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2019 BATTLEWIN PREMIER LEAGUE ROUND 1 (22/23 MARCH)

FIRST GRADE SCORES

KILLARNEY DISTRICT	4	AVOCA	2
WOONGARRAH	5	EAST GOSFORD	1
BERKELEY VALE	3	WYOMING	0
SOUTHERN-ETTALONG	3	KANWAL	2
TERRIGAL	6	GOSFORD CITY	1
TOUKLEY	2	THE ENTRANCE	1

SUMMARY

- The 2019 Battlewin Mens Premier League has kicked off in spectacular fashion with a total of 30 goals in the six Round One matches. As was the case last season the early start to the competition was necessary to accommodate the new 12-team / 22-round format with all six matches played at Pluim Park on Friday and Saturday nights.
- There were mixed fortunes for the two promoted clubs with Woongarraah comfortable 5-1 winners over East Gosford in what was the club's first-ever Premier League match while Wyoming, back after two seasons in Division One, were beaten 3-0 by 2018 runners-up Berkeley Vale.

FFA CUP

- Thirteen local clubs have entered the 2019 FFA Cup, seven from Premier League and six from Division One. Berkeley Vale and Woongarraah were the only two that played in Round 2 with the other 11 all having byes. Both the Wombats and Wildcats won and go through to this week's Round 3 matches. See below for match schedule.

KILLARNEY DISTRICT 4 AVOCA 2

- Avoca and Killarney opened the 2019 BPL season on Pluim One, in what was a very competitive match from the first whistle to the last. Avoca started the stronger of the two sides and would have bagged an early goal in the sixth minute were it not for a great close-range reflex save from Killarney keeper Andrew Sheldon. Only minutes later Avoca found themselves with another great opportunity to open the scoring as Stu Adams caught Sheldon off his line, dinking the ball over his head, however the ball strayed just wide of the far upright. It seemed only a matter of time before we were to see the opening goal, and in the 13th minute the ball was flashed across the Killarney penalty area, with Oliver Twyford netting with a well taken finish. The Terriers answered with a goal of their own only minutes later after Bryce Fielder cut in from the right-hand side and let fly with a powerful shot that deflected in off Avoca keeper Brendan Avis.
- In what was a noticeably physical match, tensions threatened to boil over in the 40th minute after a strong challenge from Killarney's Daniel Moffet, as both sides got involved in a bit of

push and shove. Killarney had the last notable chance of the first half as Tim Knight had his shot smartly saved by Avis.

- After a half-time bollocking from coach Ackerley it took less than ten minutes for the Terriers to hit the lead with Cameron Donovan swinging in a tall, looping cross that was not dealt with by Brendan Avis, with his clearing punch ending up in the back of his own net. Both sides traded chances in what was a very open period of the half before Killarney struck twice within five minutes to effectively settle the result at 4-1. Both goals were scored by replacements the first a well taken shot by Brandan Ahll driven low across the keeper into the bottom corner, before a goal-mouth scramble saw the ball fall fortuitously to Daniel Rodger who had the easiest of finishes in the 81st minute.
- Avoca were awarded a penalty in the 86th minute after Killarney's Sam Kirk was adjudged to have denied a goal scoring opportunity when he dragged his man down in the penalty area, for which he was subsequently sent off. Mitch Harrison stepped up and buried the spot kick emphatically into the bottom left corner to make it 4-2. Avoca had another late penalty shout turned down by the referee, however it would have been nothing more than a consolation as the referee blew full time only seconds later. There were plenty of positives to be taken from the game for Avoca, whilst Killarney will be pleased to have wrapped up the three points in what was a testing match for the reigning three-time premiers.
- Killarney have been the best-performed local club in each of their three seasons in the FFA Cup and will be looking to continue that when they take on Illawarra club Albion Park at Pluim Park on Wednesday night. On Saturday night they then take on Southern-Ettalong in their Round 2 BPL match. Avoca, who didn't enter the Cup, meet Berkeley Vale, also on Saturday night.

WOONGARRAH 5 EAST GOSFORD 1

- A proud day for Woongarra who celebrate their 10th season as a club in 2019 and achieving their long-term goal of playing in the Premier League. It's been a spectacular rise for the Wildcats who have risen from the depths of Division One wooden-spooners in 2016, through fourth-place and premiers in 2017 to promotion, league champions and premiers in 2018 losing just one of their 20 matches.
- After an evenly-contested first half East Gosford went to the break with a 1-0 lead through a goal in the 34th minute to Steve Harper. The contrasting pre-season preparations of the two teams then came to the fore with the Rams lack of early training and washed-out trials leaving them struggling for match fitness. With the benefit of extra training sessions, trials and an FFA Cup match the Wildcats were fitter, sharper and stronger and following an early equaliser by Ben Runge the result was never in doubt. Alex Govorcin gave his team the lead in the 56th minute followed by goals to Lachlan Jones, a second to Runge with Kane Wilson wrapping up the win.
- In retrospect East Gosford are no doubt regretting their decision not to enter the FFA Cup if for no other reason than gaining fitness. They meet another very fit team in Wyoming next Saturday night although the Tigers will be backing up from a midweek FFA Cup match.
- Woongarra play Dulwich Hill in a Tuesday night match on the synthetic at FNSW headquarters Valentine Park before their next BPL match against The Entrance on Saturday night.

BERKELEY VALE 3 WYOMING 0

- A tough opening match for Wyoming on their return to Premier League after two seasons in Division One. It's a very different looking Tigers squad with new coach Ian McAndrew returning to his former club and bringing a large number of experienced ex-Gosford players with him. By contrast Berkeley Vale are carrying much the same personnel that took the club to within one match of winning the premiership last season but with the important addition of former Australian youth international and A-League player Reece Caira.
- Wyoming began strongly and could easily have scored at least one goal inside the first 20 minutes. Instead Berkeley Vale took the lead in the 24th minute when defender Alex Burrell scored from a corner kick for the only goal in the first half. The Wombats exciting young winger Michael Tawyer was a constant threat to the Tigers defence and he eventually doubled his side's lead eight minutes into the second half, the goal also coming from a corner. Although they continued to attack strongly Wyoming couldn't break through and Brenton Westley settled the result in the 75th minute with a well-constructed goal.
- Both clubs will have midweek FFA Cup matches with Wyoming up against tough opponents in leading Illawarra Premier League club Bulli FC at Pluim Park on Wednesday night. Berkeley Vale travel to the west of Sydney to take on Blacktown Association club, Marayong FC at Harvey Park.
- Both clubs play their Round 2 BPL matches at Pluim Park on Saturday night with Wyoming up against East Gosford on Field 3 and Berkeley Vale taking on Avoca on Field 1.

SOUTHERN-ETTALONG 3 KANWAL 2

- Saturday nights BPL game on Pluim One saw Southern & Ettalong United take on Kanwal with both teams looking to start their season with a win. Despite the absence of key forwards Keith Gumbs and James Caban Southern got themselves off to the perfect start, finding the net through Rob Ward with a clever finish inside the area. The Lions were then presented with a great opportunity to double their lead on 21 minutes after a foul in the area led to the referee awarding them a penalty, however Kanwal keeper Aaron Hammond was up to the challenge, producing a full length save at the bottom left hand corner.
- The penalty spurred on the Kanwal side as they began to grow into the game. In the 27th minute a free kick from Kanwal's Brad Mclean was tipped over the bar smartly by the SEU 'keeper Luke Carnevale, however only minutes later McLean managed to draw his side level. After finding space down the right-hand side, McLean had his first shot blocked by a defender before the ball fell back to him for a second opportunity, which he didn't waste as he curled the inside the far post. Kanwal looked to be getting the upper-hand in the match, and in the 37th minute they went close to taking the lead after number eight Rorey Rizzi flashed a powerful shot just wide of the left upright from distance.
- The sides emerged from the sheds at 1-1, and once again it was Southern who managed to strike the early blow, with a shot from distance proving too hot to handle for the Bulls keeper after skidding off the greasy surface. The subsequent rebound fell at the feet of Thomas Patterson for a tap-in to thrust Southern into the lead. If there was one thing we learnt about Kanwal last season it was that they never give up and once again they hit back in the 61st minute after Lions 'keeper Carnevale was adjudged to have brought down an attacker in the penalty area. Up stepped Brad McLean, who made no mistake as he buried the penalty into the bottom right hand corner to draw the sides level at 2-2.

- Southern managed to bag the winner around the 70-minute mark through James Steer, before Kanwal threw everything they had into finding a late equaliser. However, the Lions absorbed the pressure effectively, seeing out the match and picking up the three points to leave them in fifth place after the opening round.
- Despite the loss, Kanwal coach Brad Porter remained optimistic: 'I was happy with the performance overall. I thought we did enough to get something from the game but missed chances in the end cost us. Credit to Southern who were impressive despite having key players missing'.The.
- Both teams have FFA Cup matches on Tuesday night with Kanwal at home against State League club University of NSW while Southern travel to Sydney to play Abbotsford Junior FC at Campbell Park, Chiswick. Kanwal then have a short turnaround taking on Terrigal on Friday night while SEU play Killarney District on Saturday night.

TERRIGAL 6 GOSFORD CITY 1

- Terrigal United were the surprise packet of the 2018 BPL season. After surviving relegation only through the expansion of the competition after finishing second-last in 2017 they went into the season with a new coach in Martyn Griffiths and a young and talented, but inexperienced squad. After a slow start they steadily rose up the ladder and following an eight-match unbeaten run eventually finished in second place behind Killarney District and went within one match of the grand final.
- By contrast Gosford City, who were league champions in 2015 and beaten grand finalists in 2015, 2016 and 2017 have been hit hard by player losses initially in 2018 (to CCU) and this season to Wyoming. The club is now rebuilding with a young squad most of whom are still eligible for the new U21 competition and many who have followed new coach Errol Baker from either junior representative football or from the Woy Woy club.
- The young City players put in an excellent first half restricting Terrigal to a single goal, scored from the penalty spot by Cameron Wilkinson in the 30th minute. Gosford then lost a key player in their skipper Nathan Baker with a broken leg early in the second half and Terrigal gradually broke away with Ben Flakus extending the lead 15 minutes into the half followed by a second penalty to Wilkinson who then completed his hat-trick. Gosford struck back with a goal to Jesse Parnell before two more to Terrigal scored by Erik Requelme and a second by Flakus.
- Although it was a tough initiation for the young Dragons team there's plenty of talent in the team most of whom are former junior representative players and as the season progresses there's likely to be significant improvement. Terrigal, as they showed last season with scores of 8-2 and 9-0, can be ruthless opponents.
- Gosford play Toukley on Friday night while Terrigal travel to Sydney on Tuesday night for an FFA Cup match against Pagewood-Botany before taking on Kanwal on Friday night.

TOUKLEY 2 THE ENTRANCE 1

- Two clubs that will be looking to put disappointing 2018 seasons behind them after finishing in ninth and tenth places respectively. Especially keen will be the Gunners who avoided relegation by the narrowest of margins with a final round win over Umina. The Entrance will be strengthened by the return of the Blunden brothers from CCU although that will be offset by the retirement (to M35s) of Matt Kenny arguably the League's most consistent striker over a long and distinguished Premier League career.

- Toukley started the match well, and eventually got out to a 2-0 lead thanks to goals from Josh Hall and Troy Runge. The Entrance managed to claw a goal back through Adam Blunden, however it was too little too late as Toukley held out to collect the three points in the opening round.
- Both clubs will go into next week's BPL match fresh with neither having nominated for the FFA Cup. The Entrance will be looking to bounce back next week when they face newly promoted Woongarrah, whilst Toukley will be aiming to make it two from two when they face Gosford City. Both matches will be played on Friday night.

battlewin		POINTS TABLE							
		P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
TERRIGAL		1	1	0	0	6	1	5	3
WOONGARRAH		1	1	0	0	5	1	4	3
KILLARNEY DISTRICT		1	1	0	0	5	2	3	3
BERKELEY VALE		1	1	0	0	3	0	3	3
SOUTHERN-ETTALONG		1	1	0	0	3	2	1	3
TOUKLEY		1	1	0	0	2	1	1	3
KANWAL		1	0	0	1	2	3	-1	0
THE ENTRANCE		1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0
AVOCA		1	0	0	1	2	5	-3	0
WYOMING		1	0	0	1	0	3	-3	0
EAST GOSFORD		1	0	0	1	1	5	-4	0
GOSFORD		1	0	0	1	1	6	-5	0

battlewin		LEADING GOAL SCORERS	
3	Cameron Wilkinson (Terrigal)		
2	Ben Flakus (Terrigal), Brad McLean (Kanwal), Ben Runge (Woongarrah)		

FFA CUP ROUND 3 FIXTURES

TUESDAY 26 MARCH			
KANWAL	vs	UNIVERSITY OF NSW	Pluim Park (7.00 pm)
PAGEWOOD BOTANY	vs	TERRIGAL	Jellicoe Park (7.30 pm)
HAZELBROOK	vs	CENTRAL COAST UNITED	Cook Park (7.30 pm)
DULWICH HILL	vs	WOONGARRAH	Valentine Park (7.30 pm)

WEDNESDAY 27 MARCH			
ABBOTSFORD JUNIOR	vs	SOUTHERN-ETTALONG	TBA
WYOMING	vs	BULLI	Pluim Park (7.30 pm)
KILLARNEY DISTRICT	vs	ALBION PARK	Pluim Park (7.30 pm)
PENNANT HILLS	vs	DOYALSON	Pennant Hills Park (7.30 pm)

THURSDAY 28 MARCH			
UMINA	vs	EPPING EASTWOOD	Pluim Park (7.00 pm)

SATURDAY 30 MARCH

COLEDALE	vs	BUDGEWOI	St James Park (3.00 pm)
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BPL ROUND 2 FIXTURES**FRIDAY 29 MARCH**

TERRIGAL	vs	KANWAL	Pluim Park 3 (8.00 pm)
GOSFORD CITY	vs	TOUKLEY	Pluim Park 2 (8.00 pm)
THE ENTRANCE	vs	WOONGARRAH	Pluim Park 1 (8.00 pm)

SATURDAY 30 MARCH

EAST GOSFORD	vs	WYOMING	Pluim Park 3 (7.30 pm)
KILLARNEY DISTRICT	vs	SOUTHERN-ETTALONG	Pluim Park 2 (7.30 pm)
BERKELEY VALE	vs	AVOCA	Pluim Park 1 (7.30 pm)