



Sydney United lose to Olympic

A resurgent performance from Sydney Olympic saw the 2011 Premiers overcome rivals Sydney United 2-0 in their Major Semi-Final clash in windy conditions at Belmore Sports Ground on Sunday afternoon.

The hosts struck twice from the set piece with headed goals to Richard Luksic and Emmanuel Giannaros to progress to the grand final, leaving United to now face Blacktown City FC next weekend for a second shot at Olympic.

As windy conditions ensured an intriguing encounter, Olympic launched straight into attack from kick off with Alex Smith volleying wide in the opening seconds.



United responded immediately with Ufuk Talay curling a 25-yard free kick just wide before Elsid Barkhousir had his crisp finish ruled out for offside minutes later.

Ben Vidaic should have given United the lead midway through the first half as Shane Lyons teed him up from Talay's corner, however the target man let Olympic off the hook and volleyed straight into Paul Henderson's capable hands.

Olympic looked to have punished United for their missed chances soon after when David Gullo slipped in behind United's defence to collect Chris Triantis' through ball and clip his finish over Vedran Janjetovic; however the effort was rightly disallowed for offside.

Rallied by their fans from the newly refurbished grandstand, the hosts began to create chances in attack as Chris Triantis and Smith saw shots blocked by United's brave defence.

Olympic capitalised on their momentum from the set piece on 37' minutes when Richard Luksic rose the highest to head Chris Triantis' corner into the back of the net to break the deadlock and send their partisan supporters into raptures.

Smith almost doubled Olympic's lead immediately after the restart when he stole possession from Shane Lyons and darted into the box, however the defensive error went unpunished as his miscued chip shot fell harmlessly wide.





Janjetovic did exceptionally well to deny Gullo late in the half, getting down low to hold the winger's angled effort to keep his side in the match as they trailed going into the interval.

Olympic doubled their advantage from the set piece once again early in the second half as Luksic centred Gullo's corner, providing Giannaros with a simplest of headers to score from close range.

The hosts showed impressive discipline in defence, keeping their opponents at bay in attack by isolating Luka Glavas and drawing a number of rash challenges from United as their frustration throughout the second half.

Smith sought to extend Olympic's advantage midway through the half as he earned half a yard to line up a shot from the edge of the box, however United's defence was on hand to deflect the effort wide.

United made a late surge to salvage the match as Barkhousir shot wide with a angled drive before substitute Daniel Rezo forced a fine save from Henderson with a close range volley.

Barkhousir had a late chance to grab a consolation goal as he charged onto Vidaic's lobbed through ball, however the attacker lost the ball under his feet and the chance went begging as Olympic held on to progress to the grand final.

Sydney Olympic coach Peter Tsekenis was happy to have claimed victory after a fortnight without a competitive fixture:

"We came into the game after missing out on a competitive match last week," said Tsekenis.

"We did play Sydney FC which was a good hit out, but I was a bit curious to see how the boys would handle it today.

"I was quite happy with the way they went physically, I thought we kept to our game plan, especially in the windy conditions.

"I thought we were in control for the whole game and when we had to put the ball down and play we did it, and we took our chances."

With another weekend free of competitive football looming ahead of the grand final, Tsekenis played down any concerns after the effort his side put in this afternoon:

"It's not much of a concern," said Tsekenis.

"There are some tired bodies in there; it took a lot out of us.

"We'll use this week to rest up and do a few things a little bit differently and on Tuesday it will be business as usual," Tsekenis added.

Sydney United coach Jean-Paul De Marigny was disappointed to have lost but could draw positives from his side's performance:

"I thought that in general we dominated possession," said De Marigny.

"They play the way they want to play, it's very long and direct which we expected from them.

"I was happy with the way that we played, our passing game was excellent.

"We created a few chances but we're not really sharp in the attacking third at the moment which is a bit of a concern for us."

With Blacktown City FC standing between United and another shot at Olympic in the grand final, De Marigny was hopeful his side can bring their

"We've played them twice this year and without getting the right results," said De Marigny.

"It's always a good time to change that."

Match Stats

Sydney Olympic 2 (Richard Luksic 37', Emmanuel Giannaros 53')

Sydney United 0

Sunday September 18th, 2011

Belmore Sports Ground, Belmore

Referee: Kevin Peddie

Assistant Referees: Scott Edeling and Sarah Ho

Fourth Official: Janne Sjogren

Sydney Olympic: 1.Paul Henderson; 2.Emmanuel Giannaros, 4.Ibrahim Haydar, 5.Richard Luksic (c), 8.Chris Triantis (9.Hussein Akil 82'), 16.Peter Triantis, 7.Phil Makrys, 18.Jerry Kalouris, 19.David Gullo (14.Will Angel 80'), 6.Alex Smith, 11.Robbie Mileski (22.Zac Elrich 76')

Substitutes Not Used: 17.M.Stamatelis, 21.Sam Emmanouil

Yellow Cards: Peter Triantis 29', Robbie Mileski 42', Paul Henderson 45'

Red Cards: Nil

Sydney United: 1.Vedran Janjetovic; 3.Mitchell Spear, 4.Michael Cindric, 8.Shane Lyons (38.Tom Mijic 59'), 19.Mitchell Thompson, 23.Ivo Bosnar (c), 15.Ufuk Talay (14.Petar Markovic 76'), 9.Elsid Barkhousir, 10.Steve Hayes, 13.Ben Vidaic, 11.Luka Glavas (18.Daniel Rezo 72')

Substitutes Not Used: 20.Ryan Norval, 25.Arron Peterson

Yellow Cards: Mitchell Thompson 63', Ben Vidaic 65'

Red Cards: Nil

-By **Michael Shoolman**

