

Premium Sporting Products

2019 BATTLEWIN PREMIER LEAGUE FINALS – WEEK 2

by Alistair Kennedy & Lachlan Herd

RESULTS

MINOR SEMI-FINALS				
FIRST GRADE	SOUTHERN-ETTALONG	1	TERRIGAL	0
RESERVE GRADE	EAST GOSFORD	3 (5)	KANWAL	3 (3)
UNDER 21	WOONGARRAH	3	WYOMING	1

MAJOR SEMI-FINALS				
FIRST GRADE	WOONGARRAH	2	KILLARNEY DISTRICT	0
RESERVE GRADE	SOUTHERN-ETTALONG	2 (3)	KILLARNEY DISTRICT	2 (1)
UNDER 21	AVOCA	3	KILLARNEY DISTRICT	2

SUMMARY

- With the top five teams separated by just three points going into the Battlewin Premier League final series the play-offs were always going to be evenly-contested and so it has proved with most of the four matches in doubt until the last 10 minutes.
- The new four-week finals series has created a potential problem for the league champions, in this case Killarney District, who went into their Major semi-final without having played a match in three weeks. Whether it made a difference or not is debatable but, as was the case last season when they were beaten in the corresponding match by Berkeley Vale, the Terriers were beaten here, this time at the hands of Woongarra. This year the matter is complicated with the Preliminary Final to be played on Wednesday night meaning that they go from playing one match in three weeks to potentially playing three matches in six days ... and doing it so in all three grades with both Reserve Grade and Under 21 teams also beaten in their major semis.
- In Division One Kariong are through to their first ever Grand Final after defeating league champions Woy Woy in an epic see-sawing major semi final. They now meet Umina in what will be the final match of the 2019 football season next Sunday afternoon.

MINOR SEMI-FINAL: SOUTHERN-ETTALONG 1 TERRIGAL 0

- A match that promised much but delivered almost nothing in the way of quality attacking football with the two defences grinding each other down. Terrigal had a couple of early chances from corners followed by a wide shot in the 10th minute. Southern's first corner came in the 15th minute and it proved to be decisive with the amazing Keith Gumbs doing

his best Mohammed Ali impression ... floating like a butterfly into the air then stinging like a bee as he deflected the ball into the Terrigal net.

- Terrigal countered for much of the next 20 minutes with a number of shots handled comfortably by SEU keeper Luke Carnevale the closest following an attack from Ben Flakus and Zac Allen that deflected off the crossbar for a corner. Another needed a diving save by Carnevale to push the ball wide of his goal. Late in the first half Gumbs had a chance to double the lead but his shot went over the bar.
- 15 minutes into the second half Southern suffered a serious setback when Carnevale left the field with what proved to be a broken jaw. They were fortunate to have an experienced replacement in former Gosford City first grade keeper Daniel Rogers, who 24 hours later, would guide the SEU Reserve Grade side into the Grand Final with three straight saves in a penalty shootout.
- Terrigal continued to attack with Anthony Pace chesting the ball down and driving through the Lions defence and drawing an excellent save from Rogers. Southern had the next chance with Jacob Caban beating a couple of defenders before shooting just past the top corner of the Terrigal goal. The last serious chance of the match came in the 74th minute when Gumbs pounced on a Terrigal back pass and chipped the keeper only to see the ball deflected over the crossbar.
- The result was sweet revenge for Southern-Ettalong who had bowed out in the corresponding match the previous season against the same opponents and it keeps alive their dreams of capturing the club's first premiership since 1997.
- At the same time it ended another excellent but frustrating season for Terrigal finishing in second place in the title race but not quite able to push past the semis.

MAJOR SEMI-FINAL: WOONGARRAH 2 KILLARNEY DISTRICT 0

- The Battlewin Premier Leagues major semi-final took place at Plum Park on Sunday afternoon in unusually warm September conditions as League Champions Killarney District faced-off with Woongarra. With only three weeks having passed since the dramatic League Championship deciding fixture between the two clubs anticipation was high amongst the big crowd that had packed in around pitch one.
- Expectedly tense, the majority of the opening half saw no more than a few half chances, none of which caused any significant trouble to Declan Drake or Bryce Goldsworthy in either goal. That all changed in the 40th minute as Killarney almost took the lead through captain Tim Knight. After finding himself in space down the right, Brendan Hall swung in an inviting cross that found Knight unmarked at the back post, with his effort looping back across goal and looking like nestling in the corner of the net before it was cleared just shy of the goal line by a scrambling 'Cats defender behind for a corner. A number of consecutive corners followed, the last of which saw Knight fire his corner out to the top of the penalty area to Jayden Radford whose volley was met by a full length save from Goldsworthy in the 'Cats goal.
- After finding themselves on the receiving end of the majority of the first half's best scoring opportunities, Woongarra began the second looking to cause the Terriers some defensive headaches. They did more than that, however, with top-scorer Ben Runge picking the ball

up just outside the penalty area before bending a shot past Drake and into the net to see the 'Cats into a 1-0 lead after no more than five second half minutes had elapsed.

- Desperate to secure their first grand-final appearance in the top-flight, Woongarra almost doubled their lead in the 63rd minute. After collecting centrally, Kane Woolston set winger Sam Bettison away down the right who was able to pick out Jamie Bartlett at the back post, with the midfielder killing the ball on his chest before rifling a volley goalward that was parried away smartly by Drake. Despite spurning that opportunity, both Bartlett and Woolston found themselves in the thick of the action again in the 70th minute, with the former playing the latter in behind the Killarney defence. One-on-one with an on-rushing Drake, Woolston calmly lifted the ball past the 'keeper and into an empty net to double his sides lead.
- Despite ensuring the match was keenly contested until the final whistle, it was apparent that it just wasn't to be Killarney's day with second half Woongarra substitute Liam Duncan spurning two good chances in the final 10 minutes to put the result of Sundays clash beyond doubt.
- Ultimately, the match finished 2-0 in favour of the Wildcats who secured the first spot in Saturdays grand-final, a fantastic achievement given the 2019 season marked their first campaign in the top-flight. The Terriers, who'll be keen for another crack at the 'Cats, will face Southern and Ettalong United on Wednesday night at Pluim Park in a must-win fixture if they're to have the chance to secure a fourth straight premiership.

BPL FINALS SERIES WEEK 3 (PLUIM PARK 1)

WEDNESDAY 18 SEPTEMBER – PRELIMINARY FINALS		
FIRST GRADE	KILLARNEY DISTRICT vs SOUTHERN-ETTALONG	8 PM
RESERVE GRADE	KILLARNEY DISTRICT vs EAST GOSFORD	6 PM
UNDER 21	KILLARNEY DISTRICT vs WOONGARRAH	6 PM *

** Pluim Park Field 2*

SATURDAY 15 SEPTEMBER – GRAND FINALS		
FIRST GRADE	WOONGARRAH vs winner of Preliminary Final	4 PM
RESERVE GRADE	SOUTHERN-ETTALONG vs winner of Preliminary Final	1.30 PM
UNDER 21	AVOCA vs winner of Preliminary Final	11 AM

DIVISION ONE

RESULTS

PRELIMINARY FINALS				
FIRST GRADE	KARIONG	5	WOY WOY	3
RESERVE GRADE	UMINA	3	WOY WOY	0

DIVISION ONE FINALS SERIES WEEK 2

SUNDAY 22 SEPTEMBER – GRAND FINAL AT PLUIM PARK 1		
FIRST GRADE	UMINA vs KARIONG	3 PM
RESERVE GRADE	BUDGEWOI vs UMINA	1 PM