

NZ FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

ROUND THREE
Compiled by Terry Maddaford

WELLINGTON v AUCKLAND

Newtown Park. Tomorrow 4.15pm
Referee: Matt Conger (Palmerston North)

- **THE GAME:** A classic early-season bottom-versus-top encounter. Team Wellington were tagged as one of the favourites, but a crushing 4-0 home loss was hardly the start they wanted. City have been impressive so far as they build towards the World Club Cup and will be looking to continue their unbeaten run.
- **THE PLAYER:** Greg Draper. Discarded by the Phoenix and after a brief All Whites soiree, he wants to rekindle his career. An impressive showing against the high-flying visitors will help. Plays alongside Cole Peverley who also had a brief cameo in the World Cup campaign.
- **THE RESULT:** The home side are chasing a fourth straight win over Auckland City. They lost 11 and drew one of their first 12 clashes but are now on a winning run. Hard to see that continuing. Maybe a draw.

MANAWATU v WAITAKERE

Memorial Park, Palmerston North. Sunday 2pm
Referee: Jamie Cross (Wellington)

- **THE GAME:** Plenty of interest. Manawatu are off to a flyer and will want more of the same against one of the league's perennial favourites. Waitakere coach Neil Emblen's troops have looked flat in two outings. A tough game to turn things around.
- **THE PLAYER:** SeuLe Soromon. His four goals against Team Wellington shot him well clear at the top of the golden boot. He will want more, and has players around him capable of helping out as he seeks to add to the 10 goals he has already scored at this level.
- **THE RESULT:** The home side are favourites, but will be aware of the changes in the United line-up. Emblen and Roy Krishna are likely to start and the coach has also included youngsters Zane Sole and Dakota Lucas. Nonetheless, Manawatu could grab a win.