



By George Stavroulakis

# National Premier Leagues NSW Men's 1 Round 20 wrap

The battle for finals positions is primed to go right down to the wire after Round 20 of the National Premier Leagues Men's competition delivered a weekend of shock results.

**Wollongong Wolves** missed out on the chance of clinching the Premiership after being stunned 2-0 by Blacktown City in what was only their third defeat of the campaign.

**Second placed** APIA also dropped points against Sydney FC, while Manly United slumped to defeat against the struggling Rockdale City Suns.

**Mt Druitt** did their finals hopes a world of good with a 4-2 win against Sutherland which all but eliminated the Sharks from top five contention.

**Finally, it** was back to winning ways for Sydney United 58 who rediscovered their scoring touch in a 3-0 win against bottom side Hakoah Sydney City East.

## Sutherland Sharks 2 – Mt Druitt Town Rangers 4 at Seymour Shaw Park

**Three second** half goals have helped Mt Druitt Town Rangers end the finals hopes of Sutherland Sharks with a 4-2 win at Seymour Shaw Park on Saturday.

**Both the** Sharks and Rangers needed all three points to keep their slim finals hopes alive but in the end it was an inspired display from the visitors which got the job done.

**Cooper Coskerie** got Mt Druitt off to a 1-0 lead but The Sharks fired back just after the interval to level proceedings courtesy of a Bai Antoniou strike.

**The visitors** fired back in emphatic form with a flurry of goals from Alex Boyadjian, John Roberts and Toufic Alameddine to take a commanding lead at 4-1 with less than 15 minutes to play.

**A Raul** Beneit penalty in the 76th minute hope cut the deficit for the home side but it wasn't to be their night as Mt Druitt collected the points.

## APIA Leichhardt Tigers 2 – Sydney FC 2 at Lambert Park

**A dramatic** injury time penalty has helped Sydney FC claim a shock 2-2 draw against APIA Leichhardt Tigers at Lambert Park on Saturday.

**It was** a thrilling contest as APIA tried to keep their good form up ahead of the finals and Sydney FC, missing six players to Sydney FC's traveling squad to China, were looking to make an upset.

**Sydney FC** took the lead thanks to a fantastic finish by Jaiden Kucharski after 28 minutes with APIA Leichhardt going down against the run of play.

**APIA Leichardt** levelled things up after the restart with Chris Payne's 19th goal of the season.

**Ivan Necevski's** double penalty save burst momentum for APIA as Biczo nipped in to score the Tigers' second with just over ten minutes to go.

**The match** ended in penalty drama with Benjamin Koop salvaging a draw for Sydney FC in the 94th minute after Cameron Peupion was brought down in the box.



Wollongong Wolves missed out on the chance of clinching the Premiership after being stunned 2-0 by Blacktown City in what was only their third defeat of the campaign.

## Manly United 0 – Rockdale City Suns 2 at Cromer Park

**Rockdale City** Suns snapped their five-game losing streak with a clinical 2-0 victory over fellow finals hopefuls Manly United at Cromer Park on Sunday afternoon.

**In what** was a fiery, high-stakes affair from the outset, both sides forged their fair share of opportunities during a scoreless first period.

**After the** interval, deadly strikes from Jonathan Grozdanovski and substitute Aleksander Canak were enough for the visitors to overcome a wasteful Manly outfit.

**The result** inflicted a dent within Manly's finals hopes, whilst concurrently launching the Suns right back into contention as they join Paul Dee's men on 26 points.

## Blacktown City 2 – Wollongong Wolves 0 at Lily Homes Stadium

**Blacktown City** FC have temporarily placed a spanner in the works of Wollongong Wolves' hopes of claiming an early Premiership after shocking the league leaders with a 2-0 win at Lily Homes Stadium on Sunday.

**The celebrations** for the South Coast based side will have to wait another week as a first half goal from Grant Lynch and a second half strike from Joey Gibbs made the difference in a tight contest.

**It was** a huge result for Blacktown who are now in with a shot of a top two finish after APIA's shock draw to Sydney FC on Saturday.

## Sydney Olympic 0 – Marconi Stallions 1 at Belmore Sports Ground

**A 10-man** Marconi Stallions has secured a 1-0 win over Sydney Olympic in a tense battle on Sunday evening at Belmore Sportsground.

**A 77th** minute Mitchell Mallia strike was all it took for the visitors to claim the lead, despite Liam Youlley receiving a red card in the 85th minute.

**The result** gives Marconi a crucial three points and will see them break away from a deadlocked race for fifth position and finals football.

**It also** means Olympic will be facing an uphill battle to finish the regular season within the top five.

## Hakoah Sydney City East 0 – Sydney United 58 FC 3 at Hensley Athletic Field

**A dominant** Sydney United 58 has cruised to a 3-0 win against bottom side Hakoah Sydney City East at Hensley Athletic Field on Sunday.

**It was** the Red's first win in five games ending a horror run of results and keeping their finals fate in their own hands.

**Patrick Antelmi** gave the visitors a 1-0 lead at the break with a clinical finish from a Glen Trifiro assist, while Second half goals to Tariq Maia and Josh Macdonald wrapped up the win.

**However, the** win was soured in the dying minutes as centre back Yianni Fragogiannis was sent off after receiving his second yellow card for a cynical tackle on Amaury Gauthier.