



## Sydney United crush hapless Suns as Elsid bags a hat-trick

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Action shown between Sydney United v Rockdale City Suns (Photos by Gavin Leung)



**Sydney United sent a message to the rest of the NSW Premier League with a crushing 6-1 victory over Rockdale City Suns at Sydney United Sports Centre on Sunday. The win sees the side climb to the top of the ladder.**

After Ben Vidaic opened the scoring for the home side, a quick-fire double by Elsid Barkhousir and a screamer by man of the match Steve Hayes, rooted Rockdale to the bottom of the competition ladder.

The game started in very sloppy circumstances as torrential rain peppered the pitch prior to kick-off. As the rain stopped, Rockdale began controlling possession, playing the ball on the ground as Sydney United chased their opposition.

The first chance of the game deservedly went to Rockdale in the 6' minute after a Dominic Hudap corner met a Jason Naidovski header only for Michael Cindric to do enough to put the latter off.

Rockdale continued to control possession with Hsuki Hasegawa and Shay Spitz dominating the midfield area. In the 10' minute Hasegawa had his side's second chance on goal as his shot went straight to the chest of



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Vedran Janjetovic in goal for Sydney United.

United were not going to let their home advantage slip and in the 11' minute had their first shot on goal. After moving the ball out from defence, Elsid Barkhousir played a lovely one-two with Ben Vidaic to eventually shoot directly at Ben McNamara.

The tide slowly started to turn for the home team, and in the 14' minute a lovely through ball by Barkhousir found Luka Glavas who beat the offside trap. A lovely cutback allowed Vidaic to head the ball goalwards only to hit the crossbar as the scores remained level.

Within seconds, Sydney United broke the deadlock as Steve Hayes played a great through ball to Vidaic who shot to the right of McNamara to give his side the lead.

The goal sparked Rockdale back into attack and on 16' minutes a floating free-kick was headed straight to Janjetovic for an easy save.

Rockdale continued to threaten the Sydney United defence with a switch of play. 3' minutes later, Apolevski sent Spitz down the left hand side but his shot was well wide of the mark.

Minutes later a failed clearance from the corner allowed Spitz to whip the ball towards Naidovski who again headed the ball just wide.

As the rain set in, both teams struggled to maintain possession with some wayward passing in the difficult conditions.

Sydney United settled quickly and in the 24' minute a play down the left hand side sent Barkhousir on goal only for Josh Lawson to win the ball and thwart the attack.

The action packed match then descended into a physical affair as both sides traded free-kicks in each other's halves.

In the 30' minute Rockdale had a legitimate penalty claim turned down after Sash Tirovski looked to be brought down by Michael Cindric. But it would be Sydney United who would double their lead as from the ensuing attack Steve Hayes' deflected shot fell for Barkhousir who, after one touch, volleyed the ball home to give his side a 2-0 buffer.

The tide had fully turned for United as directly from the kick-off, Hayes again partnered with Barkhousir playing him through a hole for the latter to chip the ball just over McNamara to make it 3-0.

Steve Hayes kept the pressure on Rockdale as his every touch found a teammate in space to keep the Suns on the back foot.

But it would be Rockdale who would score next as a through ball in the 38' minute found Sash Tirovski who went around Janjetovic cleverly before coolly placing the ball into the back of the net.

Sydney United continued to pepper the Suns defence and in the dying minutes of the half Glavas was again on goal but a poor shot kept the score at 3-1 at the break.

Suns coach Lee Sterrey went for the jugular after the break bringing on Adem Kir and James Monie in the hope of changing the match. The changes seemed to rally Rockdale who came out of the sheds with all guns blazing but could not find the right ball to cause the United goal any threat.

Rockdale's chances of a comeback were cut short in the 56' minute as Hayes hit the ball sweetly into the top left corner from 20-yards out to give his side a 4-1 lead.

The night turned worse for Rockdale City as they were reduced to 10-men in the 62' minute as Josh Lawson



was sent from the field by referee Alex Glasgow for what appeared to be an elbow to the head of Steve Hayes.

Despite being a player down Rockdale continued to threaten the United defence as Kir shot just wide of the mark in the 66' minute.

4' minutes later, Rockdale countered with Shay Spitz taking on four defenders only to spray his shot wide.

Ufuk Talay came into the match and regained control of the midfield for Sydney United as they kept possession for many minutes as the Suns players tired.

The plan began to work as Barkhousir chipped the ball over the Rockdale defence to find Glavas free only for Oygur to get back and save the day.

Rockdale turned to counterattack football and in the 80' minute Shay Spitz cut the ball back to Hasegawi only for the midfielder to shoot well over the crossbar.

It would be Sydney United who would have the last laugh in the 88' minute as Barkhousir completed his hat-trick before Luka Glavas scored with an easy tap in to end the match 6-1.

Following the match Rockdale City Suns coach Lee Sterrey said his side gave away too many cheap goals:

"We've given them three or four goals and they ended up with six and that is just not good enough," Sterrey said.

"The amount of times we were not goal side of our player tonight was unbelievable.

"But the real difference is the execution. We were back in the game at 3-1 and we were two or three times around the box but they get one half chance and Elsid scores in the bottom corner.

"Execution and quality of player is a lot of difference. If you talk about Glavas or Elsid compared to the players at Rockdale I mean we lack quality in certain areas but we're looking to play better than we did last year."

Sydney United coach Jean-Paul De Marigny was happy with his side's performance but said there is still a lot more to come:

"Maybe I'm a hard person to please but I thought we need to improve on our passing game," he said.

"But when we're getting in the attacking third we are very ruthless. Collectively we did quite well, it's now about getting better every week."

*In the Grade-20 match Sydney United scored a second-half header in torrential rain to defeat Rockdale City Suns 2-1.*

## **Match Stats**

**Sydney United 6** (Ben Vidaic 14', Elsid Barkhousir 30',31' 88', Steve Hayes 56', Luka Glavas 90')

**Rockdale City Suns 1** (Sash Tirovski 38')

**Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> April, 2011**

**Sydney United Sports Centre, Edensor Park**



**Referee:** Alex Glasgow

**Crowd:** 400 Approx.

**Sydney United:** 1.Vedran Janjetovic; 5.Damon Collina, 4.Michael Cindric, 3.Mitchell Speers, 19.Mitchell Thompson (38.Tomislav Mijic 58'), 23.Ivo Bosnar (C), 9.Elsid Barkhousir, 10.Steve Hayes (14.Petar Markovic 70'), 29.Ante Tomic (15.Ufuk Talay 62'), 11.Luka Glavas, 13.Ben Vidaic

**Substitutes Not Used:** 18.Daniel Rezo, 20.Ryan Norval

**Yellow Cards:** Michael Cindric 71', Petar Markovic 86'

**Red Cards:** Nil

**Rockdale City Suns:** 1.Ben McNamara; 19.Peter Apolevski (C), 3.Shay Spitz, 13.Giorgio Speranza, 20.Josh Lawson, 8.Dominic Hudap (11.Adem Kir 46'), 17.Sash Tirovski (10.Sash Trajcevski 67'), 23.Askin Oygur, 14.Hsuki Hasegawa, 9.Jason Naidovski, 18.Steven Veleski (21.James Monie, 46')

**Substitutes Not Used:** 5.Jeffrey Issa, 22.Dion Shaw

**Yellow Cards:** Nil

**Red Cards:** Josh Lawson 62'

**Player Ratings:**

3 - Steve Hayes (SU)

2 - Elsid Barkhousir (SU)

1 - Michael Cindric (SU)

**-By Chris Georges**

