



Tottenham's Down Under Delight: Kulusevski Shines as De Zerbi's Spurs Dazzle in Sydney

Description

Roberto De Zerbi's first pre-season tour as Tottenham Hotspur manager has provided an engrossing early look at what the Italian tactician is building in north London, and nowhere was that more evident than in Sydney, where Dejan Kulusevski's stunning free-kick sparked a dramatic finish against A-League side Sydney FC – a match that ended 1-1 before Spurs prevailed on penalties.

The match drew a passionate crowd in Sydney and delivered exactly the kind of spectacle that pre-season tours of this nature promise but do not always deliver – competitive football, individual brilliance, and a genuine intensity from both sides that had supporters thoroughly entertained from first whistle to final penalty.



Telâ??s stunning free-kick â?? Credit: Tottenham Hotspur FC

Kulusevskiâ??s Magic Moment in Sydney

It was Dejan Kulusevski â?? nicknamed â??Telâ?? by the Tottenham faithful â?? who provided the standout moment of the contest, curling a sumptuous free-kick into the top corner with the kind of precision and composure that marks out players of genuine class. The goal levelled the match and ignited a frantic finale, with the game ultimately requiring a penalty shoot-out to separate the sides.

That Kulusevski is at the heart of De Zerbiâ??s project comes as little surprise. The Swedish wingerâ??s ability to operate across the frontline, combine quickly in tight spaces, and produce moments of individual quality is precisely the sort of profile De Zerbi prizes in his system. The Sydney

free-kick was a reminder â?? if any were needed â?? that Kulusevski is capable of turning a match in an instant.

Behind-the-scenes footage from the Sydney leg of the tour captured a relaxed and upbeat dressing room atmosphere, with Kulusevski again at the centre of the camaraderie that has characterised Spursâ?? time on Australian soil. Squad unity during pre-season is often cited as a barometer of a teamâ??s readiness for the campaign ahead, and what De Zerbi has cultivated in a short space of time appears genuinely encouraging.

De Zerbiâ??s Tactical Identity Taking Shape

For those watching the tour with an analytical eye, what has been most compelling is the coherence of De Zerbiâ??s tactical approach even at this early stage of his tenure. The Italian is renowned for his meticulous preparation and his insistence on positional play built on pressing triggers, sharp ball circulation, and the exploitation of space in behind a retreating defensive line.

Against Sydney FC, those principles were visible in concentrated bursts. Tottenhamâ??s build-up through the thirds showed purpose and organisation, and when they did create, the movements were recognisably De Zerbi-esque â?? overlapping runs, third-man combinations, and a willingness to take risks in possession that will require defensive discipline to balance effectively once competitive football resumes in earnest.

Pre-season is, by definition, a period of adjustment and conditioning rather than polished results. But the structure De Zerbi is establishing gives Tottenham supporters genuine reason for optimism heading into what promises to be a significant season for the club. The Australian tour has served its purpose: players are match-sharp, tactical principles are being embedded, and the squad has cohered as a group under their new managerâ??s watchful eye.



Spurs in action against Sydney FC â?? Credit: Tottenham Hotspur FC

Sydney FC Give a Good Account of Themselves

Credit, too, must go to Sydney FC, who approached this fixture with genuine ambition and were rewarded for their enterprising display. A-League clubs competing against top European opposition always risk being brushed aside, but Sydney FC pressed, created chances, and took the lead at one stage â?? forcing Spurs to dig deep and produce a response worthy of their status.

For Australian football, matchups of this kind carry significance beyond the result. They expose local talent to world-class opposition, raise the profile of the domestic game, and generate the sort of nationwide excitement that grassroots development can feed off for years. That Sydney FC held their

own against a Tottenham side managed by one of Europe's most sought-after tacticians will be a source of considerable pride for the club and the A-League.

The fans who filled the stands in Sydney were treated to the kind of occasion that underlines football's extraordinary global appeal, and the warmth with which the travelling Spurs contingent was received throughout the tour speaks to the Premier League's remarkable reach across the Asia-Pacific region.

What Lies Ahead for Spurs

As the pre-season programme continues, all eyes will be on the further refinement of De Zerbi's system and how the squad's emerging players seize their opportunities to impress. Tottenham's activity this summer has been watched with keen interest across Europe, and the manager will be using every remaining fixture to sharpen his thinking before the 2026-27 season begins in earnest.

What the Sydney leg of the Australia tour has confirmed is that De Zerbi's Spurs will be an entertaining, attacking proposition. Whether the discipline and clinical quality to match that ambition can be consistently reproduced across a long, demanding season remains the central question. But right now, with Kulusevski bending free-kicks into top corners under the Sydney lights and the dressing room buzzing with positive energy, the mood at Tottenham Hotspur is one of genuine excitement – and with good reason.

Date Created

31/07/2026

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