



Roar hit the floor as Glory days go

MARCO MONTEVERDE
FOOTBALL

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.

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," Mulvey told *The Courier-Mail*.



"We're gutted, we're absolutely devastated by it, but we'll bounce back.

"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 Round 1 home loss to Adelaide United.

The other change at nib Stadium 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



EMPIRE FALLING: (clockwise from top) Brisbane's Mensur Kurtishi (above) after the loss; teammates rush to hug goalscorer Henrique; and Jade North (left) battles Andy Keogh. Picture: Getty Images

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 – who failed to last the match – before unleashing with a shot that took a wicked deflection of Donachie before finding the net.

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.

While Mulvey said he was proud of Brisbane's effort, Roar skipper and central defender Matt Smith did not mince his words in a post-match Fox Sports interview.

"I think we gifted them three goals," Smith said.

"I think in the first half we completely controlled the game. Second half it was our own doing that we actually let them back in – it's as simple as that.

"You can't defend like that and expect not to concede.

"I don't think in the second half we did a good enough job to win it."

Villa salvages point but guest can't stay all season

ROB FORSAITH
IN MELBOURNE

A NEW name, new logo, new stars and new pressure.

But after yesterday's 1-1 draw with Newcastle Jets, Melbourne City's fans were cursing the same old problem: missed chances.

David Villa struck a wondrous equaliser from the edge of the box in the 87th minute, making it two goals from two games in the A-League.

The hosts should never have been in such a position in their first home game since being rebadged, watched by a

non-derby club record crowd of 15,717.

City dominated the first half and looked potent throughout the clash, with Villa, Damien Duff, Aaron Mooy and Massimo Murodca all influential.

They created a glut of chances, firing 16 shots compared to Newcastle's seven.

"Of course it's frustrating," mused coach John van 't Schip.

"We were not ready to give the finishing punch.

"Dominating is not enough for three points ... the goals are the ones that count.

"That's something we have to be more focused on."

Not even Villa, Spain's leading goal scorer on loan at City, was immune.

The 2010 World Cup winner fired over the crossbar in the 61st minute and directed his 48th minute shot directly at Jets goalkeeper Mark Birighitti. But he beat Birighitti at his near post 26 minutes later.

"He needs only a little moment," van 't Schip said of Villa, who played the entire game. "He's always going to be dangerous and find spaces.

"We had a plan of trying to keep him on the pitch as long as possible ... so it's very good he played 90 minutes."

Jets striker Edson Montano had threatened to upstage Villa, breaking the deadlock with a bullet-like header in the 62nd minute.

Substitute Zenon Caravella had a golden chance to put the visitors 2-0 up before Villa's strike, but blazed over the crossbar with only keeper Andrew Redmayne to beat.

"He's on finishing practice first thing Monday morning," Jets coach Phil Stubbins said with a smile after the Round 2 game at AAMI Park.

"He was a great contributor ... I won't be saying anything but well done Zenon."



GUEST STINT: Melbourne City's star David Villa.

A-LEAGUE ROUND 2

| | |
|--|---|
| ADELAIDE UNITED | 1 |
| (Cirio 85) | |
| MELBOURNE VICTORY | 1 |
| (Ben Khalfallah 89) | |
| Crowd: 33,126 at Adelaide Oval | |
| CENTRAL COAST MARINERS | 1 |
| (Doyle 12 og) | |
| WELLINGTON PHOENIX | 2 |
| (McGlinchey 35, Burns 54) | |
| Crowd: 7,237 at Central Coast Stadium | |
| SYDNEY FC | 3 |
| (Gameiro 45+1, Castelen 50 og, Brosque 79) | |
| WESTERN SYDNEY WANDERERS | 2 |
| (Bridge 19, Janjetovic 24 og) | |
| Crowd: 41,213 at Allianz Stadium | |
| PERTH GLORY | 3 |
| (Keogh 49 pen, 90+2, Donachie 74 og) | |
| BRISBANE ROAR | 2 |
| (Kurtishi 39, Henrique 55) | |
| Crowd: 8789 at nib Stadium | |

LADDER

| | W | D | L | GD | Pts |
|---------------|---|---|---|----|-----|
| Perth | 2 | 0 | 0 | +2 | 6 |
| Melb Victory | 1 | 1 | 0 | +3 | 4 |
| Sydney FC | 1 | 1 | 0 | +1 | 4 |
| Adelaide | 1 | 1 | 0 | +1 | 4 |
| Wellington | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| Central Coast | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| Melb City | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Newcastle | 0 | 1 | 1 | -1 | 1 |
| Brisbane | 0 | 0 | 2 | -2 | 0 |
| WSW | 0 | 0 | 2 | -4 | 0 |

ROUND 3

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|---|
| BRISBANE v SYDNEY FC |
| Suncorp Stadium, Friday 7pm |
| MELB VICTORY v MELBOURNE CITY |
| Etihad Stadium, Saturday 6.30pm |
| WELLINGTON v NEWCASTLE |
| Westpac Stadium, Sunday 2pm |
| ADELAIDE v PERTH |
| Coopers Stadium, Sunday 4pm |
| * Western Sydney plays Asian Champions League final |

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

| |
|---------------------------------|
| LEADERBOARD |
| 5 Damien Duff (City) |
| 5 Corey Gameiro (Sydney) |
| 4 Nathan Burns (Phoenix) |
| 3 Gui Finkler (Victory) |
| ADELAIDE v VICTORY |
| VAL MIGLIACCIO |
| 3. Carl Valeri (Victory) |
| 2. Daniel Georgievski (Victory) |
| 1. Marcelo Carrusca (Adel) |
| CENTRAL COAST v WELLINGTON |
| FOX SPORTS |
| 3. Michael McGlinchey (Phoenix) |
| 2. Nathan Burns (Phoenix) |
| 1. Mitchell Duke (Mariners) |
| SYDNEY FC v WESTERN SYDNEY |
| CARLY ADNO |
| 3. Alex Brosque (Sydney) |
| 2. Corey Gameiro (Sydney) |
| 1. Romeo Castelen (Wanderers) |
| MELB CITY v NEWCASTLE |
| DAVID DAVUTOVIC |
| 3. Damien Duff (City) |
| 2. Kew Jaliens (Jets) |
| 1. David Villa (City) |
| PERTH GLORY v BRISBANE |
| MARCO MONTEVERDE |
| 3. Andy Keogh (Glory) |
| 2. Henrique (Roar) |
| 1. Josh Risdon (Glory) |