine Stadium for the first time since round five with Parramatta FC their opponents this Saturday night at 7pm.

Camden have not been the best on the road with only one victory from their recent spell of seven away days.

The hosts will be looking to replicate the kind of performance they had in their last home encounter all the way back in early April which saw them claim all three points against current frontrunners Bankstown City.

Some fresh faces at Parramatta could not prevent the new look outfit from another defeat after they were picked off by United at home last round.

Constantly defeated by the odd goal, the Eagles sit in a precarious 12th position and will be in desperate need of the win as they look to stop the rot at Ron Dine come Saturday.

Victory sever ties with visa stars

Melbourne Victory today confirmed Raúl Baena, Jai Ingham and Georg Neidermeier will not be back at the club next season.

Baena, 30, arrived at Victory on a one-year loan from Granada CF in Spain, and quickly settled into life in Melbourne before representing the club 24 times across all competitions this season.

The Spanish midfielder became a cult hit with his video about going to an AFL match but will now return home following the conclusion of his loan.

Ingham, 25, first arrived in 2016 and finishes his time at Victory with 67 appearances in total.

German defender Neidermeier, 33, represented the club in

19 fixtures this season, starting in all but three, after coming from Bundesliga side SC Freiburg.

The axe falls as Victory clear out their roster ahead of a new coach arriving for next season after Kevin Muscat's departure earlier this month.

A club statement added: "Melbourne Victory would like to thank Raúl, Jai and Georg for their contributions to the club and wish them all the best in the future."

With Keisuke Honda's departure, there will be at least three foreign player slots for the incoming manager to play with next season.

There may yet be four, with out-of-contract forward Kosta Barbarouses yet to reveal his intentions.

Barbarouses and James Troisi are both free agents next month and it remains to be seen whether Victory recontract the veterans without a permanent manager of the club.

Club best and fairest Leigh Broxham has also come to the end of his deal but will stay on, while defender James Donachie has finished up his six-month loan from his South Korean club.

Swedish striker Ola Toivonen, who was a revelation upfront for Victory this season, leads the list of contracted players as he enters the second year of his two-season contract.

Lawrence Thomas, Thomas Deng, Terry Antonis, Anthony Lesiotis and Storm Roux are among the other players signed up for 2019/20.