



By George Stavroulakis

National Premier Leagues NSW Men's 1 Round 22 wrap

There were plenty of twists and turns in a thrilling final day of the National Premier Leagues NSW Men's regular season.

The fifth and final playoff spot was on the line with Sydney United 58 the biggest winners as they not only secured their place in the post season but also claimed an unlikely home final.

Mt Druitt Town Rangers and Sydney Olympic both needed to win and have results go their way if they were to sneak into the top five.

While they both got the first half of the equation done, the results they required didn't eventuate as they finished the season in sixth and seventh respectively.

Blacktown City and APIA both dropped points after poor performances while Wollongong Wolves gave their fans a brilliant lap of honour with a final round win at home.

Relegated side Hakoah Sydney City East delivered a much improved performance in a 1-1 draw but it would be a bittersweet result as they face the reality of their drop to NPL2.



Mt Druitt Town Rangers 2- APIA Leichhardt Tigers 1 at Popondetta Park

Mt Druitt Town Rangers have narrowly missed out on a place in the National Premier Leagues NSW Mens finals series despite a brilliant 2-1 upset win against APIA Leichhardt at Popondetta Park on Sunday.

The Rangers needed victory and for Sydney United and Sydney Olympic to lose if they were to pull off a miracle top five finish, and while Aidan Desmond's side did their part the other half of the equation didn't.

Toufic Alamedddine gave Mt Druitt the early lead before Chris Payne equalised for the APIA with his 21st strike of the season.

However, the home side would bounce back as Mirjan Pavlovic sealed the deal for Mt Druitt in the second half with a clever goal.

It was a frustrating defeat for APIA ahead of the playoffs but with nothing riding on the final round tie coach John Calleja will scratch the result and hopes his team regroups before their match with Blacktown City next week.

Hakoah Sydney City East 1 - Blacktown City 1 at Hensley Athletic Field

A gallant Hakoah Sydney City East has wrapped up a horror season with an inspired fightback to claim a 1-1 draw with Blacktown City at Hensley Athletic field.

The Eastgardens based side gave their fans one final moment to savour ahead of their relegation to NPL2 showing plenty of grit in a match which lacked many flashpoint.

The game went scoreless until the 81st minute when youngster Suleyman Bangura finished calmly to send Blacktown in front.

However, Oli Green rained on their parade, taking two points from Blacktown with a last gasp header past Tristan Prendergast in the 90th minute.

The windy conditions meant neither team could get comfortable on the ball. Pinball action descended on Hensley Athletic Field with the ball acting restless in midfield and the players even more so.

Sydney FC 1 - Sydney Olympic 3 at Lambert Park

Reigning NPL NSW Men's champions Sydney Olympic has narrowly missed out on a place in the finals despite a final round 3-1 win against Sydney FC at Lambert Park.

Two goals to Alex Sanchez and one to Jack Stewart was enough to silence the home side in what was a thrilling Round 22 contest.

Benjamin Koop found the back of the net in the 13th minute for Sydney FC but it proved to be nothing more than a stat line as Olympic claimed all three points.

The win was not enough to secure finals football for the Olympic, as a tight battle for fourth and fifth position was won by Sydney United and Marconi Stallions respectively.

Wollongong Wolves 1 - Marconi Stallions 0 at WIN Stadium

Premiership winners Wollongong Wolves gave their fans the victory lap they craved with a 1-0 win against Marconi Stallions at WIN Stadium on Sunday.

A late Thomas James penalty ensured the victory for the hosts rifling his effort into the bottom left-hand corner.

Marconi put up a tough fight but they were unable to secure the point required to secure a home final, instead finishing the season in fifth.

The result capped off an incredible regular season campaign for the Wolves who led the competition from start to finish.

Sydney United 58 3 - Manly United 1 at Sydney United Sports Centre

Sydney United 58 has clinched fourth spot and a home final

with a brilliant 3-1 win against Manly United at Sydney United Sports Centre on Sunday.

The win sets up a thrilling clash against fierce rivals Marconi Stallions back at Edensor Park in week one of the playoffs.

First half goals to Matthew Bilic and Peter Simonoski set the tone for United 58 with substitute Patrick Antelmi securing a vital three points when he volleyed home in the 81st minute.

Manly looked to put a spanner in the works when Scott Balderson scored against the run of play on the cusp of half time, but it proved to be nothing more than a flash in the pan.

The match also marked retiring United 58 great Petar Markovic's final regular season match after the veteran defender announced he was calling a close to his playing career which has spanned 22 years at the club.

Rockdale City Suns 2 - Sutherland Sharks 5 at Ilinden Sports Centre

Sutherland Sharks have finished the season with Derby honours after easing to a 5-2 win against rivals Rockdale City Suns.

It was a second big win in as many weeks for the Sharks but too little too late as they missed out of finals football with an eighth place. For Rockdale the loss was a final nail in the coffin in what has been a horror second half of the season.

Jordan Morfitis opened the scoring for the visitors while Jerry Skotaadis also found the back of the net to give Sutherland a 2-0 lead at the interval.

It was more of the same in the second half with Lokolingoy getting on the score sheet while Bai Antoniou also claimed a brace.

Alec Uroevski fired in two goals in the dying stages of the match but they proved to be mere consolation goals.