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Premium Sporting Products

2018 BATTLEWIN PREMIER LEAGUE ROUND 19 (4/5 AUGUST)

By Alistair Kennedy

FIRST GRADE SCORES

UMINA	1	GOSFORD CITY	1
TOUKLEY	1	EAST GOSFORD	0
SOUTHERN-ETTALONG	1	KILLARNEY DISTRICT	1
TERRIGAL	2	BERKELEY VALE	1
THE ENTRANCE	4	KINCUMBER	2
AVOCA	4	KANWAL	3

SUMMARY

- In any other season this weekend would have seen the first matches of the finals series but, with the expanded 12-club, 22-round competition, there are still seven weeks until Battlewin Premier League grand final day. Once again the round saw six evenly contested matches with two draws, four decided by a single-goal margin and one separated by two goals.
- Southern-Ettalong has delayed Killarney's league championship celebrations for at least another week by holding the defending premiers to a 1-1 draw. The battle for the four remaining play-off spots remains as close as ever with just four points separating second and sixth place and with Avoca moving back into contention just three points behind sixth-place.
- With Kincumber needing a miracle to survive, the battle to avoid the second relegation place took a turn with Toukley upsetting East Gosford and moving up to 10th while Umina dropped behind them despite snatching a late point in their Saturday night match against Gosford. Umina Oval.
- With three matches remaining in the contest for the Battlewin Golden Boot East Gosford's Rob Walton (18 goals) remains on track to become the first ever multiple winner of the trophy. Although scoreless this round he still sits four goals ahead of the SEU pair, Keith Gumbs and James Caban. Despite missing the past six rounds the early season leader Kanwal's Ryan Walker grabbed a brace to sit a goal further behind alongside Matt Kenny (The Entrance) and Tim Knight (Killarney District).
- In Division One although the league championship is done and dusted Woongarra haven't shown any sign of resting with a 10-0 win over Wyong for the 16th straight win and passing the 100-goal mark in the process. Five teams are in contention for the remaining three semi-final places led by Woy Woy (31 points) and Budgewoi (29) who look like fighting out the second promotion place then Wyoming (28), Ourimbah (26) and Kariong (25).

UMINA 1 GOSFORD CITY 1

- A tight and evenly contested match in front of an enthusiastic and often raucous Saturday night crowd under the newly installed lighting system at Umina Oval. And, apart from a 20-minute blackout early in the first half, the lighting was indeed the best that we've seen on a Central Coast council field. Both teams went into the match desperate for points to avoid possible relegation especially Umina who were sitting just a single point ahead of Toukley.
- Gosford made a sensational start with Jackson Jacobs scoring what was the quickest goal of the season estimated at 45 seconds as well as being his first ever in the MPL top grade. Five minutes later all the power at the ground went out. Fortunately Umina coach Steve Frame knows everything there is to know about sports ground lighting on the Central Coast and along with his electrician son, Ryan, they had power restored within 20 minutes to narrowly avoid the match being called off. From there on the match fluctuated with neither team taking control for any length of time. Both sides missed several chances and then with only a minute or so to play Michael Payne scored from a powerful free kick from 30 metres out, reminding some at the ground, including his coach, of a similar strike in the closing minutes of the 2012 MPL grand final.
- The single point didn't help either team although Gosford had less to lose than Umina who, with Toukley's win over East Gosford dropped back into second-last place. Gosford can put themselves clear of any slight relegation risk when they play The Entrance at Gavenlock Oval next week. Umina will have a more important and tougher task against East Gosford at Hylton Moore Oval.

TOUKLEY 1 EAST GOSFORD 0

- Whenever there's a change of coach in any sporting team the warning lights start to flash for their next opponents and so it was here with club stalwart Brent Lewis stepping in as Toukley's caretaker coach following the departure of Greg Ko-Cass.
- Although missing key players through injury and suspension and a disrupted preparation the Gunners went into the match determined to fight their way out of their perilous position at the bottom of the table despite opponents sitting 22 points ahead of them. Defender Sam Hudson began the match as he'd ended the previous one against Kanwal with a successful penalty in the 17th minute. As it turned out that was to be the only goal in the match which was evenly-contested throughout on the small and restrictive Harry Moore field with both goalkeepers making some vital saves.
- Although it's been a very disappointing season for the Gunners they've shown plenty of grit in many of their performances both here and in their narrow loss to Kanwal the previous week. The result here could well prove to be crucial as they strive to hold their spot in Premier League for a fourth straight season although it's beginning to look like their final round match at home against Umina could well determine the fate of the two clubs in 2019. Toukley's next two opponents are finals contenders in Berkeley Vale (at Mingara) and Southern-Ettalong (at James Browne) while they'll be hoping that East Gosford put the loss behind them when they play Umina at Hylton Moore Oval.

SOUTHERN-ETTALONG 1 KILLARNEY DISTRICT 1

- Killarney travelled to the peninsula knowing that a win would guarantee their third straight league championship but also knowing that Southern invariably lift in these matches evidenced by their two wins in the last three encounters between the teams.

- Both teams struck the uprights at various times but it was Jimmy Caban who made the breakthrough for Southern in the 20th minute. Ten minutes later Tim Knight equalised from the penalty spot for a 1-1 half-time scoreline. The pivotal incident in the match came early in the second half when Killarney's Sam Kirk handled the ball inside the SEU box to concede a penalty but escape with a yellow card. Killarney's Declan Drake then saved the penalty and from the ensuing play Southern's Jack Ellwood was sent off for a second yellow card offence leaving the Lions with 10 men for the remaining 40 minutes of the match. Despite the setback they continued to play attacking football and could easily have snatched a late win.
- The draw and Terrigal's win over Berkeley Vale means that the Terriers now sit nine points ahead of Terrigal with nine points still available from the final three rounds. Despite the fact that Killarney also have an unassailable +30 goal difference they'll need to bide their time a little longer until they have a clear points margin. With five straight wins, the last four against finals contenders, Terrigal will be looking to extend the wait even beyond next weekend when the two teams meet at Duffys Road next Sunday.
- Southern-Ettalong now sit in equal fourth place with both East Gosford and Kanwal with all three of their remaining matches against teams below them on the table although the first of the three is against Avoca who now sit just three points behind them. So yet another crucial match. It's at James Browne Oval.

TERRIGAL 2 BERKELEY VALE 1

- Terrigal went into the match with the 'third-place curse' hanging over their heads becoming the fifth different team to occupy the spot over the past seven rounds. None of the other four were able to retain the position, losing their subsequent matches. Although Terrigal have also moved away they've done it by overtaking Berkeley Vale and jump into second place. It's been an amazing season for them especially after finishing in second-last place last season and only avoiding relegation through the expansion of the BPL competition to 12 clubs.
- Terrigal opened the scoring in the 25th minute after Anthony Pace made a break down the left wing before passing to Ben Flakus who scored with a superb shot from the edge of the penalty box. Troy Mumford's seventh goal in the past three matches equalised for the 'Bats five minutes before the break. Little separated the teams for most of the second half with what proved to be the deciding goal coming from Anthony Pace in the 73rd minute. Berkeley Vale were unlucky not to grab a draw with a shot striking the crossbar.
- Although Berkeley Vale has sat in second place for most of the season they've never been able to break clear of the trailing pack and this loss sees them drop down to third with a finals spot far from guaranteed. They now meet an invigorated Toukley team at Mingara before two crucial matches against fellow contenders Kanwal and Avoca.
- Terrigal now face their biggest test when they take on Killarney District at Duffys Road next Sunday. The Terriers won their Round 9 match 3-1 but Terrigal have only been beaten once since then and go into the match with plenty of confidence after five straight wins. Their final two matches are against teams in the bottom half of the competition (Umina and The Entrance) so even a point against Killarney will give them a golden opportunity to secure second place.

THE ENTRANCE 4 KINCUMBER 2

- The Entrance are enjoying a late season surge with this their third straight win although all three have been against the bottom three teams. Nevertheless they've shown plenty of character after such a disruptive season and are now well clear of the relegation zone although out of finals contention. Although beaten Kincumber did show the same character as in the second half of their previous match against Killarney and were in contention until the last quarter of an hour.
- Goals to C.J. Eyndhoven and Matt Kenny had The Entrance 2-0 up by the 30-minute mark before Ryan O'Hara pulled a goal back before the break. A second goal in successive matches by Jayden Nakhoul restored the two-goal margin for the Reddies early in the second term before Alex Osborn reduced it back to one with Corey Atkinson scoring the clinching goal in the 75th minute.
- Next round sees the clash between The Entrance and Gosford City the two clubs that have been most affected by the creation of the new Central Coast United representative team, something of which they should both be proud. The match is at Gavenlock Oval. Kincumber will be at home again to take on Kanwal.

AVOCA 4 KANWAL 3

- Another of these crucial 'six-point' matches between finals series contenders where the winners not only get the three points but almost as importantly stop their opponents from getting them. Avoca went into the match knowing that a loss would almost certainly end their hopes of reaching the semis for the first time but with the team back at full strength after injury disruption.
- Right from the kick-off Avoca showed their intent forcing Kanwal goalkeeper Aaron Hammond to make two fine saves before taking the lead in the 13th minute through Stuart Adams. In his first match back after suspension Ryan Walker also made an early impact jumping high to head the ball over the 'keeper's head to equalise in the 18th minute. One minute later the Sharks were back in front when the ball took a wicked bounce and struck a Kanwal defender's arm inside the box with Mitch Harrison converting from the penalty spot. Ten minutes from the break Avoca extended their lead when Louis Kellerman chested the ball in from a corner kick.
- As they shown throughout the season Kanwal is a team that never surrenders and they almost scored in the opening minute of the second half with a shot from Jason Cozens narrowly missing. Eight minutes later the goal did come, this time from a Ryan Walker penalty before Avoca again opened up a two-goal margin with another goal from a corner kick, this time scored by defender Jake Elder. The Bulls then ensured a tense finish with a headed goal by Jason Cozens, yet again from a corner kick, with a relieved Avoca holding out for the remaining seven minutes.
- Kanwal now take on Kincumber at Frost Reserve and they'll be hungry not only for both points and goals with goal difference looming as a potential factor in the fight for semi-final spots. Avoca's scenario will be much the same when they meet Southern-Ettalong next week at James Browne Oval. A win there will see them join the Lions on 33 points a get right back into the top five mix.

	<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	19	14	4	1	61	17	44	46
TERRIGAL	19	11	4	4	48	34	14	37
BERKELEY VALE	19	11	2	6	51	21	30	35
SOUTHERN-ETTALONG	19	10	3	6	44	30	14	33
EAST GOSFORD	19	10	3	6	33	24	9	33
KANWAL	19	10	3	6	46	42	4	33
AVOCA	19	9	3	7	41	32	9	30
THE ENTRANCE	19	7	3	9	36	53	-17	24
GOSFORD CITY	19	4	6	9	28	38	-10	18
TOUKLEY	19	4	2	13	29	59	-30	14
UMINA	19	3	4	12	36	57	-21	13
KINCUMBER	19	1	3	15	24	72	-48	6

18	Rob Walton (East Gosford)
14	James Caban (SEU), Keith Gumbs (SEU)
13	Matt Kenny (The Entrance), Tim Knight (Killarney District), Ryan Walker (Kanwal)
11	Stuart Adams (Avoca), Jason Cozens (Kanwal), Jai Kelly (Toukley), Andy Klijn (Killarney District), Josh Schumann (Umina)
10	Michael Tawyer (Berkeley Vale)
9	Ben Flakus (Terrigal), Troy Mumford (Berkeley Vale)
8	Corey Atkinson (The Entrance), Mitch Harrison (Avoca), Brad McLean (Kanwal)
7	Will Haines (Toukley), Anthony Pace (Terrigal), Blake Silvers (Killarney District), Brad Smythe (Berkeley Vale)
6	Aaron Beehag (Kincumber), Ben Green (Avoca), Matt Hall (Gosford City), Ryan Oehm (Kanwal), Alex Osborn (Kincumber), 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), Daniel Rodger (Killarney District)

ROUND 20 BPL FIXTURES

SUNDAY 12 AUGUST			
KINCUMBER	vs	KANWAL	Frost Reserve
GOSFORD CITY	vs	THE ENTRANCE	Gavenlock Oval
TERRIGAL	vs	KILLARNEY DISTRICT	Duffys Road Oval
SOUTHERN-ETTALONG	vs	AVOCA	James Browne Oval
BERKELEY VALE	vs	TOUKLEY	Mingara Sports Field
EAST GOSFORD	vs	UMINA	Hylton Moore Oval

DIVISION ONE

FIRST GRADE SCORES

OURIMBAH	2	DOYALSON	0
WOONGARRAH	10	WYONG	0
WOY WOY	7	TUGGERAH	2
KARIONG	2	BUDGEWOI	1
WYOMING	3	GWANDALAN	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	16	16	0	0	102	8	94	48
WOY WOY	16	9	4	3	50	24	26	31
BUDGEWOI	16	9	2	5	54	26	28	29
WYOMING	16	9	1	6	48	34	14	28
OURIMBAH	16	8	2	6	42	34	8	26
KARIONG	16	7	4	5	43	30	13	25
WYONG	16	6	1	9	38	45	-7	19
GWANDALAN	16	6	0	10	22	47	-25	18
DOYALSON	16	2	1	13	18	62	-44	7
TUGGERAH	16	0	1	15	9	116	-107	1