

Premium Sporting Products

2018 BATTLEWIN PREMIER LEAGUE ROUND 17 (22 JULY)

By Alistair Kennedy

FIRST GRADE SCORES

KILLARNEY DISTRICT	7	KINCUMBER	0
KANWAL	3	TOUKLEY	2
EAST GOSFORD	3	SOUTHERN-ETTALONG	2
TERRIGAL	2	AVOCA	1
THE ENTRANCE	3	UMINA	2
BERKELEY VALE	2	GOSFORD CITY	2

SUMMARY

- Killarney District have moved to within one match of their third successive Premier League league championships following Round 18 of the 2018 Battlewin Premier League. The Terriers are now a season-high 10 points clear of Berkeley Vale who held onto second place despite a draw against Gosford City. Regardless of other results a win over Southern-Ettalong at James Browne Oval next Sunday will at least preserve that lead with only three matches, and nine-points, available to challengers.
- Third-place on the table has proven to be somewhat of a jinx over the past couple of months with Avoca, Kanwal, Southern-Ettalong and East Gosford all occupying the slot at different times including four different clubs in the past four rounds, all of which were beaten in the next round and dropping down. Now a fifth club has entered the fray with Terrigal's derby win over Avoca moving them up to third place for the first time.
- The BPL moves into uncharted territory over the next four weekends. With the expansion of the competition from 10 to 12 clubs it's the first time that there will be 22 rounds although between 1992 and 1999 there were 21 rounds with each of the then eight clubs playing each other three times. For the first time there will be a five-team finals series over four weekends. The league champions sit out the first weekend (September 1 & 2) when 4th plays 5th with the loser eliminated and the winner going into the Minor Semi Final. In the other match 2nd meets 3rd with the loser into the Minor Semi Final and the winner playing the league champions in the Major Semi Final. From there on the normal playoff format applies.
- The status quo was retained at the bottom of the ladder with all Umina, Toukley and Kincumber all beaten for the fourth time in the past five rounds. With just one win all season and having conceded four or more goals in each of their past seven matches the Roos, on 6 points, look almost certain to be relegated. Either Umina (12) or Toukley (11) are likely to join them in Division One next season in a battle that could well go down to the final round when the two teams meet each other at Harry Moore Oval.

KILLARNEY DISTRICT 7 KINCUMBER 0

- With one team going into the match with one loss from their 18 matches and the other with one win from 18 this Saturday night match at EDSACC North always looked like being a serious mismatch. By the half-hour mark Killarney had cleared out to a 5-0 lead and when Brendan Hall sealed his first-ever Premier League hat-trick just before half-time another double-digit loss for Kincumber looked inevitable. But to their credit the Roos knuckled down in the second half and saved some pride by conceding just one late goal, a first in the top grade by Will Hamilton, while launching a number of, albeit unsuccessful, counter attacks. The Terriers other three goals were scored by Tim Knight (2) and Blake Silvers.
- Apart from claiming family bragging rights Brendan Hall's hat trick was the 14th of the season across the League, all scored by different players, and the fourth by a Killarney player.
- The Terriers head south next Sunday to James Browne Oval where a win over Southern-Ettalong will guarantee them their third straight league championship. They've only been beaten once this season and three times in their 38 matches since the start of the 2017 season. The problem is that two of these defeats have been at the hands of SEU so it potentially could be one of the matches of the season.

KANWAL 3 TOUKLEY 2

- The second Saturday night match was a derby at Harry Moore Oval and as such was always likely to be closer than suggested the respective ladder positions of the two teams. Jai Kelly has long been the key to the Toukley attack and, after missing the previous match through suspension, he made an immediate impact with a low strike from outside the 18-yard that found its way through the Kanwal defence. A penalty save by Gunners keeper, Robert Ryan, kept the scoreline at 1-0 at the break.
- The Bulls have shown throughout the season that they're at their best when trailing and so it was again with their in-form striker, Jason Cozens, equalising four minutes into the second half followed shortly afterwards with defender Ryan Oehm pouncing on a deflection to give his team the lead. Toukley's task suffered a major blow when Kelly was sent-off for a second yellow card offence. A second goal to Cozens (his 10th of the season) gave Kanwal a two-goal buffer before a penalty in the 89th minute by Sam Hudson ensured a tense five-minute period of injury time with the Gunners desperately but unsuccessfully trying to grab what would have been a valuable point.
- Kanwal's win moved them in equal fifth place with East Gosford. Their next two matches could well hold the key to their season. They're at home next Sunday against Avoca followed by an away match against Kincumber. Then the crunch will come with their final two matches against Berkeley Vale and Killarney District. Toukley's battle with Umina to avoid the second relegation spot could also go down to the wire starting with another home game, this time against East Gosford.

EAST GOSFORD 3 SOUTHERN-ETTALONG 2

- As expected this match between the third and fifth placed teams was tight and evenly-contested throughout. Southern took the lead five minutes before half-time with Theo Forsberg heading home from a corner kick. The same player then doubled the lead 10 minutes into the second half with a strike from the edge of the 18-yard box. Although an own goal in the 64th minute cut the deficit with just five minutes to play SEU still led 2-1 and with Berkeley Vale trailing against Gosford, they looked on track to move into second place. Then as he's done numerous times before Rob Walton stamped his presence on the

match. After being tightly matched throughout the 2017 CCF Golden Boot winner and now 2018 favourite escaped from the Southern defence twice in two minutes to snatch the points. Then to rub salt into the wound the news came through that Berkeley Vale had drawn with Gosford meaning that instead of moving up into second place the Lions dropped down to sixth, such is the closeness of this competition.

- Next up for the two teams are opponents at opposite ends of the table with Southern hoping for a repeat of their first round upset win over Killarney District when they meet at James Browne Oval while the team from Hylton Moore Oval can't afford to underestimate a desperate Toukley side when they travel north to Harry Moore Oval.

THE ENTRANCE 3 UMINA 2

- It's been a tough season for The Entrance with the 2014 and 2015 premiers starting out with a significant player drain to CCU and followed up by the loss of their home ground matches. Despite these setbacks and after a slow start they've now ensured their survival in the BPL with this vital win at the expense of fellow-strugglers Umina at Umina Oval. An early own goal saw the visitors trail until goals by Jayden Nakhoul and Corey Atkinson both in those critical few minutes either side of half-time turned the match in The Entrance's favour.
- Despite going into the match with half of their regular first graders out with injury Umina fought back strongly and equalised quickly through Ryan Frame. One of the few positives for The Entrance has been the emergence of a number of local juniors with strong family commitments to the club. It was one of them, Blake Steuart, who scored what proved to be the decisive goal in the 75th minute his first in the top grade.
- It's been an incredibly frustrating season for Umina who were expected to be competitive again after their one-year stint in Division One. And they probably would have been but for a series of defeats by a single goal, the loss to The Entrance being their seventh. They have plenty of depth and that should stand them in good stead in their remaining four matches. The first of these will be a tough Saturday nighter at Umina Oval against a Gosford side that went within minutes of an upset win over Berkeley Vale. The Entrance will be looking for their third straight win when they play Kincumber at Frost Reserve.

TERRIGAL 2 AVOCA 1

- These two clubs have had contrasting seasons to date with Terrigal struggling for consistency in the first half while Avoca went through a purple patch that took them as high as third place. Now at the business end of the competition there's been a major turnaround with Terrigal beaten just once in their past nine matches while Avoca have won just two in the same period.
- In Avoca's defence they have had been hampered by a number of injuries and unavailabilities and they went into this match missing key players in Shane Knight and Stuart Adams. Despite dominating for much of the first half Terrigal were unable to convert their territorial advantage into goals. However they did so against a sluggish Avoca team at the start of the second half with Erik Requelme scoring from a perfect cross from Ben Flakus. Substitute Zac Allen then doubled the lead midway through the half. With their semi-finals chances slipping away the Sharks sprang to life and got back into the game with an 80th minute goal from Darcy Brown before Terrigal steadied for a deserved win.
- We mentioned the third-place curse in the introduction and Terrigal will be looking to overcome it and show that they are genuine contenders over the next two rounds. One way of escaping will be with a win over Berkeley Vale next Sunday at Duffys Road and so move

up to second place. Avoca are now six points behind fifth place and will probably need to win their four remaining matches to qualify for the finals. With all four games against opponents above them on the table, starting with Kanwal at Wadalba next Sunday, it's going to be a tough ask.

BERKELEY VALE 2 GOSFORD CITY 2

- Although they've now gone six matches without a win (three losses and three draws) Gosford are probably far enough ahead of the relegation zone to feel safe especially as three of their four last matches are against teams in the bottom third of the table. Like The Entrance they suffered significant player losses at the start of the season, mainly to CCU, and this has been compounded by a long injury list that saw them with just 27 fit players to cover the three grades. By contrast, after a disrupted start to the season, Berkeley Vale are now at full strength.
- Given that form guide this match proved to be a real thriller and much closer than expected. Indeed despite Berkeley dominating possession Gosford looked set for a major upset when, after a scoreless first half, they led 2-0 midway through the second term thanks to goals by Matt Hall and Callum McGoldrick. The Wombats 10-0 win over Kincumber the previous week probably hadn't helped their preparation for this match and it took until the last 10 minutes for them to finally break through with their five-goal hero from the Roos match, Troy Mumford, on target again in the 79th minute. The Dragons continued to defend solidly before tall defender Alex Burrell equalised with just minutes remaining. Only a brilliant save by Gosford's goalkeeper, Daniel Rogers, prevented Berkeley Vale from snatching all three points.

battlewin

	<i>P</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>GF</i>	<i>GA</i>	<i>GD</i>	<i>PTS</i>
KILLARNEY DISTRICT	18	14	3	1	60	16	44	45
BERKELEY VALE	18	11	2	5	50	19	31	35
SOUTHERN-ETTALONG	18	10	2	6	43	29	14	32
TERRIGAL	18	10	5	4	46	33	13	34
EAST GOSFORD	18	10	3	5	33	23	10	33
KANWAL	18	10	3	5	43	38	5	33
AVOCA	18	8	3	7	37	29	8	27
THE ENTRANCE	18	6	3	9	32	50	-18	21
GOSFORD CITY	18	4	5	9	27	37	-10	17
UMINA	18	3	3	12	35	56	-21	12
TOUKLEY	18	3	2	13	28	59	-31	11
KINCUMBER	18	1	3	14	22	68	-46	6

battlewin

18	Rob Walton (East Gosford)
14	Keith Gumbs (SEU)
13	James Caban (SEU)
12	Matt Kenny (The Entrance), Tim Knight (Killarney District)
11	Jai Kelly (Toukley), Andy Klijn (Killarney District), Josh Schumann (Umina), Ryan Walker (Kanwal)

10	Stuart Adams (Avoca), Jason Cozens (Kanwal), Michael Tawyer (Berkeley Vale)
8	Ben Flakus (Terrigal), Brad McLean (Kanwal), Troy Mumford (Berkeley Vale)
7	Corey Atkinson (The Entrance), Will Haines (Toukley), Mitch Harrison (Avoca), Blake Silvers (Killarney District), Brad Smythe (Berkeley Vale)
6	Aaron Beehag (Kincumber), Ben Green (Avoca), Matt Hall (Gosford City), Ryan Oehm (Kanwal), Anthony Pace (Terrigal), Adam Smith (Berkeley Vale), Daniel Tuddenham (Terrigal)
5	Chris Altuneg (Terrigal), Zac Anastas (The Entrance), Alex Birrell (Berkeley Vale), Brendan Hall (Killarney District), Matt Hall (Killarney District), Paul McGinley (Berkeley Vale), Josh Menzies (Berkeley Vale), Alex Osborn (Kincumber), Daniel Rodger (Killarney District)

ROUND 19 BPL FIXTURES

SATURDAY 4 AUGUST			
UMINA	vs	GOSFORD CITY	Umina Oval

SUNDAY 5 AUGUST			
SOUTHERN-ETTALONG	vs	KILLARNEY DISTRICT	James Browne Oval
KANWAL	vs	AVOCA	Wadalba Sport Complex
TERRIGAL	vs	BERKELEY VALE	Duffys Road Oval
TOUKLEY	vs	EAST GOSFORD	Harry Moore Oval
THE ENTRANCE	vs	KINCUMBER	Frost Reserve

DIVISION ONE

FIRST GRADE SCORES

WOONGARRAH	8	WOY WOY	0
BUDGEWOI	3	GWANDALAN	1
WYOMING	6	DOYALSON	0
KARIONG	4	TUGGERAH	0
OURIMBAH	2	WYONG	1

COMPETITION TABLE

	<i>P</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>GF</i>	<i>GA</i>	<i>GD</i>	<i>PTS</i>
WOONGARRAH	15	15	0	0	92	8	84	45
BUDGEWOI	15	9	2	4	53	24	29	29
WOY WOY	15	8	4	3	43	22	21	28
WYOMING	15	8	1	6	45	32	13	25
KARIONG	15	6	4	5	41	29	12	22
OURIMBAH	15	7	2	6	40	34	6	23
WYONG	15	6	1	8	38	35	3	19
GWANDALAN	15	6	0	9	21	44	-23	18
DOYALSON	15	2	1	12	17	60	-43	7
TUGGERAH	15	0	1	14	7	109	-102	1