

KICKOFF



MARCONI
STALLIONS

GRAND FINAL

SUNDAY
14 JULY 2019
2.30PM

LILY HOMES
STADIUM



WELCOME

Welcome to the 2019 TAFE NSW Waratah Cup Final, an opportunity that will see two very historic football teams in the Marconi Stallions and Sydney United 58 grab Football NSW's first piece of silverware.

It's been an amazing year for TAFE NSW Waratah Cup and it all will come to a climax today at Lily Homes Stadium, home of Blacktown City FC.

Over 100 clubs – including Association teams from across NSW and teams from the NPL NSW Men's, NPL 2 NSW Men's, NPL 3 NSW Men's and State League Men's, participated in what has been a great campaign to date.

The TAFE NSW Waratah Cup represents the wonderful history of the game in New South Wales, and each year there are fairytale stories of local association teams beating their more favoured State League opposition.

Steeped in history, the TAFE NSW Waratah Cup was first played in 1971 and, following a 20 year hiatus, recommenced in 1991 where Blacktown City took home the silverware.

Today only two teams remain, both of whom are elite NPL NSW Men's clubs.

Both teams immersed in Australian football history, the Marconi Stallions battle neighbours Sydney United 58 in what promises to be a titanic battle between two highly rated and talented teams.

Cup Finals always produce an entertaining spectacle and this year's combatants will be no exception.

I would like to extend a huge congratulations to all teams involved in this season's TAFE NSW Waratah Cup for their participation and support of this historic tournament.

Finally a big thank you to the fans for your tremendous support today and throughout the season.

Good luck to both teams and I hope this year's TAFE NSW Waratah Cup Final lives long in your memory.

Stuart Hodge
Chief Executive Officer - Football NSW





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1ST GRADE TEAM LISTS



1	Nenad	Vekic
2	Nathan	Millgate
3	Giorgio	Speranza
4	Roberto	Speranza
5	James	Baldacchino
7	Sean	O'Connell
8	Connor	Evans
9	Anthony	Frangie
10	Marko	Jesic
11	Mitch	Mallia
12	James	Andrew
13	Yianni	Nicolaou
14	Peter	Pelekanos
15	Lachlan	Sepping
16	Liam	Youlley
17	Kristian	Sekutkoski
18	Anthony	Trimboli
19	Zac	Cairncross
20	Richie	Cardozo
23	Brandon	Vella

Coach: Peter Tsekenis

Team Managers: Frank Mammoliti and
Peter Papoythis

Goal Keeper Coach: Ante Covic

Strength & Conditioning Coach: Brett
Studman

Gear Steward: Robert Tolomeo, Robert
Filippin, Laborio Bivona

1	Daniel	Sadaka
3	Jordan	Roberts
4	Adrian	Vlastelica
5	Anthony	Tomelic
6	Petar	Markovic
7	Peter	Simonoski
8	Matthew	Sim
9	Patrick	Antelmi
10	Sebastien	Gallegos
11	Yianni	Perkatis
12	Liam	Rose
14	Tomislav	Uskok
15	Tariq	Maia
17	Matthew	Bilic
18	Glenn	Trifiro
19	Josh	Macdonald
20	Christian	Gonzalez
21	Thomas	Manos
22	Yianni	Fragogiannis
23	Luke	Vlastelica

Head Coach: Miro Vlastelica

Assistant Coach: Jerry Bilokapic

Goalkeeper Coach: Vitas Males

Gear Steward: Raymond Gerrie

Physiotherapist: Denana Kadric

Referee:

K. Patterson

Assistant Referees:

S. Edeling, J. Park

Fourth Official:

S. Lucas

ROAD TO THE FINAL

There is a reason why many believe there is a special type of magic to cup competitions.

Form, big name players and expectations can all be thrown out the window with a single bounce of the ball.

Sometimes it takes more than just skill to win when everything is on the line.

Whether it's a lucky bounce or an untimely mistake from the opposition, knockout football can bring both heartbreak and jubilation.

This season's Waratah Cup finalists know all the highs and lows of cup competition with their history as fierce rivals adding an extra layer to this captivating contest.

Two of Australian football's most historic teams, Sydney United 58 and Marconi Stallions share a rivalry which has spanned many decades including the heights of the NSL era.

Both clubs are responsible for nurturing some of the nation's greatest talents including Ned Zelic, Mark Bosnich, Tim Cahill, Christian Vieri and Harry Kewell.

For Sydney United 58 this is their first return to the Waratah Cup final since 2016 when they defended their title after also winning the trophy 12 months earlier in 2015.

The game for Marconi marks their first chance at Silverware since winning promotion back to the NPL NSW in 2017 and they won't be leaving anything to chance when they take to Lily Homes Stadium on cup final day.

Marconi cruised to the Waratah Cup decider after scoring 19 goals in five matches.

The Peter Tsekens coached side opened their cup campaign in style with a 7-0 win against Canterbury Association club side Abbotsford Juniors FC before backing it up with another dominant performance in a 5-1 win at The Ponds FC.

A 3-1 win against National Premier Leagues NSW Men's opponents Hakoah Sydney City East before another 3-1 win a few weeks later against reigning NPL NSW premiers Sydney Olympic.

Manly United was the final hurdle for the Stallions but they won 2-0 to secure their spot in the Waratah Cup final.

The opponents had a bit of a tougher time to make it to the final.

It's been an up and down season for Sydney United 58 in the league but they didn't lack a winning edge on their way to Lily Homes Stadium

Qualifying got off to an edgy start with a narrow 1-0 win on the road against NPL 3 side Gladesville Ryde Magic followed by a 3-0 win against Illawarra Premier League outfit Woonoona Sharks.

Next was a grudge match against NPL NSW rivals Blacktown City which they won 2-1 thanks to goals from Tarik Maia and Glen Trifiro.

A clash against NPL 2 side Northern Tigers in their next match had even more drama with 90 minutes not enough to decide the result.

United 58 bounced back from 1-0 down to take a 2-1 lead late in the second half, but it wouldn't be enough for the Miro Vlastelica coached Reds as the Tigers found a shock equaliser in the 88th minute.

With the game sent to extra time, Patrick Antelmi snatched the winner from the penalty spot to set up a semi-final clash against St George FC.

A second half flurry of goals had the game locked a 2-2 with United 58 seemingly set for another extra-time thriller.

However, it wasn't to be with striker Peter Simonoski netting deep into added time to clinch a 3-2 win for Sydney United 58 and a Waratah Cup final berth.

Sunday's clash will be the final test for two sides stacked with talent across the board.

There will be plenty of feeling in this contest with their historic rivalry adding extra spice to what is sure to be a thrilling match.

Eyes will firmly be on the prize as history, and bragging rights, go on the line at Lily Homes Stadium.



Marconi Stallions striker Marko Jesic is confident the historic club is on the cusp of a new era of success starting with victory in today's Waratah Cup final

The match against local rivals Sydney United 58 at Lily Homes Stadium will be the first top flight final for Marconi since 2012 and comes after the club fought their way back after relegation in 2015.

The Stallions have been desperate for silverware since returning to the NPL NSW Men's competition and boast a team stacked with talent and big game experience.

Former A-League striker Jesic is one of those players hoping to help Marconi return to the glory days of yesteryear.

The 29-year-old signed for the Bossley Park based club at its lowest point in 2016 after they were relegated from the NPL NSW Men's competition for the first time.

While it hasn't been a straightforward journey, the Marconi junior believes qualifying for the Waratah Cup is proof the Stallions are on the right path.

"A club of Marconi's history deserves to be at the top of the game so when I was approached to join them after they were relegated I took it on as a challenge to help get them back to the level I think this club deserves to be at.," he said.

"Since we've been back in the top tier, results have been up and down but by making this final goes to show we have what it takes to be successful.

"Winning this game is really important to the players because it is proof of what the club and this playing group is capable of.

It is the camaraderie among the current squad which Jesic said has played a major role in their cup run.

Marconi were hardly tested on their way to Sunday's final scoring an incredible 19 goals in only six games.

While Jesic's prolific form in front of goal has been a big part of the Stallions free scoring ways, he says it wouldn't have happened without the selfless play of those around him.

"The best thing about our team this year is that it's just a good group of lads who all put in for each other both on the training paddock and in matches," he said.

"There isn't much in the way of egos and everybody just wants to help each other succeed.

"In saying that we are all fighting for our position in the team each week which means you can't let your standards slip. We are always pushing each other to perform to our best."

Coming up against rivals Sydney United 58 in the final will bring a bit of extra spice to the final according to



Jesic.

Marconi has had the upper hand against United so far this season defeating them 5-0 in April before holding on for a 0-0 draw, despite being reduced to 10 men for most of the match, in their most recent clash only a fortnight ago.

It is because of these recent contests that Jesic is confident his team will have the mental edge against their opponents.

"I think first and foremost the fact two legendary NSL clubs are facing off in the final means more than anything either team has done this past season," he said.

"But looking at what we've done this year I think for sure they would be worried coming up against us because we've proven we know how to score against them and how to stop their attack.

"They are yet to score a goal against us this year and even when we had less players on the field they couldn't break our defence down.

"While publicly they will probably say they aren't thinking too much about their 5-0 loss against us I'm confident it will be something they'll be planning around and talking about in the locker room. I can't see why it wouldn't be in their head."

Jesic said Marconi's formula for victory for the final will be very simple.

"It all comes down to winning the individual battles on the day," he said.

"If we can all do our job on the day and beat our opposite player then I know we have the quality to be lifting the trophy.

"It will be a massive day for Marconi and hopefully we can get the job done and deliver more silverware to this great club."

FEATURE STORY

MANOS PLAYING FOR KEEPS



He may only be 23 but Sydney United 58 shot stopper Thomas Manos has the big game experience of a player ten years his senior.

Now in his fourth season as United's first choice goalkeeper, Manos has played in grand finals, cup finals, finals series as well as FFA Cup knockout matches.

He will add another huge moment in his career on July 14 when he lines up between the sticks for Sydney United 58 at Lily Homes Stadium as they take on Marconi Stallions in the final of the 2019 Waratah Cup.

A youth star for the Western Sydney Wanderers, Manos burst onto the scene at Edensor Park in the 2016 season as a precocious 19-year-old before making his name as one of the National Premier Leagues most exciting up and coming glovemen.

Four years on from his debut Manos reveals a wake-up call in his second season at United 58 changed his approach to football and taught him a valuable lesson which has helped him get the most from his experiences in the game.

"My first year at the club we had so much success and I was playing great which had me on a massive high," he said.

"However, the next year was a struggle with the team suffering through a rocky season and it hit me really hard.

"Having achieved the highest of highs to then only a year later failing to perform at a level I knew I was capable of made me realise how important it is to make the most of every moment and always give it everything.

"While I wasn't taking things easy before that point, it was more a case of understanding what was required of me to consistently perform and become the best player I could."

As well as a change in mindset, Manos admitted his time in the league has also played a big part in the evolution of his game.



Earning a reputation as a risk taking sweeper keeper when he was first on the scene, the young shot stopper has taken a different approach in recent times which he believes has made him a better player.

"When you're a young player you are always trying to make a difference and cement your position on the team by taking more risks.

"While I had a lot of success initially, I realised I needed to find more consistency in my game which I feel I have done over the past two years.

"Once where I would've launched myself over my own defender to punch away a ball into the box, I now know to trust my teammates more and not put myself in positions which the opposition can take advantage of."

Manos will need all of his new found poise against local rivals Marconi in the Waratah Cup final.

United 58 have struggled against the Stallions in 2019 including a shocking 5-0 thrashing in April as well as a 0-0 draw against a ten-man Marconi team only a little over a week ago.

However, the one-time Sydney FC player believes his team shouldn't be written off with the dream of cup glory driving United 58 ahead of the final.

"We set a target at the start of the year to reach the final 32 of the FFA Cup so now that we've achieved that we want to finish off our Waratah Cup campaign in style," Manos said.

"While it has been a bumpy few weeks in terms of league results, the team is still in the top four, in the final of one cup competition and the last few rounds of another. For most other clubs that is seen as a success but because of who we are more is always expected of us.

"This is a good team and even though we were unable to get the win against Marconi in our most recent game I think we have taken a lot of confidence from that result.

"As they always say, anything can happen in a cup final so I don't think they will have any real advantage going into the match."

Against the Stallions' high profile attacking stars Manos is ready to lead his team from the back.

"I'm really looking forward to playing in the Waratah Cup final. I've been lucky enough to play in a number of big matches and finals so I know how important it is to make the most of these opportunities," he said.

"It will be important to keep a cool head and just focus on the game as it happens in front of me instead of worrying too much about making a game changing play.

"It could be a season defining match for the club so we are determined to be the ones holding the trophy after full-time."



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2019 TAFE NSW WARATAH CUP FINAL
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