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Premium Sporting Products

2019 BATTLEWIN PREMIER LEAGUE GRAND FINALS

by Alistair Kennedy & Lachlan Herd

FIRST GRADE	KILLARNEY DISTRICT	3	WOONGARRAH	2
RESERVE GRADE	SOUTHERN-ETTALONG	3 (3)	EAST GOSFORD	3 (0)
UNDER 21	KILLARNEY DISTRICT	3	AVOCA	2



- After a series of fairly dour matches in the 2019 Battlewin Premier League finals series Woongarrah and Killarney District have served up an absolute classic in a two-hour match that showed up the quality that Central Coast football could display.
- The match began at the fast pace that would be maintained throughout with the early sparring seeing an exchange of corners and free kicks at either end of the field. Throughout the season Woongarrah's Ben Runge and Kane Woolston have formed one the most

powerful strike partnerships in the league with 25 goals between them. In a four-minute period between the 12th and 16th minutes they each struck. First up from a scramble in front of the Killarney goal Runge pounced on a loose ball with his shot striking the post, deflecting across the goal and into the corner of the net. Before the Terriers could recover a through ball found Woolston who beat two defenders giving Killarney keeper Declan Drake no chance with a shot into the far corner of the goal.

WOONGARRAH 2 KILLARNEY 0

- Both sides had chances, Killarney through Jayden Radford and Woongarra being prevented from extending their lead when Drake tipped a powerful shot from Blake Small over the crossbar. Killarney then gradually built pressure leading to yellow cards to two Woongarra players. In the 36th minute, against the run of play, Matt Johnson was brought down just inside the Killarney box with a penalty awarded. In what would prove to be a critical moment in the match Declan Drake pulled off a brilliant diving save. Then within 90 seconds a through ball in the middle of the field found an unmarked Andy Klijn in the clear on the edge of the Wildcats box who pulled a goal back with a composed finish.

WOONGARRAH 2 KILLARNEY 1.

- The opening half ended with a couple of shots by Daniel Rodger into the side net. Woongarra had the first chance of the second half with Jamie Bartlett chipping over Drake but over the bar. The Terriers keeper was again into the action when he left his box to break down a Wildcats attack with a header. Both coaches then started to clear their respective benches with Killarney's Ethan Hall in particular making an immediate impact with a cross that found Klijn whose shot went wide. Despite a number of other chances Killarney couldn't score with Woongarra keeper Bryce Goldsworthy making several point-blank stops. The 90-minute mark came and went with the fourth official signaling four minutes of added time. Then three minutes in Killarney were awarded a corner bringing all 11 players into play. From the ensuing scramble in the goalmouth the ball was squeezed out to the edge of the box where Daniel Moffett controlled the ball and sent a powerful drive that somehow found its way through the mass of players into the edge of the Woongarra net.

WOONGARRAH 2 KILLARNEY 2

- The equaliser was a devastating blow to Woongarra bringing back immediate memories of Killarney's winning goal, at almost exactly the same time, that had cost them the league championship a month earlier. By contrast Killarney went into the first period of extra time with momentum now on their side and eight minutes in they took the lead for the first time in the match with super-sub Ethan Hall making a brilliant diagonal run from the left wing beating two defenders before propping and driving the ball under keeper Goldsworthy into the net.

KILLARNEY 3 WOONGARRAH 2

- Killarney resisted the temptation to go into all-out defence but continued to play the same attacking football while Woongarra desperately tried to get back into the game. They almost did so late in the second period of extra time only to see Drake tip a long free kick over the crossbar, capping off an outstanding match by the Killarney keeper and one that saw him awarded the prestigious Andrew French Medal for the player of the match.



- For Killarney it capped yet another outstanding season setting a number of records that are likely to stand for many years including four successive league championship and premiership titles as well as four straight Premier League club championships. It wasn't all plain sailing this time around though for the Terriers with a string of injuries stretching the club's undoubted depth as well as serious challenges from a growing number of clubs that appear to have closed the gap on them. Those punters who had taken the short odds set by the bookies back in March would have been very nervous over the past month especially going into added time in those two crucial matches against the Wildcats.
- There surely has never been a club that has come so close to taking out Premier League titles and come away empty-handed than Woongarra did this season. To keep their performance in perspective, if the BPL First Grade competition didn't have added time then the Wildcats would have won both the league championship and premiership. It has been an amazing rise by a club that finished last in Division One in the 2016 season, winning just one of their 20 matches to getting so close this season. Congratulations to all concerned but especially to the club's founder and president Kevin Wilson and to First Grade coach, Luke Rogers, who won the BPL Coach of the Year as voted by his peers, the other 11 BPL coaches.