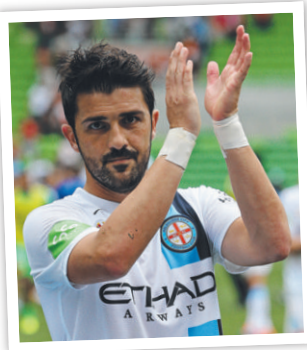


Villa waits until the death to steal a point for City



DAVID Villa struck a late equaliser as Melbourne City snatched a 1-1 draw in yesterday's A-League clash with Newcastle Jets at AAMI Park. Jets striker Edson Montano had threatened to upstage Villa (pictured), breaking the deadlock with a bullet-like header in the 62nd minute. Newcastle central defender Kew Jaliens and goalkeeper Mark Birighitti, responsible for

defusing so much of the danger the hosts created, worked tirelessly to deny Villa. But the crowd of 15,717 would not go home disappointed. Spain's all-time leading goalscorer, the man they had all come to see in his first home game at City, fired home a wondrous goal from the edge of the box in the 87th minute. Birighitti saw it coming, but there was little he could do as

Villa struck it sweetly to make it two goals from two games in the A-League. There was five minutes of injury and extra time and both sides had chances in a frenetic end, but they were forced to split the points. City dominated the first half and looked potent throughout the clash, with Villa, Damien Duff, Aaron Mooy and Massimo Muroccia all influential.

They created a glut of chances. A powerful shot from David Williams went within centimetres of the crossbar in the ninth minute, while Villa almost found the back of the net with a fine header late in the first half. Instead it was Ecuadorean striker Montano, who had previously seen very little action due to the hosts being starved of possession, who scored first.

Mulvey stands by side

MARCO MONTEVERDE

BRISBANE Roar are facing the dreaded prospect of opening their A-League title defence with a hat-trick of defeats if they fail to fix the defensive frailties that haunted them yesterday in their 3-2 loss to Perth Glory. The unbeaten Sydney FC visit Suncorp Stadium on Friday night and deserve favouritism on the basis of the opening two weeks of the season, as well as the Roar's below-par pre-season campaign. The Roar led twice yesterday, but inspired by Irish striker Andy Keogh, the Glory scored three goals in the second half to maintain their 100 per cent record. In contrast, the Roar have opened a season with successive defeats for the first time in the club's history. Despite the poor start, Brisbane coach Mike Mulvey was last night adamant his side would hit back hard. "We want to win every game that we play in, but the bottom line is you can't as has been proved in the past two weeks," he said. "I thought it was a top performance (against Perth) except for the fact that we leaked a few goals. We didn't control the game in the second half as well as we could." Selection-wise Mulvey made the right call in dropping

Liam Miller and including Henrique in one of two changes he made to the team that started in the previous week's 2-1 home loss to Adelaide United. The other change was the inclusion of Steve Lustica for suspended Socceroo Matt McKay. While Lustica did not stand out, Henrique was Brisbane's best, scoring a second-half cracker and setting up Mensur Kurtishi for the Macedonian international's first A-League goal. But despite those good signs in attack, the Roar at times looked ordinary in defence. Centre-back Jade North struggled after suffering from gastro during the week, while James Donachie continues to adapt to life as a right back. North conceded the penalty that gave the Glory their first goal after bringing down Keogh, who converted from the spot to cancel out Kurtishi's opener. Keogh also played a part in the Glory's second goal in the 74th minute, turning North before unleashing with a shot that took a wicked deflection off Donachie before finding the net. And just when it seemed the points would be shared, Keogh rose high above Brisbane's statue-like defence to head home a stoppage-time corner that Roar keeper Jamie Young perhaps could have come for.



STRETCHED: Jade North of the Roar challenges Andy Keogh of Perth Glory for the ball during their A-League match at nib Stadium yesterday. Picture: GETTY IMAGES

FULLTIME

ALEAGUE: ROUND 2
ADELAIDE UNITED 1 (Sergio Cirio 85m) drew **MELBOURNE VICTORY 1** (Ben Khalfallah 89m) at Adelaide Oval. Crowd: 33,126. Referee: Peter O'Leary.
WELLINGTON PHOENIX 2 (Michael McGlinchey 35m, Nathan Burns 54m) bt **CENTRAL COAST MARINERS 1** (Tom Doyle 12m og) at Central Coast Stadium. Crowd: 7,237. Referee: Ben Williams.
SYDNEY FC 3 (Corey Gameiro 45+1m, Romeo Castelen 50m og, Alex Brosque 79m) bt **WESTERN SYDNEY WANDERERS 2** (Mark Bridge 19m, Vedran Janjetovic 24m og) at Allianz Stadium. Crowd: 41,213. Referee: Kris Griffiths-Jones.
MELBOURNE CITY 1 (David Villa 87m) drew **NEWCASTLE JETS 1** (Edson Montano 62m) at AAMI Park. Crowd: 15,717. Referee: Jarred Gillett.
PERTH GLORY 3 (Andy Keogh 49m pen, 90+2m, James Donachie 74m og) bt **BRISBANE ROAR 2** (Mensur Kurtishi 39m, Henrique 55m) at nib Stadium. Crowd: 8,789. Referee: Shaun Evans.

	P	W	D	L	Pts
Perth Glory	2	2	-	-	6
Melbourne Victory	2	1	1	-	4
Sydney FC	2	1	1	-	4
Adelaide United	2	1	1	-	4
Wellington Phoenix	2	1	-	1	3
C. Coast Mariners	2	1	-	1	3
Melbourne City	2	0	2	-	2
Newcastle Jets	2	0	1	1	1
Brisbane Roar	2	0	-	2	0
WS Wanderers	2	0	-	2	0

Chelsea's margin remains

HIGH-FLYING Southampton thrashed Sunderland 8-0 in the Premier League yesterday as unbeaten leaders Chelsea remained five points clear with a 2-1 win away at Crystal Palace. Sergio Aguero scored all Manchester City's goals in a 4-1 defeat of 10-man Tottenham Hotspur as the champions remained second, while Arsenal needed a stoppage time goal to seal a 2-2 draw with Hull City. Everton climbed up the table with a 3-0 win at home to Aston Villa and, at the bottom, Newcastle United won for the first time this season, beating Leicester City 1-0, but struggling Burnley remained winless after a 3-1 loss to visitors West Ham United. At St Mary's, Southampton were 3-0 up at half-time, the goal rush starting when Sunderland's Santiago Vergini put the ball into his own net when he volleyed an attempted clearance in the 12th minute.

The goals kept coming in the second half as Southampton recorded the biggest top-flight victory in their history. "I think it's the most embarrassing time I've had on a football pitch," said Sunderland manager Gus Poyet. At Selhurst Park, Oscar's brilliant 30m free-kick gave Chelsea a sixth-minute lead, but five minutes before the break, Chelsea defender Cesar Azpilicueta was shown a red card for diving in two-footed on Socceroo skipper Mile Jedinak.

Mistakes to blame, not motivation

WESTERN Sydney coach Tony Popovic has denied confidence is down at the Wanderers on the verge of their biggest ever test. On Saturday the Wanderers tackle Al-Hilal at Parramatta Stadium in the first leg of their Asian Champions League final, but will go into the historic match on the back of consecutive slumping losses to open the A-League season. Popovic must find a way to rally his troops after blowing a 2-0 lead to lose a dramatic derby to Sydney FC on

Saturday night and the week before suffering the biggest defeat in the club's history at the hands of Melbourne Victory. A derby loss was always going to be crushing, but of bigger concern for Popovic is whether his side have lost their mojo at the worst possible time. "It doesn't jolt my confidence," said Popovic. "It just shows that there are a few things we have to work on and we're getting punished for our mistakes."

Invading fans incur FFA investigation

FOOTBALL Federation Australia will investigate a potentially dangerous incident in the Sydney A-League derby where more than 100 fans invaded the pitch with 10 minutes left in the match. In extraordinary scenes at a sold-out Allianz Stadium on Saturday night, Sydney FC supporters sitting in the Sky Blue fan section, The Cove, jumped the fence en masse when captain Alex Brosque scored the go-ahead goal in the 80th minute of their dramatic 3-2 victory over Western Sydney.

Dozens of people converged on the Sydney players celebrating the goal and one fan even ran halfway down the field to tap Wanderers skipper Nikolai Topor-Stanley on the rear end. FFA confirmed it would examine the incident today once reports had come in from ground staff at Allianz Stadium and the match officials in charge. Sydney FC have dismissed the incident as minor, but Wanderers coach Tony Popovic said the unauthorised access to the field posed a serious safety risk for players.