



By George Stavroulakis

FOOTBALL NSW RELEASE: NPL NSW MEN'S ROUND 3 REVIEW

Round three of the National Premier Leagues NSW Men's competition is in the books with Rockdale Ilinden on top of the ladder after the weekend's action.

Rockdale was in fine fettle on Saturday night to keep their unbeaten start to the rebooted season alive and take a one-point advantage in first place.

Sydney FC is quickly proving to be the surprise packet of the competition after the restart with Jim van Weeran's young side flying high in second after another comprehensive display.

APIA Leichhardt, Sydney Olympic, Marconi Stallions and Sydney United 58 were also winners in week three as the race for finals football begins to take shape.

APIA Leichhardt 2 (Payne 27', S Symons 61') – Western Sydney Wanderers 1 (Jordan 79) at Lambert Park

A fast-finishing Western Sydney Wanderers was unable to stop APIA Leichhardt from claiming their first win of the season as they triumphed 2-1 at Lambert Park on Friday night.

A first-half goal to Chris Payne and a 61st-minute goal to Sean Symons was the difference for APIA as they clung on against a dangerous Wanderers outfit.

Western Sydney had the best of the early chances but it was APIA who took the lead when Payne tapped home from close range midway through the opening stanza to give the home side the lead.



Payne turned provider early in the second stanza as Symons doubled APIA's lead with a powerful strike from inside the penalty area.

The Wanderers refused to give up and opened their account 10 minutes from time courtesy of a clinical finish from young gun Rory Jordan.

Luke Turnbull was required to make a number of key saves late for the home side and there was even more late controversy when APIA substitute Nick Stavroulakis was given a straight red for a challenge in the 90th minute.

The Wanderers had one last roll of the dice but Turnbull was up to the task ensuring APIA took home all three points.

Blacktown City 1 (Mendy 87') – Sydney Olympic 2 (Lokolingoy 31', 46')

A Charles Lokolingoy brace has helped Sydney Olympic to a 2-1 win against Blacktown City at Lily Homes Stadium on Friday night.

The former Sydney FC striker was in supreme form for Olympic, opening his account for the 2020 season in the first half before claiming a second only moments after the restart.

Blacktown striker Charles Mendy nabbed a penalty in the dying stages to set up an exciting finish but it was Olympic's night as they held on for all three points.

Olympic had a fast start to the match with Adam Parkhouse proving dangerous down the left wing.

It was a Parkhouse run and pass which put Lokolingoy into space for him to fire past the keeper and give the visitors the lead in the 31st minute.

Lokolingoy was at it again only seconds into the second half, when he picked the pocket of Blacktown midfielder Daniel Collins on the edge of the penalty and fired a rasping shot into the back of the net to make it 2-0.

Olympic was unlucky not to make it 3-0 in the second half with Blacktown keeper Shaun Catlin making a handful of clutch saves to keep his team in the game.

The home side won a penalty in the 86th minute and Mendy converted from the spot to set up a thrilling finish.

However, it wasn't to be as Olympic clung on until the final

whistle to keep them at the top end of the table.

Mt Druitt Town Rangers 0 – Rockdale Ilinden 3 (Gauthier 66', 83', Taneski 72')

A whirlwind second-half performance from Rockdale Ilinden has helped them to a comprehensive 3-0 win on the road against Mt Druitt Town Rangers at Popondetta Park on Saturday.

A brace from Amaury Gauthier and a Nikola Taneski penalty during a 15-minute flurry midway through the second stanza secured the win for Rockdale and catapulted them into the top spot on the ladder.

The visitors had the best of the early running and tested Rangers keeper Carlos Saliadarre with a number of shots on goal.

Mt Druitt held on until the break, but after the restart, Mt Druitt finally found a breakthrough when Gauthier headed home from a dangerous cross.

Taneski was taken down in the penalty area only minutes later before stepping up to convert from the spot.

Gauthier wrapped up the win in the final minutes of the game with a sublime finish after a slick Rockdale breakaway.

The result ensures Rockdale remain undefeated since the competition restart, while Mt Druitt finished the week at the bottom of the ladder.

Wollongong Wolves FC 0 – Marconi Stallions FC 1 (Frangie 71') at Albert Butler Memorial Park

A second-half strike from Anthony Frangie has helped Marconi Stallions claim a 1-0 win against Wollongong Wolves at Albert Butler Memorial Park on Sunday afternoon.

Frangie's 71st-minute finish helped the visitors snap Wollongong's unbeaten start to the season and claim the Stallions second victory of the rebooted season.

Windy conditions made the going tough for both sides as they struggled to move the ball upfield.

Mitch Malla was a constant threat for Marconi in the opening stanza creating chance after chance for the visitors.