

KICKOFF

GRAND FINAL
LEICHHARDT OVAL



V



4PM • SUNDAY
10TH SEPTEMBER 2017



1ST GRADE 4PM
20s 12.30PM
18s 10AM



PS4
NATIONAL
PREMIER LEAGUES
NSW MEN'S

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A special thank you to the Football NSW staff assisting in the delivery of today's Grand Final.



FROM THE CEO



Stuart Hodge
Football NSW CEO



It's an honour as CEO and on behalf of the Board of Directors of Football NSW to welcome you all to Leichhardt Oval for the PlayStation®4 National Premier League's NSW Men's 2017 Grand Final.

It's been a memorable year for the sport with a number of fantastic achievements and today promises to be a blockbuster affair for all clubs, players, supporters, coaches and volunteers involved in this wonderful sport of ours.

The Grand Final is the culmination of what has been an amazing National Premier Leagues season, with Premiers APIA Leichhardt Tigers taking on Manly United in the main match at 4pm.

APIA Leichhardt Tigers coached by Danial Cummins, come into this match with the luxury of a one week break after defeating Rockdale City Suns convincingly in the Major Semi Final. It's been a solid season for the Tigers who have really shaken up the league this year.

Having taken out the competition by two points, APIA also had the best for and against record in 2017 which further cemented its spot as the Premiers of NSW's top tier league – a feat they achieved 30 years ago. The Tigers, by taking out the Premiership, won the right to represent NSW at the up and coming PS4 NPL Finals Series where they will take on Adelaide City on Saturday 16th of September at Hindmarsh Stadium.

Their opponents, Manly United, coached by Warren Grieve, have come through to the Grand Final the hard way after defeating Sydney Olympic in the Elimination Final 2-1 before knocking out Blacktown City 2-0 in the Minor Semi-Final. It was in the Preliminary Final nerves were put to the test as they won 5-4 on penalties after the game finished 2-2 after extra time. They'll be hungry to continue on with their winning run but it won't be an easy task against a determined APIA Leichhardt Tigers outfit.

I would like to acknowledge the support of our sponsors, PlayStation®4 especially for their continued commitment with our top tier Men's competition as well as PUMA, Ultra Football, Powerade and the NSW Government for their valued input and service for our game.

As you can appreciate an event like this would not be possible without the hard work and dedication of a few people and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff of Football NSW, the clubs involved and the volunteers who have made today possible with their commitment.

Most importantly, I would like to thank you, the fans for your support, not only during the season but at today's Grand Final.

Our game is for the fans and about the fans and as such we hope you enjoy your day here at Leichhardt Oval and celebrate our great sport.

FROM THE SPONSOR

At PlayStation, we like to say that we're For the Players... both on and off the field. We love our football - whether that means picking up a controller, or strapping on a pair of boots.

We have been proud to support the PlayStation®4 National Premier Leagues since 2014, and of the contributions that our collaborations with the FFA, Football NSW and

all the Member Federations have made towards grassroots football during this time. We've watched the competition grow year on year, incorporating numerous divisions, and welcomed the introduction of the PlayStation®4 National Premier Leagues Women's competitions. This year, we'll continue raising the profile of the upcoming PlayStation®4 National Premier Leagues Finals Series, broadcasting games live on

PlayStation®4 for people to tune into the action each week.

Today we are delighted to celebrate the incredible season that was 2017, with all our friends at Football NSW.



**FOOTBALL NSW WOULD LIKE TO THANK THEIR SPONSORS
FOR THEIR CONTINUED SUPPORT**



Supported by the



by Nicholas Houghton

FROM THE EDITOR

The biggest match of the year has arrived for another season and once again we have two teams determined to write their names in the history books.

History seems to be a major theme of this year's Grand Final as APIA Leichhardt Tigers and Manly United both look to end long Championship droughts.

APIA Leichhardt has already tasted success this season when they won the Premiership for the first time in 30 years.

It was an incredible run to the top of the table during the final six weeks of the competition from the Lambert Park based side.

Today they will be making the club's first appearance in a first grade Grand Final for 14 years, determined to secure a historic league double.

It will be a landmark day for their opponents Manly United as well.

The club from the Northern Beaches have not played in a first grade Grand Final for 22 years when they won their first and only Championship in 1995.

With eight rounds to go in the competition Manly was down and out in sixth spot battling desperately for finals football.

How fast their fortunes have changed.

The club's incredible turnaround has included 10 wins from their past 11 games including a nail biting penalty shootout victory against Rockdale City Suns in last week's preliminary final.

With the departure of Paul Dee on the cusp of the season starting, many wondered how Manly would rebound.

Under the tutelage of Warren Grieve they have become one of the most exciting teams to watch in the competition and stand a great chance of ending the club's silverware drought.

Standing in their way is an APIA Leichhardt side which has broken free of their status as perennial underachievers.

Coach Danial Cummins has completely revitalised the team

this season and they are on track for arguably their most successful campaign in the club's history.

I wonder if Cummins would have envisioned such a rapid turn around in form when he took over a struggling team midway through last season.

Obviously whatever he said and did in preseason was the perfect formula to help APIA return to the top of the pile.

Both teams come into the Grand Final boasting two of the competition's strongest squads.

APIA has big name players on all three lines including Tasuku Sekiya, Sean Symons, Josh Symons, David D'Apuzzo and Ivan Necevski.

The fact APIA talisman and silky skilled midfielder Franco Parisi has

struggled to break into the starting team says a lot.

Manly on the other hand are equally stacked with former Hyundai A-League striker Dylan Macallister leading their attack and former Young Socceroo Dejan Pandurevic cutting in from the flanks.

Long time Manly shot stopper Dylan Mitchell has also been in impressive form in recent weeks and set to play a major role.

In my opinion the best thing about this matchup is both teams love to push forward and play attacking football.

It is sure to make for a blockbuster clash and hopefully a Grand Final to remember, no matter who you support.



MATCH PREVIEW

by Nikola Pozder

Premiers Sydney FC will take on Sydney United 58 FC in the Grand Final of the PlayStation®4 NPL NSW Men's under 18's competition.

Sydney FC were the dominant force throughout this season, running out clear and convincing Premiers.

They only suffered two defeats all campaign along with two draws, winning the competition by 11 points.

United 58 have had a solid season themselves, finishing in a very respectable third place on the ladder.

Sydney FC Coach Jim Van Weeren has been pleased with how 2017 has progressed for his young side.

"It's been a very successful season so far.

"Results aside, it's been rewarding to see the development of individual players. Some of our players graduated into our under 20's while one even debuted for first grade at only 15 years of age.

"Given we're playing two years up, the boys have adjusted extremely well to the physical challenge."

Going back to results, you can't run away from the impressive season the Sky Blues have had.

"This is a very talented group with

match winners all over the park. They have the ability to create goal scoring opportunities in many different ways."

Having had a week's rest, Sydney FC comes into the weekend's final full of confidence but will treat the big occasion the same as any other game.

"We will keep training as normal this week. They push each other in every session."

Van Weeren wants his players to enjoy the big dance and to learn from the experience.

"Playing in a Grand Final is good experience and hopefully the players have learnt how to manage their thoughts, feelings and emotions leading into the big one."

Sydney FC has beaten their final opponents twice already this season but Van Weeren isn't playing any mind games.

The Sky Blues coach believes his players respect their opponents and will not underestimate them.

"The competition has been very close all year and there are many good teams with Sydney United 58 being one of them.

"Anything can happen in a finals series and that is something we need to be aware of.

"Sydney United 58 are a well-organised team with an experienced coach who will have them prepared.

"We will have to be at our best to beat them."

That experienced coach in the opposition dugout is Tony Sekulic.

Sekulic took over the squad just before the start of the season in what has been action packed season.

"We have a very young team where most of the boys can play 18's again next season.

"It was a slow start and after seven round we were third last with only four points."

The United 58 coach saw his team's fortunes change against Sunday's opposition.

"After the Sydney FC match we went on a 10-match unbeaten run and rose to third on the table where we finished, defying all expectations."

A heavy defeat to Rockdale in the qualifying final saw Sydney United 58 come up against Manly who they defeated by the odd goal, before again coming up against the Suns and defeating them in a thriller to book their place in Sunday's final.

"We had a depleted squad with under 15's and 16's filling the roster until we had our full squad back before the elimination final game against Manly United."

It was a last minute goal that sent his side through to fight for a spot in the Grand Final where they came from behind to defeat Rockdale and book their spot at the big dance.

"It just showed the grit and determination the boys have been putting in all year."

Being an ex-professional footballer, Sekulic knows what these games mean and is excited for his team ahead of the final.

"I cannot be happier for the boys

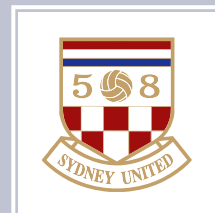


TEAM LISTS



43	Paolo	LAXAMANA
61	Jacob	VASILIOU
62	Jake	HOLLMAN
64	Ben	KOOP
66	Bailey	TOGIAVALU
67	Evan	TSAKOS
68	Marco	TILIO
76	Bailey	KUBECKA
78	Max	ROGERS
80	Alex	MASCIOVECCHIO
84	Tom	FAY
87	Mitch	MATTISON
88	Phil	CANCAR
89	Callum	TALBOT
95	Will	TODD
90	Rocco	CHISARI

Head Coach: Jimmy Van Weeren
 Assistant Coach: Jason Rea
 Manager: Richard Paddle



1	Jacob	CHAPMAN
2	Adam	GASPAROVIC
3	Christian	ZEBEC
4	Jack	GATALLARI
5	Cole	MUTTON
6	Todd	BENNISON
7	Junghee	CHO
8	Ryan	FAHEY
9	Hamish	LAMBERTON
10	Nikolas	LAI
11	Joshua	DE ROSSI
12	Aiden	TOBIN
13	Ali	KARIMI
14	Athony	PEDAVOLI
16	Joshua	JOHNSON

Coach: Tony Sekulic

Referee: Sam Kelly **Assistant Referees:** Oliver Lawton & Ivica Covic **4th Official:** Andreas Lyndon

reaching this milestone as they've endured many challenges this season.

"This game is about them and they deserve every moment of it, moments that will be life long memories."

Despite losing twice to the Sky Blues this campaign, Sekulic's side will look to make it 'third time lucky' and take out the Championship trophy.

"The first clash was a close encounter and the second we were somewhat depleted.

"It hasn't affected the team a great deal, we know these are the best two teams of 2017.

"We know we are the underdogs and have nothing to lose, we are capable of beating any opposition on our day."



ADAM MASSOUD: SHARKS STAR ON THE RISE

by Jacob Windon

Premiers Sutherland have led the competition from the opening day and if there's anyone that captures the ruthless consistency of Nick Dimovski's side it is the Sharks right fullback Adam Massoud.

The former Bonnyrigg man has been a mainstay at right back in the league's tightest defence and believes the unique team spirit at Sutherland will prove the difference when they meet APIA Leichhardt Tigers on Grand Final day.

"I feel like I've known these boys my whole life and we're looking forward to going into the final as best mates", says Massoud.

"I think our success this season has been due to our team spirit - other teams have great individual players but they lack the chemistry we have, we've done everything together this year and things that other teams wouldn't have done".

The 17-year-old has been labelled Sutherland's most consistent player by coach Nick Dimovski who managed Massoud as a Bonnyrigg youth and says the Sharks right back epitomizes the side's work ethic.

"Adam's defensive duties are second to none, he rarely misses tackles and he gives us a lot going forward.

"That right hand side of Adam Massoud and Jake Borromeo is probably the best right side in the competition."

Massoud has indeed proven an integral attacking instrument for the Premiers this season and APIA will need to marshal the overlapping sprints of the fullback carefully on Grand Final day.

With left back Matthew Stewart galloping forward on the opposite flank the Sharks have utilized both fullbacks to great effect this season and the absence of an out and out goal scorer means the side can produce goals from all over the pitch.

Diminutive playmaker Matias Da Silva Santos leads the Sutherland tally with nine but the likes of the speedy Borromeo and first grade regulars Jack Press and Jeremy Cox will also prove the main danger for the Tigers on the day.

The experience of the Sutherland roster will complement the enthusiasm

of Massoud handily as the full back makes his maiden grand final appearance on Sunday.

Dimovski considers the Sharks flyer as a genuine first grade prospect as he continues his development at Seymour Shaw.

"Adam puts his body on the line week in week out, he's good with managing pain when he's copped knocks throughout the year.

"To play first grade you need to have that sort of physical adaptation because it's such a big step up physically from 20's."

Massoud will no doubt continue to raise the eyebrow of first team coach Grant Lee as the Sharks look to respond from a disappointing 10th place finish in 2017 but for now is focussed on completing what has been a near perfect year for the Sutherland 20s.

"I don't want to rush talk of the first team.

"I'm still at a young age and don't want to be on the bench - I want to play every week and show people what I'm made of."



by Jacob Windon

AEDON KYRA: HUNGRY TIGER READY TO POUNCE

APIA Leichhardt's Aedon Kyra is targeting two trophies on Sunday as both the Tigers senior teams prepare to take on Sutherland Sharks and Manly United in their respective Grand Finals.

The competition golden boot winner is preparing for his third Grand Final in as many years having made scoring visits to Leichhardt Oval in 2015 and 2016 with Sydney Olympic but says a 2017 championship would be just reward for a club on the rise.

Kyra has netted 18 goals in 25 matches and offered a series of stunning individual performances across the campaign but credits the culture at APIA and relationship across all senior grades as pivotal to the Tigers' success.

"At other clubs getting along with the first grade boys has been a lot harder, but the boys at APIA have been so welcoming and such nice boys.

"They pick you up when we make mistakes and they're always on the sideline supporting us and celebrating with us."

The former Olympic man is yet to make a first grade appearance in the league for Danial Cummins' side but that will surely be a matter of time for Kyra who says he's found his home in the number ten role this campaign.

Having transitioned from an adventurous centre half to midfield linchpin to deadly sharpshooter in season 2017, Kyra now possesses the skill set of a seasoned all-rounder and credits his close friend, former Olympic teammate and fellow attacker Jordan Morfitis for much of his goalscoring exploits.

The partnership was first forged in a heated school football rivalry between Lewisham and Kogarah that saw Kyra and Morfitis lock horns on several occasions.

"We just have a weird connection on the field – if he has the ball I was always expected to receive it", Kyra says.

Kyra and Morfitis have accounted for nearly half of APIA's goal tally this campaign and will be equally dangerous on the counter attack as they are in longer spells of possession where the Tigers have excelled this season.

It hasn't all been smooth sailing for APIA Leichhardt though and the Tigers looked likely to spiral out of finals contention after a disastrous 4-0 defeat to Sydney FC in round 17.

That defeat saw NPL veteran coach Michael Urukalo pursue other opportunities and Kyra credits the arrival of ex-Parramatta custodian Franco Cosentino for not only steadying the ship but transforming the Tigers into title contenders.

"Training sessions have changed drastically, with Michael we were doing a lot of repetitive stuff and a lot of running.

"His attitude was that you guys have the ability, you just need the fitness and it will come and he was right.

"I've been fortunate to be under two great, experienced coaches this season – Franco is more of a technical coach, he'll change passing drills every session and we do a lot of short sharp movement.

"But I can't say a bad thing about him, we've only lost one game since he came here and he's like one of us, like a young boy and we all look up to him so much."

Cosentino says Kyra is destined for first team football and could easily be the difference when the Tigers take on Sutherland on Sunday.

"Aedon's got really good vision of the game as well as being a good goalscorer but he's worse with his back to goal.

"We've changed it around so he's looking at things and getting into areas we want him to get into.

"I think it's worked for him, he's created a whole lot of chances for us and a whole lot more for himself."



MATCH PREVIEW

by Jacob Windon

Sutherland Sharks are hoping to claim a premiership and championship double when they host APIA Leichhardt Tigers in Sunday's Grand Final at Leichhardt Oval.

Having led the competition outright since round one the Sharks finished the regular season 11 points ahead of second-placed APIA and made minimum fuss in cementing their Grand Final position after beating Sydney FC in last fortnight's major semi-final.

Nick Dimovski's side will enter the encounter as heavy favourites and the Sharks coach says his side are in top condition as Sutherland hone in on their second trophy of the year.

"We're keeping it as normal as possible this week and remain focused on Sunday, our goal from the start of the year has been to win the Grand Final and full energy is going towards making that happen.

"I've been there and done it before so I'm not as nervous as last time, my role is to keep the players calm and make sure they're in a good spot on the day."

The former Bonnyrigg White Eagles technical director led Marconi

Stallions to the 2015 U20s Grand Final where they were defeated 3-2 by Blacktown City, but Dimovski is intent on setting the record straight with Sutherland in 2017.

In keeping with their reputation as Sydney's breeding ground for youth footballers the Sharks will field a hugely proficient side with over 100 games of 2017 first grade experience bolstered throughout the roster.

It's a challenge that APIA Leichhardt Head Coach Franco Cosentino relishes after the Tigers claimed their Grand Final spot with a stunning 2-1 victory over Sydney FC last Saturday.

The former Parramatta FC coach arrived at Lambert Park eight weeks ago following the departure of Michael Urukalo and a heavy 4-0 thrashing at the hands of the Sky Blues but has lifted APIA to their best form of the campaign in his short tenure.

Cosentino says improvements in fitness, defensive structure and work ethic has prevented the Tigers from slipping away and attributes the creation a first grade environment as key to the side's progress during the final third of the campaign.

"The boys have reacted really well, we've changed a few things about

what we expect and what we want to do as a team and they've taken everything on board.

"They respect me and have confidence in me which is a great thing."

The APIA Head Coach acknowledges his side's approach to the match as outsiders but is looking to throw the gauntlet down to the rest of the NPL with both Tigers senior teams in the championship running.

"Sutherland are a great side, Nick will have them well drilled and they're a very flamboyant team going forward.

"We don't mind being the underdogs - I've been an underdog for a long time."

Cosentino has already signed on for the 2018 season and will be administering various technical positions across the Tigers' youth teams.

APIA defeated the Premiers 2-1 in round 14's clash at Lambert Park with Sutherland triumphing 2-0 over the Tigers in round three.

Sydney Olympic won the 2016 20's Grand Final after defeating Manly United on penalties.



TEAM LISTS



1	Nathan	DENHAM (GK)
4	Andrija	MANDIC
7	Jack	PRESS
8	Chris	McSTAY
13	Jeremy	COX
14	Angelo	PARASHIS
18	Matias	DA SILVA SANTOS
23	Deren	O'BRIEN
24	Adam	MASSOUD
26	Harry	SUTHERLAND
27	Harrison	QUIRK
29	Daniel	KRKOVSKI
30	Lachlan	EVERETT
31	Robert	WATSON
33	Thomas	PAPA
34	Jake	BORROMEO
36	Matthew	STEWART
37	Christian	TORRELLI

Head Coach: Nick Dimovski
 Assistant Coach: Steve Gordon
 Team Manager: Craig Simmons



24	Shaho	ISMAEEL HASAN
25	Aedon	KYRA
26	Christian	THEUMA
28	Benjamin	MCCARRON
29	Mathew	BARKHO
30	Rainer	SMAHEL
31	Jordan	MORFITIS
32	Stephan	ADATTINI
34	Nicholas	POGONOWSKI
35	Jackson	VOLARICH
36	Jack	ARMSON
37	Dominion	NASRABADI
38	Samuel	GULISANO
39	Samuel	PASLIS

Coach: Franco Cosentino
 Assistant Coach: Jonathan Keepie
 Manager: Mario Guerrera

Referee: Adrian Brett **Assistant Referees:** Hassan Jomaa & Bradley Wright **4th Official:** Michael Bailey



MATCH PREVIEW

The biggest game of the PlayStation®4 NPL NSW Men's season has arrived and months of blood, sweat and tears will culminate with what is set to be a blockbuster clash of the titans.

After 22 rounds and three weeks of finals, APIA Leichhardt Tigers will go head to head to decide who will be this season's PlayStation®4 NPL NSW Men's Champions.

APIA Leichhardt Tigers and Manly United have been the form teams of the past 10 weeks and are fitting combatants for this season's decider.

It has been historic seasons for both clubs with Manly United playing in their first Grand Final in 22 years while it is APIA's first in 14 seasons.

The chance to bring home Championship success to their long suffering fans is sure to inspire both sides for this blockbuster matchup.

APIA Leichhardt finally delivered on years of promise by breaking a 30 year premiership drought when they mounted a late season run to snatch the title from competition powerhouse Blacktown City. The Danial Cummins coached side has managed to find a way to win where teams from previous seasons have fallen short.

It is a similar story for their opposition Manly United. Years of falling short at the semi-final stage has come to an end for the club from the Northern Beaches. United has put together an incredible run of results to qualify for the Grand Final after finishing the season in fourth spot.

On the park both teams have squads bristling with talent and neither side possess any glaring weaknesses.

APIA did it at both ends of the field this season as they scored more goals

(50) than anyone and conceded the least (18) in the competition.

Striker Jordan Murray continued his development as one of the best young marksmen in the competition scoring 12 goals in his second season at the club. It has also been a breakthrough campaign for Sean Symons who made the left wing position his own scoring 9 goals and providing countless assists.

Manly United's achievements aren't ones to be scoffed at either. Despite sitting outside the top five with six weeks of the competition to go, the Warren Grieve coached side hit their straps in the run home and was the second best attack in the league with 47 goals.

Boasting one of the strongest squads in the competition, Manly know their way to goal and had five players who scored five or more goals this season.





V



The game presents a number of key match-ups with some of the competition's most talented players going head to head.

Can Josh Symons and the APIA defence hold out Manly's barnstorming wingers Dejan Pandurevic and Scott Balderson?

Can Manly stop the APIA attack of Murray, Sean Symons and the Mercurial Tasuku Sekiya?

Will the scars from their comprehensive 5-0 loss to APIA prove too much for Manly to overcome, or will it inspire them to greater heights?

The two sides have only faced off twice this season and have a win each with a total of 11 goals scored between them across the two fixtures.

While APIA will have the mental edge as Premiers and comprehensive victors from the last clash between the two sides, Manly United are full of confidence and are playing some of their best football.

Whatever the outcome this afternoon, goals, excitement and entertainment are sure to be on the menu.

However, when it's all said and done, only one team can be crowned Champion.



FIRST GRADE



S	B	#	NAME	
■	■	1	NECEVSKI	Ivan
■	■	2	MILLGATE	Nathan
■	■	3	GALIMI	Paul
■	■	4	SYMONS	Joshua
■	■	7	O'CONNELL	Sean
■	■	8	BICZO	Corey
■	■	9	WEST	Matthew
■	■	10	PARISI	Franco
■	■	11	MURRAY	Jordan
■	■	12	COX	Dominic
■	■	13	D'APUZZO	David (C)
■	■	14	TUXFORD	Blake
■	■	15	MUATA-MARLOW	Themba
■	■	16	SYMONS	Sean
■	■	17	VLASTELICA	Adrian
■	■	18	UCCHINO	Adrian
■	■	19	LUNDY	Brandon
■	■	20	SEKIYA	Tasuku
■	■	21	STEPHAN	Cameron
■	■	22	TURNBULL	Luke
■	■	23	COOK	Mathew

Head Coach: Danial Cummins
 Coach: Bronislav Jasiczek Von Castello
 Assistant Coach: John Calleja
 Manager: Sergio Bucciarelli
 Manager: Emanuele Ziino
 Gear Steward: Ben Viviani
 Head Of Senior Football: Billy McColl

TEAM LISTS



S	B	#	NAME	
■	■	1	MITCHELL	Dylan
■	■	2	PAULL	Kieren
■	■	3	LOBB	Jamie (C)
■	■	4	OUGHTRED	Travis
■	■	5	WILLIAMS	Rhys
■	■	6	FERGUSON	Dominic
■	■	7	COOPER	Travis
■	■	8	MACURA	Sasa
■	■	9	MACALLISTER	Dylan
■	■	10	CHOLAKIAN	Brendan
■	■	11	TANESKI	Nikola
■	■	12	EGGER	Leigh
■	■	13	BALDERSON	Scott
■	■	14	PANDUREVIC	Dejan
■	■	15	SAMA	Marco
■	■	16	BERTI	Sipan
■	■	17	WILSON	Samuel
■	■	18	BALNEAVES	Todd
■	■	20	CATLIN	Shaun
■	■	21	FOX	Joseph
■	■	22	SPIERS	Rory

Coach: Warren Grieve
Assistant Coach: Robert Catlin and Andrew Christiansen
Manager: Eda Rigoni
Physiotherapist: Steve Felsher



Referee: Kurt Ams

Assistant Referees: Matthew McOrist & Janush Adabjou

4th Official: Kris Griffiths-Jones



KEY PLAYERS



TASUKU SEKIYA

APIA Leichhardt Tigers' Japanese import Tasuku Sekiya has been one of the club's creative fulcrums in attack for the past few seasons and will once again play a major role for the club during this season's decider.

A crafty dribbler with an eye for goal, Sekiya can play either out in front as a striker or deeper as a creative midfielder.

The 24-year old was named in the PlayStation®4 National Premier Leagues NSW Men's team of the season last year and he will be determined to add a Championship title to his collection.

A technical player who has slowly adapted to the extra physicality of football in Australia compared to his native Japan, Sekiya could once again prove to be the difference maker for APIA.

Marauding winger Sean Symons has had a breakthrough season in 2017. Playing 22 games and scoring ten goals, Symons has been a regular attacking threat for APIA from wide positions.

His improvement in front of goal this season has made him a true double threat with the ability to provide a pin point cross into the box or skill to cut inside and score.

He is sure to create plenty of headaches for the opposition defence on Grand Final day.



SEAN SYMONS



IVAN NECEVSKI

With a career spanning 17 years including ten seasons in the A-League, Ivan Necevski's composure and big game experience is sure to give APIA Leichhardt Tigers an edge on Grand Final day.

Necevski is an A-League title winner with Sydney FC and knows what it takes to win in big matches.

The shot stopper kept a clean sheet in APIA's semi-final win and has been in impressive form since doing the club mid way through the season.

He is sure to make life difficult for opposition strikers as the Tigers last line of defence.

Young striker Jordan Murray has quickly become a big part of APIA Leichhardt Tigers in only his second season at the club.

The 21-year-old has nearly doubled his tally of seven goals from 2016 with a haul of 12 goals this normal league season campaign.

Tall, fast and with an eye for goal, Murray is a handful for defenders and can be a matchup nightmare on set pieces.

If Murray is at his best, APIA will be hard to beat.



JORDAN MURRAY



KEY PLAYERS



BRENDAN CHOLAKIAN

The Manly United attacker has long been the creative fulcrum for the Northern Beaches side and will once again be an important part of their Championship endeavours.

Possessing silky dribbling skills, a deft touch and an eye for goal, Cholakian has the ability to break open a match with a moment of brilliance

Expect a big performance from Cholakian who will be determined to push his side to a historic Premiership win.

The veteran striker has played a key role for Manly United this season troubling defences with his size and holding the ball up for their wingers.

Despite scoring only four goals in the normal league this season, Macallister's experience playing in the A-League, Hong Kong's Premier League and Norway's Tippeligaen means he is a player who can't be underestimated in the season's biggest match.

The target man scored against Blacktown City in the Semi-Final and is sure to keep the APIA Leichhardt Tigers defence busy all match.



DYLAN MACALLISTER

Success seems to follow the midfielder who is set to play in his fourth straight Grand Final.

Macura made the move to Manly this season after two Grand Final winners medals and a Premiership with Blacktown City.

His experience in big matches and ability to control the midfield will prove vital for the Northern Beaches side as he attempts to limit APIA from controlling the middle of the park.



SASA MACURA

Manly United have really unleashed a weapon in their armour and that is the club's right back in Kieren Paull.

Regarded by many as one of the most creative and energetic defenders in the entire PlayStation@4 National Premier Leagues NSW Men's competition, Paull's mazy runs as well as lethal crosses have been a regular occurrence at Cromer Park and beyond.

One player to certainly watch out for on Grand Final day and someone that can change the match in more ways than one.



KIEREN PAULL

APIA LEICHHARDT TIGERS FC



DAVID D'APUZZO

On breaking the club's 30 year Premiership drought

It was a feeling of relief when we won the Premiership.

I think everyone just thought it was about time that we finally won the title because we had gone so close so many times before.

It was a great moment for the club and hopefully we can add a Grand Final win as well.

On playing in a Grand Final

Everyone is excited and we can't wait to take to the field on Sunday.

Of course there are a few nerves as this is a first for a number of the boys but mostly it is just a really great moment for the club and individually as players.

It is the first time in 14 or 15 years since the club has made it to a Grand Final so it is important we make the most of this moment.

On what makes this year's APIA team so special

I think the secret is the chemistry of the team.

Everyone gets on really well and we all go out and spend time together away from the pitch as well.

The boys all work hard for one another and with that mentality it has helped us fight on even when things weren't necessarily going our way.

DC (Danial Cummins) worked us pretty hard in preseason and got us into great shape for the season which has also helped us along the way.



NATHAN MILLGATE

On the week off

It has been a really different experience preparing for a Grand Final.

It is my first one at this level so I've tried to get myself in the best mindset and focus on the match but also trying and enjoy it. You never know how many Grand Finals you're going to play in during your career or if any at all.

With the Westfield FFA Cup match the other week it meant we had a few niggles and other injuries in the squad so having an extra few days to recover and prepare should really help us.

On their dominant semi-final win

Everything just clicked for us in that match (5-0 major semi-final win against Rockdale City Suns) and everyone was playing some of their best football.

DC (Danial Cummins) changed our style a bit for the match and it really paid off.

The way we played in the second half, I don't think anybody in the competition could have stopped us.

On APIA's biggest strength

I think the quality and depth we have in every position makes us a tough team to play.

Everyone in the squad can come in and make a difference in a match.

At training everyone is working hard to fight for their spot in the team.

While there is plenty of competition internally, we are all on the same page and working for the same goal which I think has played a big part in our success.



MANLY UNITED FC



BRENDAN CHOLAKIAN

On why Manly United can be Champions

Manly has been developing more of a winning mentality over the past few years and it has really helped us win tough matches this season.

We believe no matter the score we have what it takes to fight back and win.

It feels like the culture at the club has changed and I think our attitude has us primed to win Manly's first Grand Final since the mid 90's

On coach Warren Grieve

Warren has done an incredible job taking over from Paul Dee this season and everyone is really confident he is the man to help us get the job done in the Grand Final.

To come in and do his job as technical director at Manly and take on the first grade side as well is a massive task. Warren has devoted himself to the role and it's obvious how much he wants to win and build on the platform Paul set.

He has all the players believing in themselves and what the team as a whole can achieve.

On what winning means to the club

It would be a huge deal for Manly United if we were to take out the Championship.

It has been a long time between drinks for this club and it would mean a lot to a lot of people if we were to win.

This is a great club and we are all driven to help Manly achieve the success it deserves.



JAMIE LOBB

On Manly United's extraordinary run of form

I don't think there was any particular catalyst which turned our season around. I think it was a case of players who were injured started to become available once again and we had a bit of renewed energy around the squad.

When we were outside the top five towards the back end of the season we just started to treat each match like a final and the results came with it.

On Grand Final nerves

Playing in a Grand Final is something very different for most people at Manly because it has been so long since the club last played in one.

There is a lot of excitement and nervous energy around the place but I think overall everyone is just really happy with the success we have had this season.

It's great we have made the Grand Final but i think it is most important we stay composed and get the job done against APIA.

On what it will take to win the Grand Final

In both games we've played against each other APIA has raced out of the blocks so I think how we handle ourselves early on will be a big factor.

I think if we can hold on early we will be able to take the game to them as the match progresses.

Both teams have incredible strike forces so I think defensive play could be the difference in the end.

2017 ENCOUNTERS

ROUND NINE

MANLY UNITED 4 - 2 APIA LEICHHARDT TIGERS

Four unanswered goals helped Manly United to bragging rights against APIA Leichhardt Tigers when they secured a 4-2 win during their PlayStation®4 National Premier Leagues NSW Men's Round Nine clash at Cromer Park.

It looked like APIA were going to cruise to an easy win when Tasuku Sekiya and then Josh Symons gave the visitors a 2-0 lead after only 24 minutes.

However, Manly would fire back in emphatic style thanks to a double from Scott Balderson either side of the half time interval.

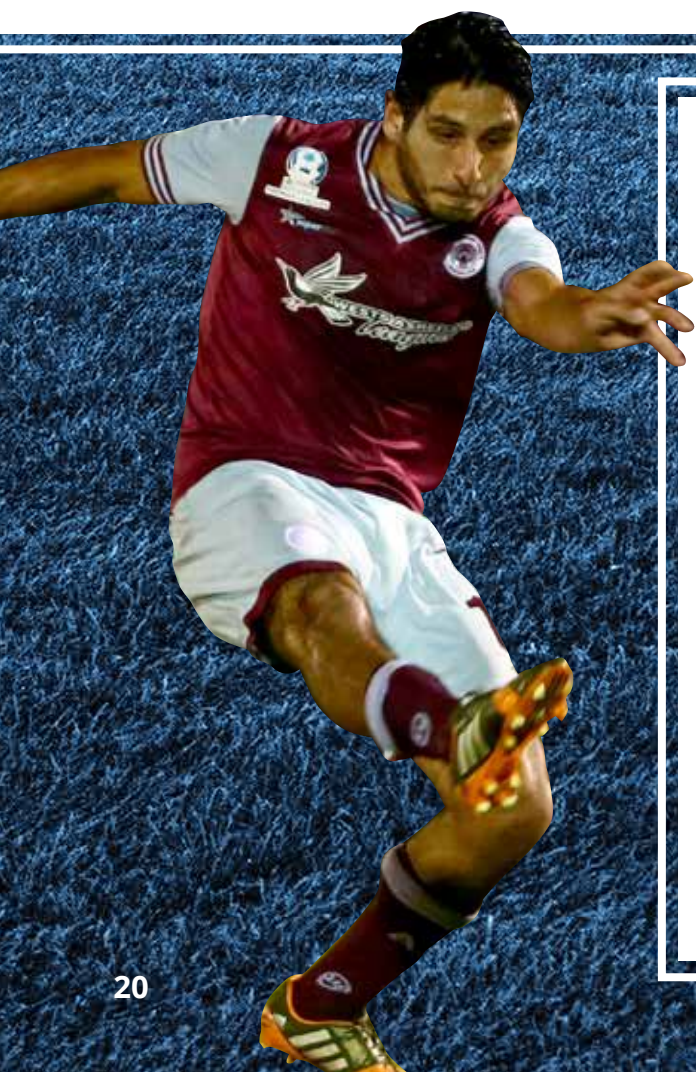
APIA battled to regain their lead but the momentum was all with the boys from the northern beaches who were steadfast in defence and ruthless in attack.

With 14 minutes left on the clock, Sasa Macura fired home from outside the box to give Manly a 3-2 lead.

Substitute Nikola Taneski gave the home fans plenty to smile about in the 82nd minute when he hammered the final nail in APIA's coffin with an absolute stunning long range strike to clinch the 4-2 victory.

The result ended a run of three games without a win for Manly.

The game will also be remembered for the incredible fighting spirit of Manly United defender Travis Oughtred who finished the match despite dislocating his shoulder twice.



ROUND 20

APIA LEICHHARDT TIGERS 5 - 0 MANLY UNITED

APIA Leichhardt Tigers made amends for their round nine loss in emphatic style as they thumped Manly United 5-0 at Lambert Park during Round 20 of the PlayStation®4 National Premier Leagues NSW Men's competition.

Everything that could go wrong did go wrong in what was Manly's worst defeat of the season.

It all started in the 14th minute when United attacker Brendan Cholakian was sent for an early shower after a straight red card for a rash challenge on APIA midfielder Sean O'Connell.

With the extra player advantage, the home side went on the offensive and there was little Manly could do to stop their opponents.

Sean Symons gave the home side a 1-0 lead when he finished an Adrian Uchino cross in the 27th minute before defender Nathan Millgate made it 2-0 with a towering header in the 35th minute.

Tasuku Sekiya's tap in from a Corey Bizco cross made it 3-0 on the cusp of half time.

It didn't get much better for the visitors in the second stanza with Dominic Cox finding the back of the net in the 68th minute while Sekiya claimed his second goal of the match with a silky finish in the 77th minute.

The win proved to be a vital result for APIA moving them into top spot ahead of their season defining win against Blacktown City in the penultimate round of the competition the following week.

COACHES COMMENTS



DANIAL CUMMINS

On handling the pressure of a Grand Final

The club has worked so hard in the past 10 years to reach this milestone so of course there is pressure on us to achieve success. The players have really high expectations for themselves and as do the coaching staff as well as everyone else at the club.

What has helped us I think is that we have been focused on our own standards and shutting out any outside pressure.

Most importantly if we stick to our structure and enjoy what we are doing then we should be on the right track to achieving what we've set out to achieve.

On APIA's Grand Final preparations

Having played 41 games this season, and also going so deep into the Westfield FFA Cup, of course we are going to have a few niggles and injuries we need to manage.

The week off has given us the opportunity to freshen up and take our time getting things right before the big match.

I have been in sides where the extra time off before the Grand Final has been a bit of a hindrance but I think it has really steeled us and has the team in the best possible shape to win the championship.

On why this year's APIA team can win the double.

We have a strong culture in this team which strives for nothing less than their best.

It was important at the start of the year to instill this mentality and make changes from how things were done in previous seasons at the club.

The change has been the mentality, the accountability and the standards we set.

We set strict boundaries in preseason and those standards have pretty much stayed the same all season,

Having such a strong squad the players know they have to fight for their position on the team and the extra level of competitiveness has helped us achieve the success the club deserves.

It will be exactly the same on Grand Final day and I'm very confident in the squad's ability to get the result on Grand Final day.



WARREN GRIEVE

On Manly United's incredible mid-season turnaround

We always believed we had what it takes to make it to the Grand Final.

All the way through the season I have been positive that this group of players were capable of achieving great things and it is a testament to their fighting spirit and determination that they have beaten their challenges to make it this far.

It has been a fantastic run of results over the past 10 or so weeks and we are very confident we can win it.

On Grand Final tactics

It's a Grand Final and anything can happen.

If you look at the teams we have beaten in recent weeks it goes to show we can defeat anyone in this competition.

I think tactically an early goal will be important but most of all I think composure and determination will be deciding factors.

On taking over from Paul Dee

Paul has played a very big part in establishing this squad but I think it is most important to stress this game is not about one person. It is about the club, the players as a whole and the fans.

Everything we do should be about the collective good.

I'm confident we have what it takes to get the job done on Sunday.

SEAN SYMONS: THE NEXT BIG THING

by Nicholas Houghton

A breakout season from Sean Symons has helped APIA Leichhardt Tigers to a Premiership, a Waratah Cup final and a deep run in the Westfield FFA Cup, however the winger says it will be bitter sweet unless his side tastes Grand Final glory.

Despite being a major part of APIA's PlayStation®4 National Premier Leagues NSW Men's side for the past few seasons, it wasn't until this year's campaign that the 24-year old really made his mark.

A total of nine goals during the normal league season and countless assists from Symons has helped him become one of the most dangerous wingers in the competition and he says it all came down to finding consistency.

"This year I was given the chance to play left wing all season which was something I've really appreciated," he said.

"Over the past few seasons I have been moved around the park playing a variety of positions and I haven't really had the chance to really make one my own.

"Left wing is my preferred position and I think my performances this season are proof of what I can do in that role if I'm given the chance to play there week after week."

Symons has developed a strong partnership with APIA's other attacking players and said it was the chemistry between the entire squad which has helped lift each player's performances to a higher level

"This season everyone has been on the same page as one another and are willing to do that little bit extra to help their teammates," he said

"With everyone working tirelessly for one another it just takes the pressure off that little bit knowing you have ten other guys out there all striving for the same goal.

"It has been an incredible squad to be a part of and after all we have done we want to end the season with a Grand Final win. It would take a bit away from our achievements this year if we fell one game short."

One team mate Symons has enjoyed playing alongside the most is that of brother Josh Symons who joined the

club from Parramatta FC at the start of the campaign.

"It is the first time we have played together in senior football and I couldn't wait to run out alongside him when I heard the club were going to sign him," he said.

"It's absolutely awesome having Josh at the back. It is great having him back there because you know you can rely on him week in and week out to lead the defence.

"Being able to share all our successes together has been amazing and hopefully we get another chance on Grand Final day."

Symons said he hopes his side can replicate their near flawless semi-final performance in this season's decider.

"It was a great match and everything just clicked for us. We wanted to show what we are capable of but to beat Rockdale 5-0 and in the manner which we did it exceeded even our own expectations," he said.

"We have always been able to create chances in our matches this season but in the semi-final we were on

another level. Our finishing was also much improved and we were able to capitalise on all the opportunities we were creating.

"I'm very confident in our chances of winning the Championship if we play the same standard of football in the Grand Final. We know we can play at such a high level now so it will be the benchmark we will be working towards."

Although focused on his role with APIA Symons has one eye on making the next step with his football career and hopes a big Grand Final performance could be the key to doing so.

"It would be a dream come true to play in the Hyundai A-League," he said.

"I'm really happy at APIA but there is always that part of you which wants to test yourself at the highest possible level.

"There will be a lot of extra attention on us during the Grand Final so if I play well you never know who is watching.

"All that stuff is really secondary for me at the moment. We've worked so hard this season all we want to do now is lift that Premiership trophy."



by Nicholas Houghton

DYLAN MACALLISTER: TURNING BACK THE CLOCK

Veteran Manly United striker Dylan Macallister says Grand Final glory on Sunday against APIA Leichhardt Tigers would be major highlight in his career which boast titles in Australia, Norway and Hong Kong.

The nomadic striker has featured for club's in Norway, Switzerland and Hong Kong's top flight as well as an extensive stint in the Hyundai A-League playing for Central Coast Mariners, Wellington Phoenix, Gold Coast United and Melbourne Heart.

Despite a season interrupted by injury, Macallister hopes to help Manly taste a Championship triumph for the first time since 1995.

"I'm a Manly local so it was nice to come home to the club after playing last season at Rockdale," he said.

"Winning trophies is what every player strives for, no matter what level they're playing at, so on that level it makes me very excited to be playing in a big match like this.

"Injury wise I haven't had the best year, but I'm feeling pretty good now and hopefully I can make a difference against APIA Leichhardt."

Macallister said Manly's unity and team spirit this year would make it a season he wouldn't forget and it was because of this any success would rank alongside his triumphs from his time playing professionally abroad.

"Our struggles earlier this season really brought us together and I think it really helped get us back on track and win our way to a Grand Final," Macallister said.

"The best thing out of this season so far has been this great group of guys in our squad. The spirit and camaraderie everyone has shown is second to none.

"A lot of these players are here because they really want to be here and because they love this club so much. That has been something really unique to my experience playing at Manly and it inspires you to

give everything you can on the pitch.

"I've been lucky enough to have won championships overseas but if we are to win the title the connection we all have to this team will make it very special."

The 35-year-old's experience playing in big matches and his position as a veteran leader in the locker room has meant Macallister has played a role in helping his teammates prepare for the clash with APIA.

"Because it has been a long time since Manly played in a Grand Final many of the boys in the team have not had the chance to play in one," he said.

"I spoke to some of the younger players in the team and shared with them some of my experiences playing in Grand Finals.

"I was lucky enough to play in an NSL Grand Final when I was 19 and you think you will play in championship matches all the time through your career but more often than not that isn't the case. In fact it was another 10 or 11 years after that NSL decide

before I played in another Grand Final.

"The main message I had for them was to enjoy themselves and don't take anything for granted. We have a real opportunity here and you don't want to look back later on and say you have regrets because you didn't give it your all."

With the chance to make history for the club he represented as a junior, Macallister said he is determined to come away a winner.

"Manly United have been building towards this moment for quite sometime and I think as a squad we have come a long way in just this season alone.

"We might be underdogs coming up against APIA but once the whistle goes I don't think that will have much impact on the game at all.

"The Manly United club and the local community have really got behind the team this year so it would mean a lot if we are able to bring home the title."



ULTRA FOOTBALL TEAM OF THE YEAR

With the PlayStation®4 National Premier League NSW Men's 2017 season reaching its crescendo, it's that time of year where we reflect on the standout players who made this season great.

After every competition fixture, our reporters have been awarding 3, 2, 1

votes and they are added up to decide the make-up of this star studded team that featured a starting eleven as well as a strong substitutes line-up.

From the experienced campaigners to the young up and coming superstars, 2017's team of the year has it all.

The list of players with powerful performances was a long one and included many individuals who did their clubs proud. Congratulations to each player and team for a great season and a big well done to the players that ultimately made the PlayStation®4 NPL NSW Men's Team of the Year for 2017.



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FOR THE KIDS

Zig Zag Word Puzzle

This is a zig zag word puzzle. Words go left, right, up, down - not diagonally - and can bend at right angles. There are no unused letters in the grid, every letter is used only once.

C	H	G	O	A	L	K	A	C	E
A	C	R	E	P	E	E	R	W	E
P	T	L	E	R	H	T	D	O	R
T	A	P	A	O	W	I	N	L	E
A	M	E	G	T	E	R	E	L	F
I	N	N	U	D	A	M	D	E	E
T	L	A	E	E	F	E	N	Y	R
Y	T	R	I	K	E	R	K	I	T
D	S	G	N	I	M	I	D	F	I
R	I	B	B	L	R	E	D	L	E

Find all the words from the word list (ignore spaces and dashes):

CAPTAIN	MIDFIELDER	DEFENDER
PENALTY	DRIBBLING	REFEREE
GOALKEEPER	STRIKER	KIT
TEAM	LEAGUE	THROW-IN
MATCH	YELLOW CARD	

Find the Difference

Find 5 differences in the picture below.



1. Cloud near boy's head is extended 2. first tree missing trunk 3. missing teeth 4. left armband on shirt is yellow 5. left shoe has missing tongue.

Favourite Sports Logic Puzzle

	Baseball	Tennis	Basketball	Soccer
Alex				
Jessica				
Ryan				
Sophie				

Four friends each have different favourite sports. Use the clues to figure out who likes which sport.

- Jessica likes neither soccer nor basketball.
- Ryan used to like basketball and baseball best, but he has changed his mind.
- Neither of the boys likes soccer best.

ROBBIE SLATER MEDAL

The 'Robbie Slater Man of the Match' award was instigated to honour the tough tackling attacking midfielder as he spent his early years developing as a footballer in NSW before trekking off overseas to forge a successful footballing career abroad.

"I've got a huge history in NSW, especially as a footballer" says Slater.

"I grew up in the Bankstown area and commenced my career as a footballer with the Revesby Rovers and Revesby Workers before moving to Panania RSL then onto Auburn.

"Soon after that I played almost 100 matches for the St George Saints then went to the Blacktown City Demons and Sydney United in the old National Soccer League before I left for Belgium.

"You could certainly say that I spent my early life developing as a footballer in NSW, so to receive such an accolade was a huge honour indeed."

Born in Lancashire, England, the 46-year-old was delighted to have been given this honour by Football NSW as Slater holds a high regard for the PlayStation®4 NPL NSW Men's competition.

"As I said earlier it's a huge honour and quite humbling really to have been thought of for this.

"I have been involved with this since 2009 and have seen all the winners move onto bigger things which have seen various players take part in the Hyundai A-League and more.

"In my opinion the PlayStation®4 NPL NSW Men's competition has developed a number of current Hyundai A-League stars who have gone onto play higher whether it be abroad or for the Caltex Socceroos.

"The competition itself has evolved in many ways and that's also thanks to the introduction of the Westfield FFA Cup.

"A number of the clubs taking part in the PlayStation®4 NPL NSW Men's competition were involved in the old National Soccer League but I really believe that these clubs have played a huge role in way the Australian game has progressed.

"In my opinion the PlayStation®4 NPL NSW Men's has been seen as a pathway to the top for our many elite footballers at the present moment and is certainly an important competition in Australia."

The 'Robbie Slater Man of the Match' is presented at the conclusion of the PlayStation®4 NPL NSW Men's Grand Final.

ROBBIE SLATER MAN OF THE MATCH WINNERS

2009 Blake Powell
Sutherland Sharks

2010 Tolgay Ozbey
Blacktown City FC

2011 Peter Triantis
Sydney Olympic

2012 Nathan Elasi
Marconi Stallions

2013 Alex Mansueto
Bonnyrigg White Eagles

2014 Kearyn Baccus
Blacktown City

2015 Chris Tadrosse
Bonnyrigg White Eagles

2016 Danny Choi
Blacktown City



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