

MEN'S



Nevertheless it has been a Herculean fightback from Terry Palapanis's team this season as they have lifted themselves off the bottom of the ladder and 10 straight matches without a win to now be on a nine game undefeated streak.

The Sharks are a dark horse for finals football if they can keep the streak alive and have new signings Bai Antoniou, Jerry Skotadis and Liam McGing to thank.

The former Sydney FC teammates have hit the ground running at Seymour Shaw Park to give Sutherland a new spine which has transformed them into unlikely contenders.

Expect Palapanis to utilise the foursome to full effect on Sunday but will need to do it without the in-form Charles Lokolingoy who was given his marching orders at Edensor Park last Sunday.

Sutherland's recent form makes them a very tough competitor but Manly are strong at their Cromer Park home ground.

It's set to be a thrilling match-up.

Blacktown City FC v Sydney FC, 3pm Sunday at Lily Homes Stadium

Third placed Blacktown City will be hoping

to further cement their spot at the top end of the table with a win against a struggling Sydney FC team at Lily Homes Stadium on Sunday.

Mark Crittenden's men have gone quietly with their own business making a surge into the current top five placings.

Blacktown ground out a hard-fought 1-0 win against Manly last round to claim their first victory in three games and will look to this match as a valuable opportunity for another three points.

Joey Gibbs found the back of the net for only his fifth goal of the season as the former Newcastle Jets and Sydney FC front man struggles to reach his usual high scoring output without his previous teammates in the form of Mitch Mallia and Danny Choi.

Emmanuel Gonzalez and Leroy Jennings are slowly building a chemistry with the veteran striker and it could prove dangerous for opposition teams once it all clicks.

Looking to stop them is a Sydney FC team which last week slumped to their fourth straight defeat.

The Young Sky Blues have been doing it tough with a new intake of youth stars trying to adapt to the hustle and bustle of NSW's premier football competition.

However, it's not all bad news for coach Jimmy van Weeren with his squad bristling with quality

across the park and the ability to test the competitions top teams for stretches.

Marco Tillo is one player who can break open a game in an instant and is sure to create headaches for the Blacktown City defence while the return of Jordi Swibel could once again propel the Sky Blues to victories. That and the recent run of good form of Ryan Teague, expect goals and excitement from van Weeren's men.

Blacktown will be favourites for this match but they could be forced to save face if they don't give Sydney's up and coming stars the respect they deserve.

APIA Leichhardt Tigers v Hakoah Sydney City East, 3.30pm at Lambert Park

Nothing short of victory will be enough for APIA Leichhardt Tigers as they host bottom of the ladder Hakoah Sydney City East on Sunday.

APIA flexed their muscles against Rockdale City Suns last week to record a 5-1 win with veteran star Franco Parisi delivering a throwback performance as he claimed a brace in the victory.

It sets up a scary prospect for the visiting Hakoah as they prepare to take on a Tigers side near the peak of their powers.

Injury and squad depth has concern for the Tigers this season so don't be surprised if coach John Calleja uses this match to rest some of his veteran players.

One player that has to be signaled out from the Tigers back-line has been that of the hard hitting form of defender Paul Galimi. He, along side Josh Symons have really formed a great combination and along with the return of suspension of Themba Muata-Marlow, the team will certainly go from strength to strength.

Another player from the APIA camp that has also lifted up a gear has been the form of Michael Kouta – expect a big game from him against his former club.

Hakoah come into this game on the back of their first win since round four and will be filled with confidence.

Adrian Vranic has given a new dimension to their attack since arriving a fortnight ago which played a big part in last weeks victory.

Expect Hakoah boss Gavin Rae with stick with the same team from last week as they set out to snag another big upset.

APIA will be firm favourites at home and if they can deliver a solid performance should be able to get the job done.

Sydney Olympic FC v Rockdale City Suns, 4pm Sunday at Belmore Sports Ground

Fierce rivals Sydney Olympic face off against Rockdale City Suns at Belmore Sports on Sunday with both sides battling to keep their

slim playoff hopes alive.

Olympic suffered a 2-0 loss to Wollongong Wolves last week and have only won one match of their past five.

Coach Abbas Saad will hope the return to Belmore Sports Ground could inspire his side to a much improved performance than they delivered seven days ago.

Look to the usual suspects of Alex Sanchez and Jason Madonis to lead the charge for Olympic who are in desperate need of the points in stopping the rut of losses for 2019.

Rockdale come into this match at one of their lowest points of the season after copping a 5-1 flogging at the hands of APIA Leichhardt Tigers.

They have lost four of their past five matches conceding a total of 15 goals during that period.

The Suns have slumped back into the same mistakes which cost former coach Paul Reid his job earlier this season.

Coach Nick Porecca will be desperately searching for answers in an attempt to salvage their campaign and will hope that his back-line tighten their grip against the Blues.

Trent McClenahan played important minutes in the club's 20's side and they will need him to come back into the squad in further strengthening the club's defence.

Sydney United 58 v Marconi Stallions, 5pm Sunday at Sydney United Sports Centre

Nothing less than a win will be good enough for Sydney United 58 on Sunday as they play host to local rivals Marconi Stallions at Sydney United Sports Centre on Sunday in the competition's final match of round 17.

Not a bad way to end the round right?

Inconsistency and basic errors have crept into United 58's game in recent weeks with the club determined to iron out any issues sooner rather than later.

Peter Simonoski helped snatch a last gasp draw against Sutherland Sharks in round 16 to avoid the side slumping to a second straight loss.

With the pressure building on the mid-table teams to secure their place in the top five, United 58 will be desperate to take home all three points.

After a second straight loss, their opponents Marconi will be just as desperate to turn their season on its head.

Defeat at the hands of bottom side Hakoah was a cruel reality check for the Stallions star studded squad and with only six games left the pressure will be on them to perform.

Marconi put five past United 58 when the two clubs faced off in this derby clash in Round 5 and are sure to be using that match as inspiration.

That defeat is sure to be in the back of the minds of United 58 coming into this clash.

Expect plenty of feeling from both sides in this match which should make for an exciting clash.