

ON THE BIG SCREEN LIVE FROM SYDNEY... CATCH ALL THE ACTION!

STRIKERS V SYDNEY UTD

Sunday May 11 5pm Kickoff Return Leg of Major Semifinal ...See it all at the **QLD SOCCER CLUB** Perry Park Doors Open 4:30PM ☆ Bar ☆ Hot Food ☆



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ABC PRINTING Milton. Qld. Tel: 07 33699133 Cover Photograph: City's Chris Slater flies high all over the back of Beenleigh's Wayne Hinton at Spencer Park last Monday.





Editorial

The XXXX Premier League takes a short break this week as Queensland Cup matches take centre stage.

On Saturday, May 10, Bundaberg Waves will host the Wynnum Wolves at Thabeban Sports Complex.

Waves have been playing some good football of late and will be buoyed playing in front of a parochial Bundy crowd. I believe Wolves will have to play above their recent form to win.

On the same night, Rochedale Rovers travel to Chris Green Park where they will meet the Beenleigh Lions.

Both teams have been displaying indifferent form, but with Gary Brattan and Nick Seeley likely to return to Rochedale's starting 11, Rovers will most likely prove too strong for the Lions.

Sunday, May 11, sees Brisbane Lions host Taringa Rovers at Lions Stadium.

This will be great game and even though many pundits have been declaring Taringa as the form team of the competition, I think Miron Bleiberg's men will win.

Top of the table Brisbane City will also have an outing on May 11 when the team heads west to play Coalstars.

This will be a tough match for City as Coalstars have strung a couple of wins together and Eric Evans Reserve is a notorious hard away game. However, it would be difficult to bet against a team that is yet to be beaten in league games.

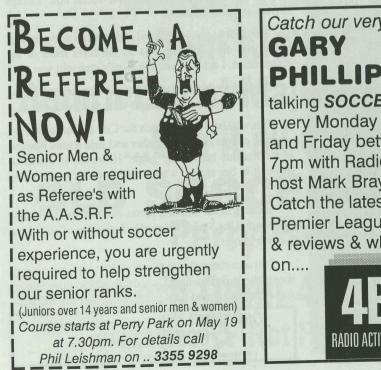
Looking at the national scene, most of you will know by now that the Strikers played before a record crowd last Saturday night.

This attendance figure augurs well for a massive crowd should the Strikers deliver United another blow this Sunday and ensure the grand final is played at Suncorp Stadium.



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Semi Pro Divisions Fixtures Mt Gravatt v Slacks Creek The Gap v Capalaba	Mt Gravatt Capalaba	Mt Gravatt Capalaba	Draw The Gap	Creek The Gap
Amateur Divisions 1 & 2 Latrobe v Uni Of Qld Oxley Utd v Jimboomba Pine Hills v Margate	University J'boomba Margate	Latrobe J'boomba Margate	Latrobe J'boomba Margate	University J'boomba Margate
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Catch our very own.... PHILLIPS talking SOCCER

and Friday between 6pm & 7pm with Radio Active 4BC host Mark Braybrook Catch the latest on the XXXX Premier League - Previews & reviews & what's going



Brisbane City suffer scare

Brisbane City were lucky to escape with the three points in their match against Beenleigh Lions on the Labour Day holiday at Spencer Park last Monday.

The league leaders seemed destined to lose their first match of the season until two goals in the last 15 minutes of the game sealed a dramatic 2-1 victory for the home side.

The match typified the closeness of this year's XXXX Premier League competition with 5th placed Beenleigh displaying a spirited effort.

Both teams appeared to be coming to terms with the conditions during the first ten minutes of the match with a slow Spencer Park pitch probably contributing to a number of ill timed passes.

The game's first goal scoring opportunity fell for City striker Mark Luburic. Midfielder Cameron Pearse (pic) provided a well-directed pass from the right side of the field, which striker Chris Slater deftly headed down into the path of a surging Luburic.

However, with just the keeper to pass, Luburic's shot from 15 yards out directly in front of goal sailed six feet over the cross bar.

Two minutes later, City were again thwarted when the normally lethal Slater collected a through-ball from Steve Glockner.

Slater found himself in a one-on-one with Beenleigh goalkeeper Chris Roche but his low drive hit the left-hand upright.

At the 22nd minute mark and against the run of play, City goalkeeper Daniel Duke received a yellow card on what appeared to be on the edge of the 18-yard box for a challenge against Beenleigh's Calvin Gneck.

However, referee Derek Crawford obviously saw the incident from a different angle and awarded the visitors a penalty kick, much to the dismay of the City players and supporters.



The experienced Brett Druery coolly stepped up and slotted the ball past Duke to give his side an unexpected lead.

Ten minutes later, Slater was again denied by the woodwork when a well-timed header hit the left-hand corner of the goal.

The second half began as the first ended, with City camped in Beenleigh's defensive third and it was defender Wayne Strange who had an opportunity to tie the match in the 59th minute.

Strange broke from the back and played a neat one-two with Glockner, but he hit his shot from just inside the left-hand edge of the penalty area straight at Roche.

Beenleigh caught the City defence napping in the 65th minute when Druery played a great ball that put striker Michael Robinson in a oneon-one with Duke. However, Robinson shot finished high of the mark.

The equaliser finally came for City in the 79th minute when captain Mark Greer crossed to replacement forward Dean Almond, who despite a bad first touch, composed himself to net from six yards.

Five minutes from full time, Greer was again involved as he layed the ball off for Pearse who gave Roche no chance as he "pidgeoned" a curling chip from 25 metres.

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Strikers - one step closer

The Hyundai Brisbane Strikers are one step closer to securing their first ever National League grand final berth, following a nail-biting 1-0 victory against Sydney United at Suncorp Stadium last Saturday night.

After some early nerves, the Strikers settled down in front of the record 14,666 crowd to dominate the minor premiers.

Man of the Match Nick Meredith, was inspirational in midfield, with his firebrand style of play upsetting a number of United's key players.

Both sides had several early chances, but the best opportunity of the first half came off a Meredith corner, which found the head of Strikers aerial expert Rod Brown and sailed only centimetres over the bar.

A 0-0 scoreline at half time reflected the intensity of the match and a change in formation at the break paid dividends for the Strikers.

Young striker Wayne Knipe was replaced by the experienced Gary Phillips with player/coach Frank Farina moving into the front line.

Farina caused the United defence plenty of problems but failed to dispatch a one-on-one with United keeper John Perosh.

The telling blow however came in the 62nd minute when Meredith made an incisive run down the left to the by-line, before cutting back a low cross to a waiting Sean Cranney (pic), who expertly slotted the ball into the bottom right corner of the net.

The Strikers continued their search for another goal in the final quarter of the match, while United tried hard for an equaliser, but the visitors were held superbly by the rock solid Brisbane defence lead by captain Alan Hunter and the marvellous goalkeeping skills of Clint Bolton.



There is no doubt it's going to be tough to win Sunday's return match in Sydney but Farina is confident his side can earn the right to host the 1996/97 Ericsson Cup grand final.

"It was a very good result. The one goal might not be enough but I was happy to get our noses in front in game one," he said.

"This is something the guys have worked for all their careers and the chance to play the grand final in Brisbane is a huge incentive."

Farina said he was pleased with the performance of all players, but particularly the efforts of several of his senior players.

"The more experienced guys stood up and were counted; players like Danny Wright, Alan Hunter, Gary Phillips and Rod Brown are all big game players and set the example for the younger guys," he said.

Stars shine as Waves crash

The Bundaberg Waves once again suffered a heartbreaking loss on Sunday, conceding the winning goal in a 2-1 loss to Coalstars two minutes into injury time.

The Waves looked like going home with a well earned point at the end of normal time only to once again concede a vital goal in the dying seconds.

When the Waves played at Lions several weeks ago they gave away a last gasp equaliser and this time it was Coalstars' Fraser Cuba who was to rob them in the final moments of the match.

Cuba was returning from suspension for only his second appearance of the season and celebrated his return by netting the winner in the 92nd minute.

In a late downpour which seems to have become the norm at Bundamba of late, Richie Hilli was able to smother a skidding ball and turn to release Cuba who raced away to secure the points for the home team.

The match had been a very even contest throughout with play constantly swinging from one end to the other and neither side really able to attain dominance over proceedings.

The first good chance fell to Bundaberg's Luke Graham who headed just wide from a corner before being substituted soon after due to a recurring groin injury.

Next it was Coalstars turn to go close with Brenley Jefferd laying on the chance for Peter McKendrick, but his looping volley was straight at the keeper.

The tireless efforts of Jefferd in the Coalstars midfield, made him the clear stand out in a match which at times threatened to degenerate into a shin-kicking contest as both sides became increasingly frustrated at their inability to find the net.



The Waves clearly struggled in front of goal without the services of their first line strike force of Warren Allen, Anthony Brown and Darren Bender, all unavailable through suspension.

At the other end, the passing of Jefferd and the quicksilver pace of the Hilli brothers caused all manner of problems for the Waves defence and finally told with 20 minutes to go.

Richie Hilli (pic) rode one challenge before centring for Jefferd who was fouled from behind but still managed to flick the ball past the advancing keeper to give the home side a 1-0 lead.

It was at this point that the rain began to tumble down and effectively put an end to any further quality football.

The rain was to play an important part in the equaliser however, with Bundaberg's Nick Maas stooping to head in a skidding cross which gave Coalstars keeper Michael Cassidy no chance.

The goal, with only five minutes remaining, sent the visiting supporters into raptures but the Waves were once again dumped in the final moments as Cuba slotted the winner before wheeling away in jubilation.

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QLD CUP PREVUE - Bundaberg v Wynnum

The XXXX Premier League's two bottom sides meet on Saturday night when the **Bundaberg Waves host the Wynnum Wolves** at Thabeban Sports Complex.

Bundaberg had a 2-1 loss last week to Coalstars and coach Aldo Baretta believes experience was a telling factor in the result.

"I thought we lost our way late in the second half as we managed to pull it back to one all with 10 minutes to go after they had scored midway through the half," he said.

"We should have settled for a draw but we were without some of our more experienced players and I thought we let the emotion of the moment get to us.

"Too many of the players pushed forward in search of the winning goal which opened the game up dramatically and not surprisingly, we got punished when they (Coalstars) scored with three minutes left."

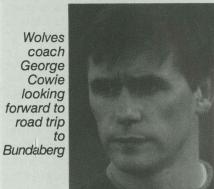
Baretta said despite Wynnum's lowly position on the league points table, he expected a tough match from the Wolves.

"There are eight teams in the Premier League and as I have said all year, I believe there is not much between them... we will have to be on our game to ensure victory this weekend."

Wynnum coach George Cowie said he was looking forward to the road trip to Bundaberg as he felt it would be a good opportunity to develop the camaraderie among his players.

"Travelling in a coach for six hours doesn't bother me in the slightest and hopefully we'll be able to stay the night and get the boys together and build some team spirit," he said.

Bundaberg decimated Wynnum 5-1 in their only previous encounter at Thabeban Sports Complex in Round 5.



It is set to be an enthralling match as Bundaberg have been playing some good football in recent weeks with little to show for their efforts

On the other hand the Wynnum players and coach George Cowie must be feeling the pressure of no league points after nine rounds of Premier League football.

BUNDABERG V WYNNUM

Thebaban Park, Bundaberg Saturday May 10, 7pm

BUI	NDABERG	WY	NNUM
1.	Michael Bainbridge	1.	Peter Underhill
2.	Nick Maas	2.	Luke Adair
3.	Giuseppi Baraza	3.	Ben Wood
4.	Stephen Starr	4.	Danny Valle
5.	John Giovannoni	5.	Rob Hilton
6.	Tony Roebuck	6.	Tony McKinless
7.	Michael Legg	7.	Geoff Maltby
8.	Luke Graham	8.	Paul Wilkins
	Anthony Brown	9.	Mark Wilkins
10.	Rodney Cooper		Wayne Corbett
	Warren Allen	11.	Malcom Van Basten
12.	Chris Wilson	12.	Ricky McKinless
13.	Sean Hunt	13.	Dennis Mills
14.	Shaun Aslett	14.	Nick Hadland
15.	Darren Bender	15.	Andrew Davidson
16.	Paul Fagan	16.	Trevor Murphy
17.	John Lawler	17.	Brendan Rogers
18.	(Not allocated)	18.	Damian Rogers
	(Not allocated)	19.	Bill McDermott
	Ross Barbera	20.	Garth McCulloch

QLD CUP PREVUE - Beenleigh v Rochedale

Rochedale Rovers will be seeking revenge when the team travels to Chris Green Park to meet Beenleigh on Saturday at 7pm.

Rochedale were thumped 5-2 by Peter Bannon's side in Round 6 of the XXXX Premier League.

Rovers coach Gary McDowall has been forced to delve into his playing stocks in recent weeks as several experienced players have been outed due to suspension or injury.

The pre-season favourites are currently in 4th position on the league ladder, but McDowall believes it could have been worse.

"To be honest, I thought we could have been in a far worse position than what we are," he said.

"I'm not making excuses but it's really difficult to get the results when your side is constantly being disrupted through injury and suspension.

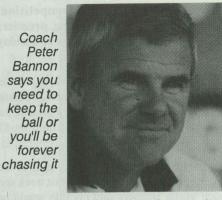
"I've had to use guite a few of the younger players in the last few weeks, although the real disruption comes when you have to move players out of their normal positions to cover for those missing."

McDowall was hopeful that injured players Nick Seeley and Gary Brattan would return from injury this week.

"We'll need those guys because Beenleigh are not going to be giving much away and will definitely be hard to beat," he said.

Beenleigh lost 2-1 to City last week and the Lions' form will have to improve if they are going to be any chance of repeating the Round 6 demolition of Rovers.

Coach Peter Bannon said even though his players had worked hard at Spencer Park, he was disappointed with their quality of play.



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"It was a pretty ordinary performance by us as we continually gave possession back to City," he said.

"Keeping the ball is the bulk of what we work on at training and in a game like that against opponents like City, you need to keep the ball or you'll be forever chasing it."

Chris Green F	OCHEDALE ROV Park, Beenleigh May 10, 7pm
BEENLEIGH	ROCHEDALE ROVERS
 David Iliff Brett Druery Michael Roland Dean Milosevic Kieran Galloway (Not allocated) Wayne Hinton Brett Jones Ross Smart Fotis Skordou Troy Wickstein Michael Leake Ross Davidson Joe Morris Lee Preston Marc Lederhose Calvin Gneck Alan Gordon Michael Robinson Chris Balke 	 Clint Dal Santo Andy Monement Nick Seeley Michael Lane Damian Harris Eddie Lees Brett Adams (Not allocated) Kieran Cooper Clayton Koch John Weatherby David Pilic Paul Grugan Steve Dawe Steve Fitzsimmons Robin Gosney Garyo Brattan Greg Anderson Aaron Baldwin RGK Michael Turnbull RGK Cameron Duck

The form team of the competition, Taringa Rovers, meet reigning premiers Brisbane Lions at Lions Stadium on Sunday at 2.30pm.

Taringa are currently in second position on the XXXX Premier League ladder on 20 points, while Lions, after enduring a slow start to the season have moved into outright third on 17 points.

Lions had a solid 2-1 victory against the highly fancied Rochedale Rovers last week and coach Miron Bleiberg said his side would be approaching this game with the same tenacity as a normal league match.

"We want to win the Queensland Cup as much as we want to win the league," Bleiberg said.

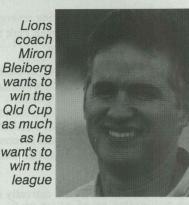
The players and support staff of both teams are likely to get to know each other extremely well over the next few weeks as they are likely to meet three times in succession; two Queensland Cup games divided by a XXXX League encounter.

Bleiberg said he was confident the tally would be in his side's favour after the three games had been played.

"Taringa are a quick side and they have done very well to be in the position they are but I believe we have the better quality and depth on our side," he said.

"As yet, Taringa has not beaten any of the other teams in the top four and it's okay to beat teams lower on the table, but if they want to be considered championship material, they must produce against the better sides."

Taringa coach John Ogden said he was very happy with his team's 3-1 victory against league cellar-dwellers Wynnum Wolves last Sunday.



"We were three nil up and conceded a late consolation goal and to be honest, I thought we never looked like losing," he said.

"I was a little concerned before the match but really, the guys didn't seem to get out of second gear and were never seriously pushed and I thought we deserved to win."

BRISBANE LIONS V TARINGA ROV Lions Stadium, Richlands Sunday May 11, 2.30pm							
BRISBANE LIONS	TARINGA ROVERS						
 Robbie Farrow David Lonsdale Ibro Cahut Cliff Tuck David Hunter Mark Geritz Steve Jackson Robert Pudja Greg Di Losa Kevin Meacock Martin Matula Roy Huth Craig Rogers Cameron Watson Anthony Cotton Chase Bursnall Adam Daly (Not allocated) (Not allocated) (Not allocated) 	 Andrew Hobbs Joel Hale Laurence Inunciaga Stein Grodum Danny Britton (Not allocated) Brent Read Demetri Theochari Danny Stowers Darren Hillier Ian Hutchison Stuart Collins Marc Flemington Mathew Packer Glen Kolpak Scott Robertson Des Hughes Shaun Molenda Brad Ditton 						

21. Jason Lucas

20. Scott Higgins

QLD CUP PREVUE - Coalstars v Bris City

League leaders Brisbane City travel to Eric Evans Soccer Reserve this Sunday to meet the much-improved Coalstars at 2.30pm.

Brisbane City were lucky to escape with the three points in their match against Beenleigh Lions on the Labour Day holiday last Monday.

City seemed destined to lose their first match of the season until two goals in the last 15 minutes of the game sealed a dramatic 2-1 victory for the home side.

City coach Bobby Hamilton said he had reminded his players during the half time interval that pretty football does not win matches.

"I thought we were a little bit flat and perhaps a number of the players were in holiday mode," he said.

"We had a lot of possession but I don't believe we're direct enough at times as we don't seem to be troubling teams.

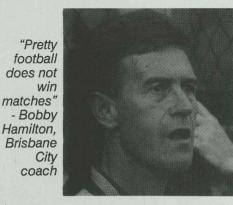
"We had many shots on goal in the first half but the Beenleigh keeper hardly had to do anything, so I reminded the guys that it was no good having a heap of possession and not doing anything with it."

Hamilton said he was expecting a tough match against Coalstars and was not surprised that they had translated some good form into victories in recent weeks.

"Coalstars are a reasonable side at home and when played them earlier in the year, they caused us quite a few problems until we got our second goal and the third came soon after," he said.

Coalstars coach Paul Barry said was delighted that his side had got the three points last week against a solid Bundaberg outfit.

"A few weeks ago, we seemed to be finding



new ways to lose games and I was glad that we are now finding ways to win matches," he said.

"I'll be approaching this week's cup match a little differently as I will be using some of my experienced players who haven't played much football to ensure they get game time under their belt."

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	 Michael Cassidy Patrick Boyle Clint Scott Andrew King (c) Darren Petie Peter Hinks Brenley Jefferd Mark Bennett Mark Bennett Mark Hilli Wes Park David Guest Peter McKendrick Peter Hallett Scott Stenzel William Ingledew Wayne Adams Marcello Cuba Richard Hilli Chris Barrett Todd Vaggs 	6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19.	Mark Geminelli Anthony Scodellaro Mark Greer Wayne Strange					



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Steve Jackson (Brisbane Lions)

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THE XXXX REPORT

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ROCHEDALE 1 v BRISBANE LIONS 2 (0-2) at Underwood Park SCORERS: Rochedale: S. Fitzsimmons Bris Lions: S. Jackson, C. Tuck

ROCHEDALE: Dal Santo, Adams, Harris, Cooper, Lane, Pilic, Lees E., Fitzsimmons, Grugan, Dawe, Anderson. (Subs: Weatherby, Gosney, Koch, Duck, Seeley) LIONS: Farrow, Lonsdale, Huth, Watson, Geritz, Rogers, Matula, Poggi, Tuck, Jackson, Pudja. (Subs: Lucas, Laslo, Cotton, Cahut, Meacock)

COALSTARS 2 v BUNDABERG WAVES 1 (0-0) at Eric Evans Reserve SCORERS: Coalstars: B. Jefferd, F. Cuba

Bundaberg: N. Maas COALSTARS: Cassidy, Boyle, Scott, Petie, Hinks, Jefferd, Bennett, McKendrick, Adams, Hilli M., Hilli R. (Subs: King, Cuba F., Park) BUNDABERG: Bainbridge, Maas, Starr, Giovannoni, Roebuck, Legg, Graham, Barritt, Foy, Fagan, Lawler (Subs: Wilson, Hunt, Driver, Donnison)

TARINGA ROVERS 3 v WYNNUM 1 (1-0) at Jack Speare ParkSCORERS:Taringa: D. Stowers, M. Flemington (2)Wynnum: W. McDermott

TARINGA: Higgins, Innunciaga, Grodum, Read, Theocari, Stowers, Hillier, Hutchison, Kolpak, Hughes, Ditton, Flemington (Robertson, Grodum, Dickens, Niven) **WYNNUM:** Underhill, Adair, Wood, McKinless, Maltby, Wilkins P, Wilkins M, McDermott, Corbett, Davidson, Rogers B., (Subs: Van Basten, Hadland, Poppewell, McCullouch)

BRISBANE CITY 2 v BEENLEIGH 1 (0-1) at Spencer Park

SCORERS: City: D. Almond, C. Pearse Beenleigh: B. Druery (pen)

CITY: Duke, Strange, Elliott, Pearse, Glockner, Greer, Haddow, Almond, Waugh, Wilkinson, Slater, Luburic (Subs: Eslick, Almond, Schiavo, Taraborrelli) BEENLEIGH: Illif, Duery, Rowland, Milosevic, Hinton, Wickstein, Davidson, Preston, Lederhose, Gnech, Robinson. (Subs: Jones, Skordou, Gordon, Smart, Balke)



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READ between the LINES

The Queensland Cup kicks off this weekend for real, with the XXXX Premier League sides to face each other in the preliminary rounds.

For some, the Queensland Cup is the final chance to win silverware for the year.

Clubs such as Wynnum have no chance of winning the league or qualifying for the semifinals despite the season only entering the second round.

As usual, the cup has thrown up some interesting clashes, with Lions and Taringa to face each other on consecutive weekends.

The two sides are riding high and full of confidence so the game should be a ripper.

Getting away from the Queensland Cup, yours truly made a special guest appearance on the Brisbane Soccer Show this week.

The boys on the panel were interested to hear the reaction to my pre-season odds, which have been a popular and spectacular success.

The soccer show has been an excellent innovation and it's good to see clubs finally supporting the concept.

Any exposure the game can get in Queensland is excellent. Besides, it gives couch experts such as myself a chance to make a rare appearance on TV.

Fortunately for myself, a panel including Kieran Copper, Mick Mulvey and Davey Richardson won't show too may people up in the beauty stakes.

While odds were given for club's chances in the title stakes, I ommitted to list my favourites for the Clem Jones Gold medal and the Rookie of the Year awards.

The medal race has been thrown wide open

Brisbane City's Barry Wilkinson in excellent form for Rookie of the Year



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with the mystery surrounding the futures of Andy Lees and Craig Collins.

Both players were perennial contenders for the medal and their imminent departure from Gary McDowall's side has brought their seasons to a shuddering holt.

For that reason, I'm leaning towards Coalstars Brenley Jefferd, Brisbane Lions Steve Jackson and Taringa's dynamic midfield duo of Darren Hillier and Brad Ditton.

For the Rookie of the year Award, there are two standouts, Brisbane City's Barry Wilkinson has been in excellent form for the competition leaders, while Taringa's Scott Higgins has been consistently superb between the sticks.

Coincidently, Bazza and Giggles are best mates. Both have the potential to go on to higher honours and whoever gets there first is sure to give his mate some stick.

Meanwhile, City's narrow win over Beenleigh on Monday has maintained their position at the top of the table.

The addition of Chris Slater has provided some impetus while the return of Shane Haddow and Damian Waugh has strengthened the side.

Newmarket - first show

Cup action returns to the XXXX League this week with two second round matches to be played in the Semi-Pro Division 1 Cup competition.

Sunday sees Newmarket make their first appearance in the competition after going through to the second round via a bye, but they can expect tough opposition from an Acacia Ridge side who cruised past Grange Thistle with a 6-2 aggregate result in the first round.

Neither side have had a particularly auspicious start to their league campaigns and they may well see the Cup as their best chance of honours this season.

Newmarket currently hold down eighth position in Semi-Pro Division 1 North but have only managed one win to date and have conceded far more goals than they have managed to net. Coach Peter Carey will no doubt see the Cup as a chance to turn around his team's disappointing start to the season. He might also drill into his charges the need to tighten up their defence if they want to avert a short Cup campaign this season.

Acacia Ridge are similarly placed in the southern competition, holding seventh spot and with only a marginally better goal difference.

Ridge are also yet to register a league win but coach Dave Richardson will be well pleased with his side's surprise draw against run away league leaders Toowoomba.

He will now be hoping his side can emulate that same grit and determination when they match up against Newmarket.

The match will kick off at McCook Park, Newmarket on Sunday afternoon at 2.30 pm.

Mitchelton might have edge

In the other Cup match this weekend, Rocklea will host Mitchelton at the Croatian Sports Centre on Sunday at 2.30 pm.

The home side reached the second round of the Cup by virtue of a battling 3-2 win in their second leg against Easts, giving them an aggregate victory of 5-4.

They are currently in third place in Semi-Pro Division 1 South and go into the Cup tie off the back of an impressive 4-1 league victory over Ipswich St. Helens at the weekend.

Rocklea have scored an impressive 14 goals in the opening seven league matches but have conceded just as many and will need to tighten up their defence against the Mitchelton outfit.

Mitchelton completely outclassed their opposition Ipswich St. Helens in the opening round, recording a 15-1 aggregate result which included a 10-0 rout in the first leg.

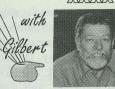
They recorded some similar scorelines in the opening weeks of their league campaign before slumping to a couple of unexpected losses in recent fixtures.

They returned to the winners circle last week but, a 2-1 win against Olympic, was not exactly the sort of form they would have wanted to take into their Cup clash with Rocklea.

The Cup takes on the knockout format from the second round, so fans can expect more of an "all-or-nothing" attitude from teams as they will not have the advantage of a second leg to repair any damage.

There will be no replays, with any matches not decided in the regulation 90 minutes going first to a golden goal extra time and then to a penalty shoot-out if required.

Before The Whistle



We have all been critical, at one time or another, of referees and refereeing standards, and I have certainly been vocal on that subject in the past, if I felt it was warranted.

Conversely, I am also very quick to praise when praise is justified, as I have already made the point at a number of matches I have seen so far this year.

Last Saturday night I saw a match that had the alleged 'best referee in Australia' officiating. All I can say is, if he is the best, it doesn't give much for our young up and coming referees to aspire to, as his inconsistencies were there for all to see. We all know its a physical game, particularly at the highest level, but the amount of shirt pulling - ankle tapping - body checking, that went unabated and unchecked, was absolutely astounding!

One player in particular from the opposition, no names, but he wore the number 8 shirt, committed three fouls in quick succession and all he gave away were free kicks, no hint of a card no verbal chastisement. I must confess I was bitterly, bitterly disappointed at the performance, it was a great spectacle of a match, unfortunately the standard of the official did not match it.

However on to the local scene, and, as mentioned last week, there are a number of good up and coming referees officiating at the higher levels, particularly Semi Pro Division 1's and starting to filter through towards the XXXX League. All club officials have to do, (easier



said than done) is be patient and allow these younger referees to gain the experience to come up to the standard of the Crawfords and Shields.

Before previewing the few matches we have on this weekend, its time to do a review of the season to date.

Semi Professional Divisions

In the northern sector Pine Rivers are starting to pull away at the top, its tight for runners up spot between Mitchie, North Star and the Creek, and even tighter in that mid-table area all the way down to ninth position. Grange currently propping up the table, but with their recent influx of players, expect to see them starting to pick up points over the next few weeks.

In the southern division, Toowoomba still lead the pack with a five point break, Inala suffered a set-back last week and have been pegged back with Rocklea now having caught them up, but again look how tight it is in the middle, with the Ridge and Redlands yet to pick up their first three pointer of the season.

In the Amateur Divisions University are still maintaining their unbeaten record in Division 1 and looks as if they will be making a big push to go up into the Semi Pro ranks next year, very tight for Semi Final placings and other aspiring clubs looking for promotion. Darra appear to have lost their way of late, and are now sitting in mid table, Samford and Bayside still trying to come to grips with this division. In Div 2 Margate currently enjoy a 4 point lead with a game in hand and Brothers fast bringing up second spot. Three other teams Park Ridge, Greenbank and Clairvaux bucking for Semi placings, Oxley still yet to get off the mark, but they're getting closer by the week.

Div 3 has two teams running away at the top with Samford and University, Ipswich City

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is without a doubt the surprise packet, consisting as it does of the club's colts players from last year, and they are more than holding their own in this company. Division 4 has Taringa still leading the pack, despite suffering their first lost last weekend, and when you look at how competitive this division is down to eighth place, it's certainly not one for the faint hearted.

Woodridge are almost running away with Division 5 but Mt Gravatt are keeping them honest right to the end, as can be seen at the foot of the table there are one or two (most decidedly) social teams playing in this division, whilst Division 6 has Coalstars and Capalaba pulling away in this division also, and on current form it doesn't appear as if they will be headed. Having said that, its jam packed in the middle of the table, for the end of the season final's placings.

As a footnote, I must commend The Gap's Division 6 side as they turn out, week in week out, and they must be a very strong bunch, as they are carrying the weight of 17 divisions on their shoulders!

As mentioned at the head of the column, this is catch-up weekend with Cup Competitions taking place in the XXXX League and Semi Pro leagues, together with a veritable 'motley' lot of matches elsewhere.

Semi Professional League Cup

Only two matches being played in the second round, both on Sunday with Newmarket against Acacia Ridge. As this Cup Competition is now in the knockout phase and played over 1 leg only, it's now do or die, on current form one would have to tip Newmarket. The other match is much more difficult to predict between Rocklea and Mitchelton, the home side is now up in equal second position, whilst Mitchelton were the original leaders in their division but have slipped of late, this is more difficult to pick, home side advantage may see Rocklea go through to round 3.

As mentioned above, these are only single leg matches, if it's tied after ninety minutes the

games will go into extra time with the Golden Goal rule then applying.

Semi Professional Division 1 North

Only one match rescheduled for this weekend The Gap v Capalaba which was washed out last Sunday, both sides desperate for points to resume their climb up the table, none more so than The Gap as they are two matches in arrears, desperation points to a home win.

One other match has been rescheduled for next Wednesday (14 May) between The Gap and Olympic, those with good memories will recall this is the one where SEQEB blew the fuses and the lights malfunctioned half way through the match.

Kick off is at 7.30pm, with a huge incentive for both sides to pick up maximum points, The Gap will be marginally the fitter side, having played on the weekend, whilst Olympic would have gone almost two weeks without a game, it all points to a narrow home win.

Semi Professional Division 1 South

Again only one match scheduled in this division which is the game also washed out last Monday between Mt Gravatt and Slacks Creek, both sides are capable of scoring goals, but there is a vast difference in the defensive capabilities, and for that reason I'll tip a home win.

Amateur Division 1

A most crucial match has been rescheduled on Sunday afternoon between Latrobe and University, a win for the students will give them a gigantic 8 point lead in the table, and for that reason it will be an incredibly tight match. A draw would not surprise, and, as the stakes are as high as they are, there could even be a narrow home win, which will make for a very interesting points table.



Amateur Division 2

Two matches have been rescheduled for this weekend, on Saturday Oxley host Jimboomba which is the match washed out from last Easter, and whilst Oxley's margin of deficit is getting smaller, I still can't see them picking up any points in this one. On Sunday last weekend's wash-out between Pine Hills and Margate takes place, and again, difficult to see the leaders dropping any points in this one.

Amateur Division 3

It's derby time on Sunday when Kingsridge make the short trip down the road to Woodridge, and, surprise surprise, the hosts are now ahead on the points table. Early season form of both teams had Kingsridge riding high in the table, and Woodridge languishing in the lower regions, time has closed the margin, and this will be a very tight match indeed, a score draw would not surprise, given the goals for and against column for each side.

Amateur Division 4

This is the Division that was completely decimated last Easter, so we have an almost full book of matches.

On Friday Souths host Capalaba with the visitors likely to resume their surge for the top of the table in this one, also the same night North Star and The Gap do battle, and judging by their respective placings in the table, this could be a score draw, but more likely an away win.

On Saturday afternoon top plays bottom with Taringa hosting Park Ridge, and the Rovers will look to repair last week's surprise loss and put away a few against bottom markers Park Ridge. The same afternoon Slacks Creek make the trip out to Teralba Park, and with a potential fourth placing in their sights, difficult to see Slacks Creek letting this one slip.

On Sunday afternoon Albany Creek entertain Newmarket, with both teams locked in mid table and having very similar goals for and against, home ground advantage may just see the points remain at Wolter Park.

Amateur Division 5

Only three matches in this Division the first one is on Friday, when Samford make the trip to Richlands, the Lions marginally better form dictates a home win. On Saturday the match is between Brisbane City and Samford, with the dubious honour of the wooden spoon at stake. Samford have one win to their credit, whilst City have 3 draws, it all points to a marginally narrow victory for the visitors.

On Sunday afternoon Eastern Suburbs, with third placing in their sight, entertain St Helens, difficult to see the Saints taking anything away from this game.

Amateur Division 6

Friday sees the only match in this division between Lions and Slacks Creek with a potential third place up for grabs, expect the visitors to go home with all three points.

Qantas Cup

We are currently in the process of drawing this year's Qantas Cup competition, and hope to have it circulated to all participant clubs in the next week.

This week's quote

Football is a simple game. The hard part is making it look simple. (Ron Greenwood)



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