

Week 8
Vila Velebit v Biograd na Moru
Danny Rogic

A pivotal match was played at the Richmond Picnic Grounds this weekend between the crafty veterans from Velebit and the “Big Yellow Submarine” of Biograd. It was a see-saw battle that saw both teams display their high caliber of play. The opening half started with a bang in the shape of Velebit’s Tom Rukavina. Only a minute into the game, Rukavina received a pass in the middle of the park and pointed his finger like “The Babe” towards the far corner. Rukavina, after calling his shot, hammered the ball past a sprawling Dennis Mrsic in the Biograd net for the opening goal. Tasting blood, the Velebit squad pressured more in order to up the advantage. Some great work in the middle of the park by Dave “Nacho Libre” Soric and brothers Johnny and Peter Sulentic made it difficult for the Biograd bunch to gain much momentum. However, Biograd found a lifeline in the suave Rob Mrsic. After gaining a pass from Johnny Rogic from the wing, Mrsic found himself all alone with only the Velebit net minder to beat. Rob got a toe on the ball and managed to slot it through the keeper’s legs for the tying goal. Little time passed before Biograd scored again to take the lead. Ante Krapic had the ball on the wing and decided to go for goal from well out. His low shot was seen late by Velebit goalkeeper Mike Milkovic who was unable to keep the ball out of his net. The half-time whistle came and both teams returned to the sidelines.

The second half started as the first ended with both teams pressuring each other. However, Velebit was being much more dangerous early on. It paid dividends as Peter Sulentic, after winning a ball in the middle of the park, hit a low screamer through a crowd that found its way into the bottom corner for the tying goal. The rest of the match seemed to rely on counter-attacks and good break-outs. Velebit used its defence well in bringing the ball out from the back and pressuring the Biograd midfielders to lose their markers. However, as luck would have it, a quick break-out by Biograd secured the next goal in the match. Danny Rogic collected the ball in his own half and was able to round his marker in the middle of the park. After making further progress down field, he pulled a defender toward him. Rogic spotted his cousin Johnny on the wing and gave him a pass that put him on a breakaway. Johnny finished low into the corner for Biograd’s third goal. Late in the match, Biograd was awarded a foul a few yards outside of the box. Ante Krapic bent a brilliant drive around the wall and into the near corner for Biograd’s insurance marker and his second goal of the match. Some confusion in the wall may have lead to the goal, but Biograd was willing to take it. Up 4-2 with little time left, Biograd was able to turtle and keep Velebit away from their net until the referee had seen enough.

The final result leaves Biograd at the top of the table with Velebit holding strong in the middle of the pack. Both teams played well in a very gritty and skillful match. Honorable mention must go to Velebit’s Dave Soric and Sulentic brothers who were constant threats throughout the match. Biograd’s goalkeeper Dennis Mrsic must be applauded as well as Johnny Rogic for his exhaustive work-rate in the middle of the park.

Next week is the last day of the regular season. Can Biograd maintain its untarnished season against Hajduk? Be there to find out! Players will be signing autographs, so remember to bring your sharpies...