



By George Stavroulakis

'WE SHOULD HAVE WON THAT MATCH'

SYDNEY FC HAVE BEEN LEFT TO LAMENT A MISSED OPPORTUNITY AS TEN-MAN JEONBUK EQUALISED IN THE FINAL MINUTE OF THEIR ASIAN CHAMPIONS LEAGUE CLASH

Sydney FC desperately needed a win to build momentum in the AFC Champions League, but fell short as Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors conjured a much-deserved late equaliser at Jubilee Stadium.

A highly contentious penalty converted by Adam Le Fondre seemed set to have Sydney FC on the road to a crucial AFC Champions League win with 13 minutes remaining on Wednesday, only for Han Kyowon to find an 89th minute riposte for the South Korean champions.

"We should have won that match," Sydney FC coach Steve Corica said.

"To concede very late against one of the best teams in Asia is disappointing.

"We need to keep the ball for longer. They had ten men and if we keep the ball we don't concede.

"At home it is important to get wins, and we didn't do that tonight."

The two sides' swapped goals early in the second half as Sky Blues midfielder Luke Brattan

netted an unlucky own goal, before teammate Trent Buhagiar drew level with a lovely dinked finish after dribbling past a defender.

The runaway A-League champions somehow maintained parity as Jeonbuk conspired to miss two gilt-edged openings during a lengthy period of second-half dominance.

Substitute Cho Guesung pushed his effort over despite almost standing on the Sydney FC goal-line and teammate Han's miss minutes later was only marginally better.

Sydney FC fashioned a rare foray forward on the counter-attack and the result of the goalmouth scramble changed the momentum of the match.

Jeonbuk skipper Choi Bokyung was controversially deemed to have handled the ball to receive a red card and allowing Le Fondre the opportunity to crash home the resulting penalty.

But Han's eleventh-hour equaliser dashed Sydney's hopes of a crucial home win, following a crushing 4-0 defeat against Yokohama F. Marinos last month.

Andrew Nabbout celebrates a big win for the Victory.



MELBOURNE VICTORY CLAIM COME-FROM-BEHIND WIN OVER ADELAIDE UNITED

ADELAIDE UNITED AGAIN GAVE UP AN AWAY LEAD TO LOSE A SECOND CONSECUTIVE MATCH ON THE ROAD, AS THE REDS CRASHED 2-1 TO MELBOURNE VICTORY AT MARVEL STADIUM ON SATURDAY NIGHT

Adelaide United again gave up an away lead to lose a second consecutive match on the road, as the Reds crashed 2-1 to Melbourne Victory at Marvel Stadium on Saturday night.

Adelaide's Kristian Opseth scored the opener in the seventh minute – just his second goal of the campaign.

Marco Rojas equalised against a patched up Adelaide which allowed the All Whites international to ghost into a goalscoring position when United had the numbers to quell the danger inside the box in the 57th minute.

Andrew Nabbout kept Victory's top six hopes alive with a brilliant injury time winner.

He smacked the ball into the top corner from 20m just seconds after teenage sensation Mohamed Toure was so close to giving the Reds a go-ahead goal in the 89th minute.

KURZ CURSE IS OVER

Victory's knee jerk reaction to sack former Adelaide United boss Marco Kurz before he could put his stamp on the side was the best decision the club has made for all rival clubs benefit, perhaps until last night.

Interim coach Carlos Salvach a from Madrid didn't appear to be the answer as the club lurched, the players weren't responding until Nabbout sunk Reds hearts to give the Spaniard his first A-League win.

Victory even showed how badly organised they are when centre back Michael Jakobsen was allowed to run 50m with the ball before releasing George Blackwood who thumped the leather against the crossbar early in the second half.

Blackwood again smacked the ball against the crossbar in the 70th minute from a sublime James Troisi assist.

MCGREE IS TOO CLEVER FOR THIS LEAGUE

Adelaide United's Gawler Eagles junior Riley McGree is streets above everyone attacking midfielder in this competition.

Surely it won't be long before the Reds again lose the prodigy.

European football is beckoning but this time the 21-year-old is more than ready to make his mark.

His exquisite no look pass to Norwegian

striker Opseth which led to the Reds opening goal is not out of place at Old Trafford, San Siro, Camp Nou or Juventus Stadium.

IZZO QUALITY

He has copped a barrage of goals at inept times but Paul Izzo's 22nd-minute save from a Nabbout point-blank volley should have been season defining but his men in front let him down in the end.

It came at a time when Victory threatened to find a first half equaliser, a reaction to what has become a melancholic story for a club which has been largely the shining light – on and off the park – of the A-League since 2005.

Izzo also made more classy saves from Marco Rojas and Elvis Kamsoba efforts.

GRAND FINAL HOSTING AND 2021 CHAMPIONS LEAGUE FOR GRABS WHO WANTS IT?

Providing runaway leader Sydney FC – on track to claim the premiership in a canter – doesn't win its semi final, second spot, hosting a grand final and 2021 Champions League is on offer.

But which club really wants it?

Perth Glory blew its chance to streak three points closer to cementing second place when it lost to second last Newcastle Jets 2-1 away on Saturday.

Adelaide knew before its clash that a win over Victory would put the club on equal points with the second-placed reigning premier but it cracked at the death.

MELBOURNE VICTORY 2 (Marco Rojas 57m, Andrew Nabbout 91m)

ADELAIDE UNITED 1 (Kristian Opseth 7m) at Marvel Stadium

Victory (3-4-3): Thomas, Gallifuoco, Donachie, Hoogland, Nabbout, Basha, Broxham (Lestiotis 58m), Traore (Lauton 46m), Kamsoba (Athiu 88m), Toivonen, Rojas

Adelaide (4-3-3): Izzo; Marrone (Boland 46m), Elsey, Jakobsen, Maria; D'Arrigo, McGree, Troisi; Blackwood, Opseth (Yengi 68m), Mileusnic (Toure 78m)

REFEREE: Chris Beath

VAR: Kris Griffiths-Jones

YELLOW CARDS: Victory: Toivonen, Thomas, Broxham

2021 FIPFA WORLD CUP LAUNCH

THE AUSTRALIAN POWERCHAIR FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION (APFA) IS PLEASED TO INVITE YOU TO THE FIPFA POWERCHAIR FOOTBALL WORLD CUP LAUNCH

DATE: THURSDAY 19TH MARCH
TIME: 2:30PM
LOCATION: BANKWEST STADIUM
11-13 O'CONNELL STREET, PARRAMATTA NSW

RSVP BY MARCH 5TH 2020 TO CHARLOTTEE ERCIL
VIA CHARLOTTEE@FOOTBALLNSW.COM.AU