



Manly United - Sydney Olympic 1-2

Two Nikola Kuleski stunners has helped Sydney Olympic emerge 2-1 victors over Manly United in a pulsating encounter at Cromer Park on Sunday afternoon.

Following a rather tame opening stanza, the contest sprung to life two minutes after the interval as Kuleski produced a goal of the season contender from long range. Manly equalised courtesy of a Brendan Cholakian set piece twenty minutes later, however they were only level for a matter of moments as Kuleski curled in another screamer from his own dead ball scenario on the 70-minute mark.

The hosts found themselves in the ascendancy for extended periods of the match, however were left frustrated by a heroic defensive showing from the Champions.

There was no shortage of late drama as a last-gasp equaliser from substitute Charles Mendy was eventually scratched out for offside after a heart-stopping few minutes of deliberation by the officials.

Six minutes of stoppage time were eventually brought to a halt, and Olympic secured a priceless three points to tighten their stranglehold on an all-important top five position, breaking Manly hearts in the process.

In a match where the stakes were high, both sides took their time to grow into the contest resulting in a tight, scrappy first period.

While Olympic maintained possession well in the opening stages, it was Manly who finished the half the stronger.

Their best opportunity arrived in the 43rd minute, as Adam Parkhouse forced a smart save out of Paul Henderson down low to his right, before Cholakian's attempt at turning home the opener was smothered.

Then out of seemingly nowhere, Katie Pattinson's whistle at the commencement of the second half brought rise to a battle of epic proportions.

47 minutes in, a Harris Gaitatzis effort was deflected out into the path of Nikola Kuleski at the base of Olympic's midfield.

He confidently brought the ball under control, before unleashing an unbelievable half-volleyed strike which evaded a soaring Dylan Mitchell to nestle in the top right corner of the net.

While the Cromer Park faithful sat stunned, they were soon on their feet as Manly so nearly replied instantly.

Adam Parkhouse flew down the left wing and shook off his marker to find himself in a promising crossing position.

He elected to produce a smart cut back into the path of Cholakian, whose attempt at curling one home into the bottom right corner was denied by Paul Henderson.

Manly could smell blood, and continued to claw their way back into the contest.

As the hosts upped the ante, the Champions found themselves conceding a string of free kicks in dangerous positions.

And after three precise Cholakian deliveries were scrambled away by Olympic's evergreen shot-stopper, Manly were finally rewarded for their efforts on the fourth attempt.

67 minutes in, Cholakian unleashed a menacing delivery which no less than four Manly defenders attempted to guide home.

The ball managed to evade them all, as well as the outstretched palm of Henderson, to fortuitously forge the fired-up Manly outfit parity.

Then despite their ongoing persistence, the hosts were hit with a cruel sucker-punch just three minutes later.

The 70-minute mark saw another set piece spectacularly evade everyone in its path from an even more acute angle.

This time, it was the man of the moment Kuleski who struck his effort so sweetly that it reunited with the same top corner he had pinpointed twenty minutes earlier.

As was becoming customary of the game's frantic rhythm, Manly almost swung straight back through substitute Charles Mendy.

72 minutes in, the winger drove towards the edge of the area and powered a venomous strike which whistled past the post by a matter of centimetres.

Abbas Saad then attempted to consolidate Olympic's advantage, employing a resolute five-at-the-back shape following the introduction of Thomas Whiteside.

The approach worked wonders to secure the final result, however the latter stages were not without some nervy moments for Saad's men.

There was no greater heart-in-mouth moment than when Mendy turned home Parkhouse's flick-on at the back post with two minutes remaining, sparking jubilant scenes of celebration around Cromer Park.

However the drama did not end there; after a lengthy consultation between the referee and her assistant, the goal was deemed offside and the score-line remained in Olympic's favour.

Manly gave their all in pursuit of the equaliser during six minutes of additional time, however a stoic Olympic defensive unit ensured they would return to Belmore with a snatch-and-grab three points.

Abbas Saad was elated with his side's resistance which secured them a crucial three points in the finals race.

"It was a hard-fought win," he said

"Both teams were desperate for three points, and both units defended really well.

"It took three quality goals to open things up.

"There weren't many chances from open play, but it was

end-to-end and very competitive.

"It could have gone either way, but I was happy that there was a bit of luck on our side for a change.

"Maybe a draw was a fair result, but we worked hard for the win."

On the other hand, Paul Dee was left scratching his head as to how his side emerged empty-handed.

"It was a game where I was not happy with the result but was very happy with how the boys executed our game plan," the Manly boss revealed.

"I thought we were threatening going forward and created a whole host of chances.

"I come away in disbelief that it was a 2-1 loss.

"It took two very special strikes to beat us today.

"It was hard to take that one; a game that our boys played really well but came away with nothing."

Match Stats

Manly United FC 1 (Cholakian 67')

Sydney Olympic FC 2 (Kuleski 47', 70')

Sunday 7th July, 2019

Cromer Park, Dee Why

Referee: K. Patterson

Assistant Referees: L. Greenshields, J. Adabjou

Fourth Official: H. Fenton-White

Manly United: 1. Dylan Mitchell, 2. Kieran Paull, 4. Travis Oughtred, 5. Sam Gallagher, 6. Joseph Fox (9. Harry McCarthy 81'), 8. Dominic Ferguson, 10. Brendan Cholakian, 14. Dejan Pandurevic, 13. Scott Balderson (12. Charles Mendy 62') 11. Adam Parkhouse, 17. Lewis Miccio

Substitutes not used: 32. Mackenzie Syron, 7. Sam Wilson, 23. Bradley McDonald

Yellow Cards: Ferguson 37', Balderson 62'

Red Cards: Nil

Sydney Olympic: 1. Paul Henderson, 3. Riley Woodcock, 4. Mitchell Stamatellis, 6. Nikola Kuleski, 7. William Angel, 8. Jason Madonis, 10. Harris Gaitatzis (2. Thomas Whiteside 78'), 11. Jinya An, 12. Zachary Mackenzie, 17. Jack Steward (44. Peter Kekeris 61'), 22. Michael Gaitatzis

Substitutes Not Used: 9. Radovan Pavicevic, 20. Ezequiel Consoni, 52. Nikolas Tsattalos

Yellow Cards: Angel 64', Kuleski 66', Madonis 78', Zachary Mackenzie 90+7'

NPL NSW 2019 MEN'S 1

Round 18 Results

Blacktown City - APIA Tigers 1-1

Manly United - Sydney Olympic 1-2

Wollongong Wolves -Hakoah Sydney1-0

Mt Druitt Rangers - Sydney United 0-0

Sydney FC Youth - Rockdale City Suns 3-1

Sutherland Sharks - Marconi Stallions 0-3

Next Games Round 19

20.07.2019

Marconi Stallions - Mt Druitt Rangers

21.07.2019

Wollongong Wolves - Sutherland Sharks

APIA Tigers - Sydney Olympic

Rockdale City Suns - Blacktown City

Hakoah Sydney - Manly United

Sydney United - Sydney FC Youth

Premier League NSW 1 Table 18 round

	Team	GP	Pts	W	D	L	GF	GA	+/-
1	Wollongong Wolves	18	42	13	3	2	45	14	31
2	APIA Tigers	18	35	10	5	3	35	23	12
3	Blacktown City	18	31	9	4	5	24	19	5
4	Sydney United	18	27	7	6	5	24	27	-3
5	Sydney Olympic	18	26	7	5	6	29	27	2
6	Marconi Stallions	18	23	7	2	9	35	27	8
7	Manly United	18	23	6	5	7	22	27	-5
8	Rockdale City Suns	18	23	7	2	9	21	33	-12
9	Sutherland Sharks	18	22	5	7	6	25	23	2
10	Mt Druitt Rangers	18	21	5	6	7	31	39	-8
11	Sydney FC Youth	18	17	5	2	11	28	43	-15
12	Hakoah Sydney	18	10	3	1	14	10	27	-17