



By George Stavroulakis

ROUND 1 PREVIEW

NPL NSW MEN'S 2020

THE LONG WAIT IS FINALLY OVER, THE NATIONAL PREMIER LEAGUES NSW MEN'S COMPETITION IS BACK FOR SEASON 2020 WITH A MASSIVE OPENING WEEK OF MATCHES FOR FANS TO SINK THEIR TEETH INTO.



It is shaping up to be one of the most evenly matched seasons to date with all 12 teams with their eyes on Premiership and Championship success. The Wolves hold the crown for being the 2019 Premiers while the APIA Leichhardt side are the reigning Champions.

All teams will want to get the season started on the right note and an opening week win could be the confidence booster required to find a run of early success.

Round one is also 'Bush Fire Relief Round' with clubs around the competition doing their part to help support those affected by this summer's horrific fires.

Fans are invited to support the best NPL competition in Australia with so much at stake, the 2020 season promises to be the biggest and best yet.

For those not being able to make it, you can once again watch each and everyone of the matches on both NPL NSW Facebook Page and Football NSW YouTube page so tune in when you can.

NORTH SHORE MARINERS V APIA LEICHHARDT FC, 6PM SATURDAY AT LAMBERT PARK

Competition new boys North Shore Mariners have been thrown in the deep end to start the season with a clash against reigning Champions APIA Leichhardt.

The Mariners will be desperate to prove themselves and show that they are not here to just make up the numbers.

The will need to find a way to win without star recruit Panny Nikas who has been ruled out with a facial injury he suffered in a pre-season friendly.

That being said, the club still has enough players to surprise APIA with the likes of Emmanuel Peters, Brian Jamba, Marquin Smith and captain Chris Lindsay set to fire on all cylinders.

It puts the pressure on long serving coach Joe Haywood

who will need to find a different way to goal against a well drilled APIA defence.

A big round one win will also be on the agenda for the John Calleja coached APIA Leichhardt as they set out to start their title defence on the right foot.

While APIA has a new look off the field this season with a new club logo and revised name, the team on the field will be very similar.

Club captain Sean Symons will once again lead the team onto the park with club veteran Franco Parisi, shot stopper Ivan Necevski and Josh Symons also back for another season.

A lot of pressure will be put on the shoulders of leading marksman Chris Payne to lead from the start in attack while new recruit Jeremy Cox would love to open his account with APIA against the new kids on the block.

North Shore will be calling Lambert Park home this season but APIA will be out to remind them they whose turf it really is.