



## Sydney United and Bankstown City finish level in thriller

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**Sydney United's charge at the top of the League ladder was halted further as Bankstown City left Edensor Park with a point on Sunday afternoon.**

A rather slow first-half was brought to life in an exciting second 45' minutes as both sides scored twice to draw 2-2. Hussein Salameh's early second-half goal in the second period was overturned by a quick one-two from Ben Vidaic and Steve Hayes late on in the half. With the Reds seemingly destined for the win, David Gardiner headed the Lions level in a fine performance that certainly did warrant a share of the spoils for Bankstown City.

The first real opening arrived in the 9' minute as Steve Hayes played a through ball into the path of Luka



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Glavas. The Reds striker was quick to round his marker, though ran out of space as the ball crossed the goal-line.

At the other end, Frederick Graham showed some trickery to beat his marker down the right-flank. The Bankstown City striker created the space to deliver a cross though sent his effort directly over the goal-line.

The visitors kept the ball in the Sydney United half as Hussein Salameh was released down the left-flank. The Lions number 10 found the space to unleash an effort on goal from an acute angle, though the attempt crossed the entire goalmouth and amounted to a spurned opportunity.

Sydney United quickly turned defence into attack as Daniel Rezo forced Zlatko Joseski into a phenomenal save. Rezo played an exceptional one-two with Ben Vidaic on the edge of the penalty-area before unleashing an exceptional chipped attempt over the Lions shot-stopper. Joseski showed all his experience as he turned the ball away to safety.

Vidaic was next to have the Bankstown City backline retreating. The burly striker turned his marker nicely on 25' minutes before lining up a shot from distance however the final effort failed to test Joseski.

An Ufuk Talay set-piece on the half-hour had the Lions defence scrambling to defend the goal, and the visitors did just enough as David Gardiner showed his experience to clear the ball away to safety.

Bankstown City had the Reds scrambling shortly after as Steven Bozinovski's free-kick from the left-flank had the Reds defence under some distress in the Reds' penalty-area.

Experienced defender Mark Rudan showed his class with an effortless clearance in front of goalkeeper Vedran Janjetovic.

The Lions suffered a setback prior to the break as Steve Liavas was stretchered off the field due to injury. The speedy Lions winger was one of his side's most lively players and concern about the midfielder's injury was big as he was taken to hospital. Scans have since revealed there is no break to Liavas' lower shin, much to the relief of the Bankstown City staff and supporters.

Bankstown City closed the half with a strong chance deep in first-half injury-time. Salameh was played a neat short pass on the edge of the penalty-area before turning his marker and shooting inches wide of Janjetovic's right-hand post.

The Lions were quick out of the sheds following the break and Blagoja Kuleski's men found an immediate opener. Hussein Salameh found a yard of space inside the penalty-area following a goalmouth scramble and managed to force his effort into the back of the net past Janjetovic.

On 58' minutes, Bankstown City should have doubled their advantage via the feet of Salameh. The Lions striker produced a tremendous slalom effort to free himself of Milan Bosnar first, then Mark Rudan, to go one-on-one with Janjetovic. With the goalkeeper in front of him, Salameh paused and lost his momentum as the Reds shot-stopper claimed the ball at his feet.

The Sydney United supporters were on their feet on the hour as Ufuk Talay stamped his free-kick from distance against the crossbar. Talay's delivery was Beckham-esque, though the ball failed to dip enough to find the back of the net.

Salameh once more put his foot down in the 62' minute for the Lions in the attacking third. The striker again beat his maker on the left, though could only send his low-driven effort across the face of goal as the chance again went begging.

The Lions were made to rue the missed chances as Ben Vidaic drew the home side level in the 74' minute. Ben Vidaic expertly brought the ball down off his chest with his back to goal on the edge of the penalty-area before unleashing a venomous volley on the turn into the back of the net. It was the goal the Reds needed as



the side started moving the ball about with more cohesion across the park.

Bankstown City had a set-piece in the 76' minute from a very positive position, though Aman Hadid's delivery was lacking any real power as Janjetovic made a routine save down to his right.

The pressure from the home side took its toll as Steve Hayes found the 'go ahead' goal 7' minutes from time. A poorly timed clearance by the Lions defence presented Hayes with a look-in from outside the penalty-area. The Reds number 10 unleashed a fine low-driven effort inside Zlatko Joseski's left-hand post, much to the relief of the home supporters.

The relief did turn into despair 2' minutes later though as the Lions drew level. Steven Bozinovski's free-kick from the right-flank picked out Gardiner who rose highest to head the ball home for the equaliser.

Sydney United had two last ditch efforts in the closing stages, both via Tomislav Mijic. The first, the left-sided defender picked up a loose ball on the edge of the penalty-area though failed to hit the target with his first-time attempt. Moments later, Mijic unleashed a venomous drive from distance, only just skimming the top of Joseski's crossbar.

Following the match, Sydney United boss Jean-Paul DeMarigny expressed his opinion on his side's current moment:

"A bit disappointed with the result though to be fair we didn't create very much in the first-half," DeMarigny commented.

"We changed a few things at half-time and we got going. The cheap goal we conceded was disappointing though we did improve with the change of formation in the second-half which was positive.

"We do have a number of players out, nine players today, and that is not at all helpful. It is good that we are still picking up points even though we have these players out, so that is pleasing.

Ahead of the Cup match this Wednesday, DeMarigny is certain his side will give that competition a good shot

"It isn't ideal to play the midweek match this week, simply because of the injuries we have, though it will be a good opportunity for the players who come in and get a shot in the first team.

"We will however be out to win the match, as we want to win all out matches and challenge in each of the competitions we are involved in," DeMarigny ended.

Bankstown City coach Blagoja Kuleski was delighted with his side's efforts, despite squandering a number of chances that could have resulted in the three-points for his side:

"That has been the story of our season, we need to be more careful in defence and not concede goals especially when we are dominating certain parts of the match.

"Today, I am very happy with the draw, because we got this result against a very strong, very experienced team.

"I believe Sydney United will be one of the teams to be in the finals, they are very well organised.

A further positive note for the Lions is the news Steve Liavas' injury is not as bad as initially feared:

"I have just spoken with Stevie at the hospital and he has received the scan results and there is no break in his leg, it is just very heavily bruised.

"This is very important for this team because we need him to be on the field because he has a lot of



experience to help the younger players," concluded Kuleski.

*In the Grade-20 division, Sydney United out ran Bankstown City with a dominant second-half display. The Reds won the encounter 3-1.*

### **Match Stats**

**Sydney United 2** (Ben Vidaic 74', Steve Hayes 83')

**Bankstown City 2** (Hussein Salameh 47', David Gardiner 85')

**Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June, 2011**

**Sydney United Sports Centre, Edensor Park**

**Referee:** Alex Glasgow

**Assistant Referees:** Nick Backo and Alex Long

**Fourth Official:** Leigh Pigram

**Crowd:** 300 Approx.

**Sydney United:** 1.Vedran Janjetovic; 38.Tomislav Mijic, 6.Milan Bosnar, 21.Mark Rudan, 3.Mitchell Speers, 23.Ivo Bosnar (C), 10.Steve Hayes, 18.Daniel Rezo (37.Logan Zeschke 70'), 13.Ben Vidaic, 11.Luka Glavas, 15.Ufuk Talay (12.Matthew Milic 70')

**Substitutes Not Used:** 28.Mitchell Osman, 20.Ryan Norval

**Yellow Cards:** Milan Bosnar 40', Ufuk Talay 65'

**Red Cards:** Nil

**Bankstown City FC:** 1.Zlatko Joseski (C); 4.Steven Bozinovski, 5.David Gardiner, 7.Steve Liavas (3.Chris Petrovski 43') (19.Daniel Zeleny 65'), 8.Peter Peralta, 9.Amam Hadid, 10.Hussein Salameh (14.Suad Ameti 80'), 11.Frederick Graham, 12.Blaz Dejanovic, 16.Lenox Tweneboa, 17.Steven Krsteski

**Substitutes Not Used:** Gk. A. Anic, 2.Omar Saadi

**Yellow Cards:** Steve Liavas 30', Steven Bozinovski 84'

**Red Cards:** Nil

### **Player Ratings:**

3 – Hussein Salameh (BC)

2 – Steve Hayes (SU)

1 – Tomislav Mijic (SU)

**-By Joseph Carlucci**

