

## Round 16 Preview - NPL 3 NSW Men's

Brace yourself for another weekend of the of the National Premier Leagues 3 NSW Men's competition as we preview what is to come ahead of round 16. The race for finals football is well and truly on with most of the sides still in contention to be lacing up their boots come the business end of the campaign.



**Granville Rage are the latest side to head to Arlington Oval as they meet Stanmore Hawks FC at 7pm on Saturday night.**

A 1-1 draw against Hawkesbury last round would have undoubtedly left Stanmore frustrated as they missed their chance to reach the summit of the NPL3 ladder. The Hawks have dropped valuable points at home with their last two matches at Arlington ending in 1-1 stalemates. Rage find themselves languishing in the lower depths of the table, in a precarious 13th position. The away side have found the back of the net on just the two occasions in their last five fixtures and only recently where they able to reach double digits in the goals department. Hawks enjoyed a comfortable 2-0 victory the last time these two sides met, and they look on course to complete the double come this Saturday.

**The sole encounter on Sunday sees Western NSW Mariners make the long-haul journey to Sydney as they prepare to face off against Gladesville Ryde Magic at Christie Park at 3pm.**

**Consecutive wins** against Sydney Uni and Granville sees Magic retain 3rd spot on the league ladder. While the hosts have been solid defensively, it is in the attacking third where they need to seek improvement. As it stands, they have a goal difference of 12 with 31 goals to their name. However, those surrounding them on the league table have all exceeded the 40-goal mark and each have a goal difference of at least 20 or better. The Mariners on the other hand are a team in strife and they have not put any wins on the board since their triumph over Sydney University five weeks ago. They have been hammered in each of their last three fixtures with all three opposition outfits scoring a minimum five goals against them. Magic will see this upcoming match as an opportune time to improve their goal difference as they look set to inflict further damage on the NPL3 basement dwellers.



Roy Krishna celebrates a goal for the Wellington Phoenix

## FORMER PHOENIX STAR KRISHNA COMPLETES INDIAN SUPER LEAGUE MOVE

**The sought-after** Fiji forward rejected several offers from clubs across Asia, including the most lucrative contract ever offered by the Phoenix, according to Stuff. Krishna's decision to join the two-time ISL champions came down to his ancestral ties to India, the country from which his "forefathers" originated. "It was not just about me, it was about my family," Krishna said of the move.

**"My wife,** [Naziah Ali], is coming with me. She's more familiar with the Indian culture and that was also one of the reasons why I chose to go there. **"Obviously my** forefathers came from there 140 years ago so I'm going back after 140 years. I'm excited, I'm happy and I know I've made the right decision." Krishna's short-term move to the Kolkata-based club follows the likes of Robbie Keane, Helder Postiga and Luis Garcia to have worn the red and white stripes. Though just 31 years of age and fresh off an incredible A-League campaign as the Johnny Warren medallist and Golden Boot winner, Krishna's chance to come "full circle" proved an opportunity too good to pass up.

**"It comes** down to who values me more and, being in the A-League, it was just hard," he said.

**"We rejected** ATK at the start but they never gave up hope. They never lost hope on my potential and that was the key, they valued me more than any other.

**"At the** same time, I look forward to introducing the club and its fans to Fiji, my homeland. I'm eager to promote Fijian tourism, people and culture while in India.

**"It's disappointing** to leave the Phoenix but that's part of life and we all have to move on. I just want to wish the club and Ufuk [Talay] all the best for the coming season.

**"The clubs** kept coming and I wanted to stay in the A-League but it comes down to who values me more and then I talked to my family and I think ATK was the right club. They valued me more and that's all I can say."

**Will he** be back next year?

**The Fijian** striker revealed little about his plans for next season after being awarded the club's main prize on Wednesday night, adding to the Johnny Warren Medal and A-League golden boot secured earlier in the month. Krishna, who also won the Phoenix players' player prize, is the hottest property on the Australasian market and believed to be the subject of a hefty offer from champions Sydney FC. Other A-League clubs have tabled interest in the 31-year-old, while there are reports of offers from Asia and North America. Krishna has maintained he will announce his status before the end of May, with his family to play a part. The awards evening was also attended by Mark Rudan, who oversaw positive change as Wellington head coach this season before announcing his departure midway through a two-year contract. He is expected to be unveiled as Western United's inaugural head coach on Thursday. Newly-appointed Phoenix coach Ufuk Talay arrives in Wellington this week, having finished his role as Sydney FC assistant coach on a high last Sunday when they beat Perth in the grand final.