

Eye On

Queensland Soccer Federation
Official Magazine

Soccer

QUEENSLAND'S MOST READ SOCCER MAGAZINE

Vol 7-2
March 5
1998
\$2.00

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Johnston
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at Cup booty
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EYE ON Soccer Magazine

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Eye On Soccer is a QSF publication printed
by
ABC PRINTING Milton, Qld.
Tel: 07 33699133

Cover: Mark Bennett slides in to stop the
advancing Warren Allen from Taringa
during their Round 1 clash at Jack Speare
Park last weekend. Wayne Strange from
City looks on.

Editorial

The XXXX League began in style last weekend, with some good results for the competition's newcomers.

Ipswich Knights and Gold Coast City both secured impressive home victories, while Mount Gravatt were narrow away losers at Brisbane Lions.

It was pleasing to see the new teams do so well in their first league hitout and indications are already pointing to a season of tight matches between highly competitive teams.

And that's the whole point of the revamped XXXX League, to give spectators the highest quality soccer and the most competitive league possible. Let's hope this trend in the top grade continues.

On another note, there have been more positive inroads made into the promotion of the XXXX League, with the introduction of the television version of *Eye On Soccer* on Optus Local Vision.

The first episode went to air last night on Optus' local channel (Channel 50) and for an initial effort, was a success.

The program will go live to air every Wednesday night at 7.00pm and feature respected Sunday Mail sports writer Guy Hand and Queensland's foremost soccer identities Frank Farina and Andy Harper.

These three men, along with a team of experienced journalists, will keep XXXX League fans up to speed with the local competition and discuss any other issues currently affecting the world game.

It's understood that not everyone has access to Optus Vision, so attempts will be made to make copies of the show available to clubs to play at club houses and so forth.

At this stage the show will cost clubs nothing and we're confident that will remain the case.

However it's important that the clubs help the organisers of the show out as much as they can by promoting the concept at home games, filling in statistical information to be used by the panellists, and generally attending to the needs of Optus Vision crew at fixtures. If everyone helps, the show will be a success.

Season launch celebrated

More than one hundred officials, sponsors, club representatives and players attended last week's launch of the 1998 XXXX League.

The ten XXXX League clubs were introduced to everyone in attendance, with newcomers Gold Coast City, Mount Gravatt, and the merged Ipswich United outfit, receiving very warm receptions.

Manager of Sponsorship and Promotions for Castlemaine Perkins, Geoff Northcott (pictured) opened the season, while QSF President Wallace Dann outlined the changes to the competition.

"This time last year we launched a new look XXXX Premier League, optimistic that it would produce a more competitive environment, an overall improvement in the standard of play and greater spectator interest," Mr Dann said.

"Our optimism was rewarded and this year we were able to initiate a number of measured changes aimed at further enhancing the prestige and attractiveness of our flagship competition.

"At the forefront of these changes is the inclusion of Gold Coast City and Mount Gravatt in an expanded ten team league.

"The Gold Coast is able to draw on a huge regional support base and brings a new dimension to the league, whilst redevelopments at Mount Gravatt suggest it is poised for a major resurgence and a return to prominence.

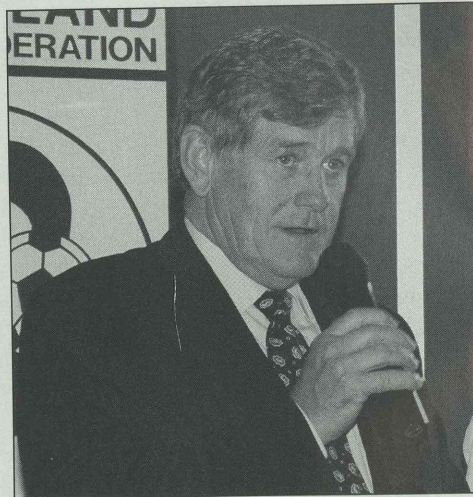
"No doubt both of these teams will issue a strong challenge for 1998 honours."

The QSF President also heaped praise on the Ipswich Knights, a team which evolved out of a merger between close neighbours Coalstars and Saint Helens.

"That's another very positive move which should help revitalise football in the Ipswich area and add further strength to the XXXX League competition," Mr Dann said.

"We should all commend those who have had the foresight to initiate this move."

Mr Dann also gave the thumbs up to the restructured XXXX Queensland Cup format,



which this year will involve all 55 QSF clubs and the respective winners of Queensland's two regional competitions (see page 6 for details).

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Rovers make impressive start

Rochedale Rovers look to be the form team following the completion of the first round of the XXXX League.

The Rovers scored a solid 3-0 victory over last year's runner-up Bundaberg Waves at Underwood Park, and sounded a strong warning to the other sides in the competition.

Ironically it was a former Bundaberg player who opened the scoring for Rochedale in the fifth minute.

Michael Legg latched onto a poor clearance before expertly slotting the ball home.

The home side extended its lead shortly afterwards when Glen Kolpak was brought down in a clumsy challenge. Clayton Koch stepped up for the spot kick and made no mistake.

Bundaberg tried hard to crack Rochedale's defence in the second period but the Rovers held strong and put the icing on the cake three minutes from full time, when Koch got his leg to a Damian Harris cross, to chip Michael Bainbridge in the Waves goal.

The newly formed Ipswich Knights also got off to a winning start with a 1-0 victory over Charity Shield holders Wynnum at the Eric Evans Reserve.

First half goals to David Guest and John Clark were negated by an own goal and a Mark Wilkins strike.

In the end it was a goal from Knights replacement Brenley Jefferd that proved the difference, Ipswich getting up 3-2.

There was more good news for the new Gold Coast City outfit, which also won its match against Beenleigh 3-2.

Peter Grierson was the difference between the two sides. He scored two goals, including a penalty, while Brett Adams rounded the scoring off for the Coast.

Veteran Brett Druery hit the target for Beenleigh, with Alan Spiers also scoring.

But it was a different story for the competition's other newcomers.



Wynnum's Matt Campion moves in on David Guest of the Ipswich Knights during their Round 1 encounter last weekend

Mount Gravatt looked extremely flat in their 1-0 loss to Brisbane Lions, although Miron Bleiberg's boys didn't look much better.

Promising young defender Roy Huth scored the only goal of that match. Steve Faulkner's Mount Gravatt outfit was left to ponder what could have been, after they squandered a myriad of chances.

In the final match of the first round, Brisbane City were too good for a new look Taringa.

The 1997 Grand Final replay did not reach any great heights, with Taringa intent on trying to out-muscle their opponents early on.

But stacked with National League talent, the City eleven answered back in the best possible way when Damien Waugh took advantage of a poor Scott Higgins clearance to send Chris Slater on his way. The experienced striker easily rounded the Taringa keeper before tapping in from close range.

Taringa had its fair share of chances in the latter stages, with replacement Warren Allen in particular, troubling the City defence.

Amateurs - chance at booty

For the first time in the competition's seven year history, clubs in the Amateur divisions will take part in the XXXX Queensland Cup.

In keeping with a traditional Cup format, this year's competition will involve all fifty-five QSF member clubs, along with representative teams from throughout regional Queensland.

As an added incentive to club's in this year's competition, not only will there be \$10,000 up for grabs in October's final, but team's will also be playing for bonus prize money throughout the knockout tournament.

This will also include sizeable incentives for the last Amateur and last Semi-Pro clubs left in the competition, bringing the total value of the 1998 XXXX Queensland Cup to more than \$26,000.

The QSF has also set aside \$2,000 to assist with travel expenses for teams making it as far as the state semi-finals.

Once again, the regional centres have a great chance of taking out the big money in this year's competition, with the winners of the Coral Coast Challenge and the Soccer Association of South Queensland, progressing straight to the Cup semi-finals.

The new FA Cup style format had been mooted in previous years, with the QSF Board finally giving it the go ahead after much consideration.

"This opens things right up for clubs in the lower divisions," QSF Secretary Jim Gilbert said.

"The format makes for exciting games, with plenty of room for upsets.

"What's more, the clubs in the lower divisions have got a real chances of getting amongst the prize money because of the incentive scheme the QSF has come up with."

The new format certainly received the thumbs up from the XXXX League fraternity at last week's season launch.

Lower division clubs have also warmed to the idea, which has given them even more games, and provided them with a second Cup competition for 1998.

The first round of matches in this year's XXXX Queensland Cup will commence next month, with the competition continuing right throughout the year. At this stage the final will be played at the completion of the regular season in early October.

1998 XXXX Queensland Cup Format & Prize Pool

Round 1	44 teams	22 winners	(\$100)	\$2200
Round 2	32 teams	16 winners	(\$150)	\$2400
Round 3	16 teams	8 winners	(\$250)	\$2000
Round 4	8 teams	4 winners	(\$500)	\$2000
Brisbane Semis	4 teams	2 winners	(\$1000)	\$2000
State Semis	4 teams	2 winners	(\$1000)	\$2000
Cup Final	2 teams	winner		\$7000
	2 teams	runner-up		\$3000

Incentive Prize Money:

Last Amateur Club	\$ 500
Last Semi-Pro Club	\$1000

(NB: \$2000 has also been allocated for travel costs for the State semi-finals)

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† In memory of Ian Johnston †

Nearly 500 people turned out at the Uniting Church, Middle Park on Tuesday, to mourn the passing of one of Queensland soccer's true greats.

Ian Stuart Johnston passed away last Thursday after being diagnosed with a series of brain tumours in October. He was just 50 years old.

The former Queensland and Australian striker is survived by his wife Betty and two children, Melissa 22 and Christopher 20.

Amongst those in attendance at Ian's funeral were the members of his old Brisbane City team. Goalkeeper David Neal gave the eulogy, while another close friend, Horst Schneider, paid a private tribute to his former team mate.

"The very first time we met was at a reception for the Australian team just prior to our visit to New Caledonia in 1967," Horst said.

"I didn't really get to know him at the reception, but we ended up sitting next to each other on the plane trip over.

"But after spending 14 days together, I went back to Newcastle and Ian went back to Queensland, and we didn't see each other again until 1973."

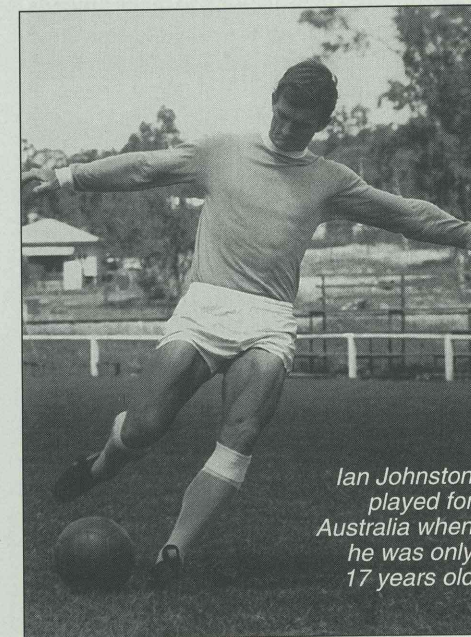
It was in that year Horst received a work transfer to Queensland. The former Australian midfielder had no intention of playing soccer in the Sunshine State, but officials from Brisbane City had other ideas.

"When I got off the plane they were waiting for me. They signed me up and the next night Ian and I were reunited at training."

From there, Horst said the two developed a close friendship in a team which bonded particularly well. So well in fact that it won four consecutive premierships from 1973 to 1976.

"Ian was a major part of that team. You could count on him scoring a goal every week," Horst said.

"And he was very fond of the number ten jersey. Back then all of the great players around the world wore the number ten, and there was



Ian Johnston played for Australia when he was only 17 years old

no way Ian was going to give it up."

The son of a Scotsman, Ian's greatest wish was to visit his father's homeland.

He finally realised that dream, when he and his family toured the UK late last year, after he was given just a short time to live.

In a career which saw him play for Queensland and Australia at the tender age of 17, Ian Johnston proved to be one of the best strikers the state has ever seen, playing alongside the likes of Neal, Schneider, Spencer Kitching, Peter Tokesi, Ross Kelly and Kevin Caldwell in Queensland, and John Warren, Adrian Alston and Manfred Schaefer during a stint with Sydney club St George.

But for those close to him, those who knew the man off the football pitch, he will always be remembered for something else. Something far more important than his uncanny goal scoring ability.

"Ian was always a great family man... someone who would always put his wife and children first."

PREMIER PREVIEW - BEENLEIGH v BRISBANE LIONS

Beenleigh will be looking to make amends for their opening round loss when they host Brisbane Lions at Underwood Park on Friday evening.

Phil Kerr's side travelled south last week, but got more than they bargained for, losing 3-2 to a pumped-up Gold Coast City.

While disappointed with a first up loss, Kerr did glean some positive aspects from the game.

"The bottom line was that we didn't play that well as we were very patchy," he said.

"We've got a few new guys this year and I think over time, the team will become more settled and hopefully, consistency will follow.

"We tried a few things during the match, but unfortunately for us, they didn't come off, but I firmly believe that we can improve on that performance.

"We still managed to create a lot of chances and once the lads start playing the way I know they can, we'll definitely push a few sides."

Brisbane Lions won a hard-fought affair 1-0 at home last week against a determined Mt Gravatt outfit, and Kerr is weary of one of the league's "big guns".

"Lions are always a very strong side and I expect our guys will have to soak up a lot of pressure," he said.

"It's probably not a good thing having to face one of the competition's strongest teams after losing to Gold Coast last week, but we'll have to face up to it.

"In saying that, most teams lift for the big games and Lions are certainly a side that always brings out the best in their opposition.

"It was a close game when we played them in the final of the 'Silver Boot' competition and there's no doubt, it will be another tough encounter."

Lions have tremendous depth in their side once again this season, and will most likely prove too strong for Beenleigh.



Beenleigh coach Phil Kerr feels his side will lift for this weekend's match

BEENLEIGH v BRISBANE LIONS

Chris Green Park, Beenleigh
Friday March 6, 7.30pm

BEENLEIGH	BRISBANE LIONS
1 Chris Roche	1 Jason Lucas
2 Kieren Galloway	2 David Lonsdale (c)
3 Michael Lipscombe	3 Darren Sime
4 Brett Jones	4 Clifford Tuck
5 Steven Forshaw	5 Paul Worroll
6 Wayne Hinton	6 Mark Geritz
7 Fotis Skordou	7 Steve Jackson
8 Jarrod Austin	8 Frank Mengotti
9 Brett Druery	9 Anthony Brown
10 Bradley Ditton	10 Michael Brockwell
11 Alan Spiers	11 Marc Brockwell
12 Michael Rooney	12 Marc Flemington
13 Daniel Stowers	13 Craig Rogers
14 Michael Bettridge	14 Cameron Watson
15 Lee Preston	15 (Not Allocated)
16 Michael Kalic	16 (Not Allocated)
17 Paul Lederhose	17 (Not Allocated)
18 Marc Lederhose	18 Greg Di-Losa
19 Grant Martin	20 Darren Hillier
20 Chris Balke	20 Robert Farrow

PREMIER PREVIEW - MT GRAVATT v WYNNUM

Mt Gravatt and the Wynnum Wolves will be out for points when they clash at Dittmer Park on Friday evening.

Both teams had a less than ideal start to the Premier League season, losing to Brisbane Lions and Ipswich Knights respectively in round one of the competition.

The Wolves 3-2 loss to the Knights was a roller-coaster ride, coming back from 2-0 down to draw level at half-time, only to have the winner scored with just eight minutes on the clock.

Despite the loss however, Wynnum go into this match as slight favourites.

The team possesses few big names but George Cowie has been able to teach his side how to grind out a win.

After a much-publicised disastrous start to last season, the Wolves have turned their form around, and according to Mt Gravatt coach, Steve Faulkner, will prove tough opposition.

"We played them last year in Cup competition and beat them 3-0, but you really can't look to that result as a pointer," Faulkner said.

"They (Wolves) were bottom at the end of the first round last year, but had a great end of season.

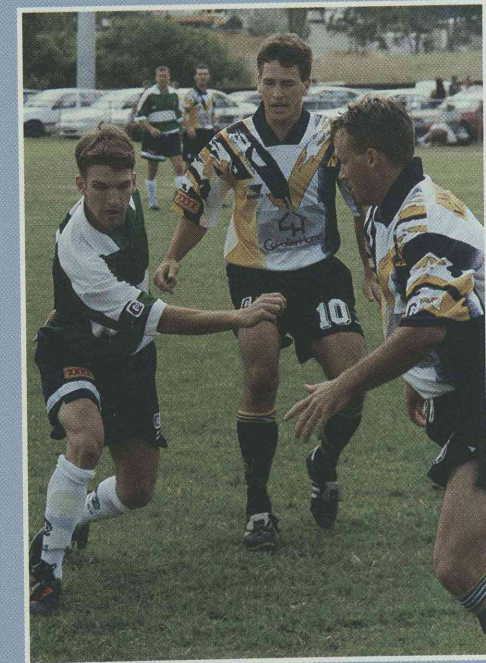
"They won the Queensland Cup and were one of the top performers of the final round, and their win in the Charity Shield this year has continued their success."

Faulkner said he was looking forward to the game and was surprisingly positive about last week's loss.

"To be honest, I wasn't disappointed about the game," he said. "I was really happy with the team's performance and thought the guys did very well against one of the league's top sides.

"We had a few shots cleared off the line and I think a draw would have been a fairer result.

"We conceded a goal against the run of play in the first half and unfortunately, we were unable to get back on even terms."



Ben Wood (#10), one of Wynnum's big hopes

MT GRAVATT v WYNNUM

Dittmer Park, Mt Gravatt
Friday March 6, 7.30pm

MOUNT GRAVATT	WYNNUM DISTRICT
1 Mark Bland	1 Kevin Tatton
2 Barry Browett	2 Shane Gilroy
3 Nathan Carlross	3 Paul Wilkins
4 Willie Carter	4 Nigel McClure
5 Joel Douglas	5 Luke Adair
6 Graham Edmonds	6 Andrew Davidson
7 Neil Ferguson	7 Tony McKinless
8 Ewen Fisher	8 Bill McDermott
9 Andrew G-Gowers	9 Nick Hadland
10 Criag Harvey	10 Ben Wood
11 Anthony McCullough	11 Owen Filewood
12 Michael Rooney	12 Mark Wilkins
13 David Pryor	13 (Not Allocated)
14 Anthony Roche	14 Stuart Popplewell
15 Darren Stachowicz	15 Damien Rogers
16 Danny Stickland	16 Matt Champion
17 Danny Cox	17 Ricky McKinless
18 George Whyte	18 (Not Allocated)
19 Collin Bethall	19 (Not Allocated)
20 Trevor Evans	20 Garth McCulloch

PREMIER PREVIEW - BUNDABERG v Gold Coast

Gold Coast City faces a mammoth road trip when they travel to Thabeban Sports Complex to take on Bundaberg Waves on Saturday.

City scored an impressive 3-2 win against the more fancied Beenleigh last weekend, to make a very successful debut in the XXXX League.

Trevor Greenwood had a great game up front and his harassing tactics on Beenleigh's defence were a key factor in his side's victory.

However, six hours in a bus is surely going to test the new club and it would be fair to suggest that this fact alone entitles Bundaberg to favouritism for this match.

Bundaberg coach Aldo Baretta said Waves had to re-focus on the match after enduring a 3-0 whitewash against Rochedale last week.

"It was extremely disappointing to lose the way we did," Baretta said.

"The bottom line was that we simply were not up to the pace of the game.

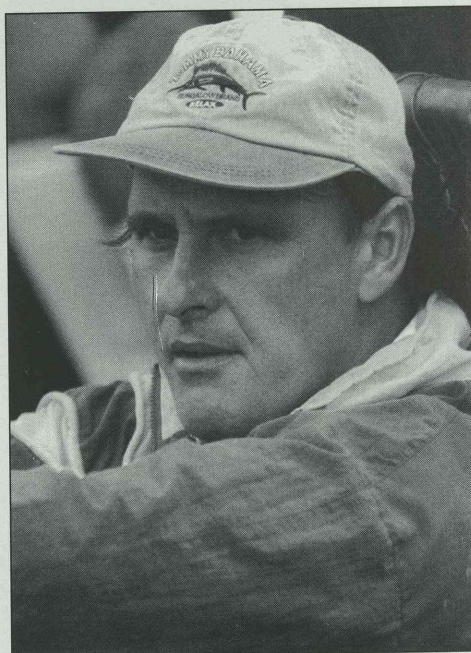
"We lost the match in the first twenty-five minutes of the game when we went two-nil down and that was really the end of the story after that.

"We didn't play too badly after that but when Rovers came out buzzing early, they just blew us away."

Baretta said he was expecting the Gold Coast to be just as tough Rochedale.

"I don't know too much about them, but I believe the game will be in a fairly similar vein to last week as all teams are fairly equal," he said.

"We definitely need to regroup at training, but I do still think that we're a little under prepared and are probably two to three weeks away from hitting our straps."



Baretta - "we're a little under prepared".

BUNDABERG v GOLD COAST

Thabeban Sports Complex, Bundaberg
Saturday March 7, 7pm

BUNDABERG	GOLD COAST CITY
1 Michael Bainbridge	1 Martin Simpson
2 Peter Bock	2 Tom Protuder
3 Neil Trebbin	3 Adam Hayward
4 Andrew Donnison	4 Mick Richardson
5 John Giovannoni	5 Trevor Wood
6 Tony Roebuck (vc)	6 Brett Adams
7 Luke Graham	7 Col Phelan
8 Patrick Conway	8 Jade Flack
9 Rauvami Madigi	9 Troy Greenwood
10 Rooney Cooper	10 Peter Grierson
11 Jason Chapman	11 Aaron Bristow
12 Chris Wilson	12 Rob Boxall
13 (Not Allocated)	13 Stuart Stevenson
14 Mathew Barritt	14 Matthew Packer
15 Tony Giovannoni	15 Trevor Elliott
16 Paul Fagan (c)	16 Martyn Carter
17 Stephen Mack	17 Pat Casey
18 (Not Allocated)	18 Adam Evans
19 (Not Allocated)	19 Lee Vernon
20 Cale Driver	20 Matt Miner

PREMIER PREVIEW - Ipswich Knights v Taringa

League newcomers, the Ipswich Knights, have a tough assignment against Taringa Rovers at Eric Evans Reserve on Sunday.

The Knights, fresh from a nail biting 3-2 win against Wynnum last week go into this match as underdogs.

On paper, Ipswich lacks the class of Taringa but coach Mike Mulvey, himself a newcomer to the XXXX coaching ranks, is desperate to get the three points at home.

"Taringa are a good, quick footballing side, but if we are to be a threat this season, we need to make sure we maintain a one hundred per cent win record at home," Mulvey said.

"To my mind, John (Ogden) has brought very well in the off season and has assembled a good squad of players.

"In particular, he managed to snare Richard Hilli from us, who I believe is one of the most exciting players in Queensland and will go on to play in the national league.

"And I'm sure friendships aside, our guys will want to give Richard a special welcome home, which will add some spice to the match."

Taringa coach John Ogden said Rovers needed to concentrate on eradicating silly mistakes from their game.

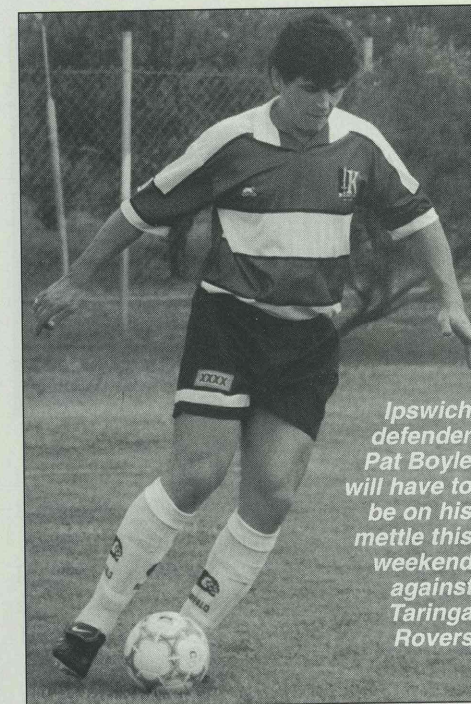
"We gave last week's game to City and that always seems to be the way when we play them," Ogden said.

"Our keeper mistimed a kick and gave the ball straight to Chris Slater who took full advantage of a gift situation.

"It was unfortunate, but that decided the match and if we want to win the tough away trip this weekend, we need to tighten up that part of our game."

Ogden said long term injuries to Steve Dawe and Des Hughes were major blows to Taringa's premiership aspirations.

"We rely on those guys for leadership on the field and I'll be looking to some of our younger players to fill the void."



Ipswich defender Pat Boyle will have to be on his mettle this weekend against Taringa Rovers

IPSWICH KNIGHTS v TARINGA

Eric Evans Reserve, Bundamba
Sunday March 8, 2:45pm

IPSWICH KNIGHTS	TARINGA ROVERS
1 Barney Smith	1 Brett Dickens
2 David Guest	2 Scott Robertson
3 Nick Seeley	3 Laurence Inunciaga
4 Brett Wilkinson	4 Stephen Starr
5 Pat Boyle	5 Joel Hale
6 Darren Spence	6 Steve Dawe
7 Andrew King	7 Des Hughes
8 John Clark	8 Demitri Theochari
9 Damien Conquest	9 Robert Laslo
10 Brenley Jefferd	10 Richard Hilli
11 Peter Hinks	11 Brett Allen
12 Peter McKendrick	12 Stephen Bland
13 Scott Stenzell	13 Scott Rocker
14 Clint Scott	14 Clinton McDermott
15 Wayne Adams	15 Aaron Bakker
16 Matt Hilli	16 Shaun Molenda
17 Brad Smith	17 Cameron Williamson
18 Neville O'Sullivan	18 Trent Cardwell
19 Ken Caldwell	19 Warren Allen
20 Sam Ferguson	20 Scott Higgins

PREMIER PREVIEW - BRISBANE CITY v ROCHEDALE

Brisbane City and Rochedale Rovers clash in the match of the round at Spencer Park on Sunday.

Both teams secured three points from the first round and will be eager to assert some authority with another win in this match.

City outlasted Taringa for a 1-0 result last week and coach Bobby Hamilton admitted it was not one of his side's more memorable performances.

"It was nice to get away with the win when you consider we didn't play as well as we could have," he said.

"But in many respects, I see that as a positive thing because we'll learn from that match and improve ourselves for the future."

Hamilton said he was looking forward to the match against Rochedale and expected them to be full of confidence after downing Bundaberg 3-0 last week.

"What I like about the new league is that all the games tend to be fairly close, hard-fought affairs," he said.

"It's always a tough game against Rochedale and I'll be looking for consistency from the players on Sunday."

Rochedale coach Peter Bannon said he was confident his side could match the experience of City.

"I was very happy with our win last week and it was satisfying to start the season with three points," he said.

"The game was probably not played at the maximum intensity due to the heat, but most of my guys had a reasonable game.

"As for the match against City this week, it will be a good test for us and an indicator of our title aspirations.

"It's still early days, but the game should tell us where we are at and where we might need to go.

"At the end of the day, it's up to the players to perform and I believe our team has enough experience in it to know what is required of them."



City's goalscorer from last week, Chris Slater will be looking for more goals on Sunday

BRISBANE CITY v ROCHEDALE

Spencer Park, Newmarket
Sunday March 8, 2:45pm

BRISBANE CITY

- 1 Daniel Duke
- 2 Warren Cooley
- 3 Damon Voss
- 4 Mark Bennett
- 5 Wayne Strange
- 6 Scott Elliott
- 7 Barry Wilkinson
- 8 Chris Slater
- 9 Damian Waugh
- 10 Danny Wright
- 11 Shane Haddow (c)
- 12 Robert Kidd
- 13 Daryl Anderson
- 14 Mark Battistin
- 15 Mark Luburic
- 16 Mark Jenkins
- 17 Damon Tune
- 18 Eddie Azorello
- 19 (Not Allocated)
- 20 Adriano Taraborrelli

ROCHEDALE ROVERS

- 1 Graham Ross
- 2 Troy Wickstein
- 3 Ross Davidson
- 4 Michael Lane
- 5 Damian Harris
- 6 Eddie Lees
- 7 Steve Fitzsimmons
- 8 Michael Legg
- 9 Andy Lees
- 10 Clayton Koch
- 11 John Weatherby
- 12 David Pilic
- 13 Alun Evans
- 14 Paul Grugan
- 15 Aaron Baldwin
- 16 Glen Kolpak
- 17 Gary Brattan
- 18 Andy Monement
- 19 Anton Beronic
- 20 Robert Bajic

Pancakes Faulkner's secret

If you asked Steve Faulkner twenty years ago, where he would be in 1998, chances are he would not have said coaching Mount Gravatt in the XXXX League. This is a man who by his own admission "fell into soccer".

And that seems a strange statement from a man who hails from Birmingham and completed his tertiary education in Liverpool.

But Faulkner's interest in soccer at that stage was purely from a spectator's point of view.

"Obviously I grew up in a soccer-mad environment," the forty-two year old school teacher said.

"I'd even played the game but only at a low level... to be honest I just enjoyed watching soccer and that was about the full extent of it."

However things changed when Faulkner migrated to Australia in 1985. It was then that he took up a teaching role with Brisbane Grammar School and developed an interest in coaching.

"I started out with the second eleven at 'Grammar' and from there I progressed to other junior sides and then onto rep teams," Faulkner said.

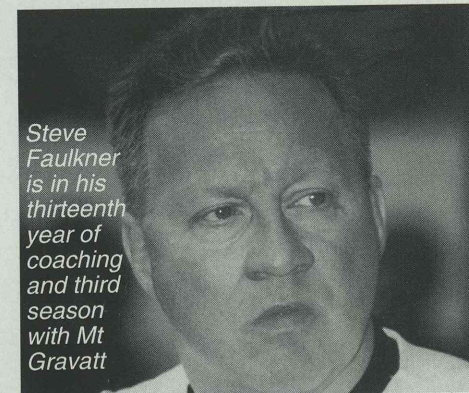
His first taste of senior football was with Taringa's reserves in 1993, and after three years there he moved to the struggling Mount Gravatt outfit, which had narrowly escaped relegation the previous year.

Under Faulkner, Mount Gravatt finished the 1996 regular season in fourth place, but then backed up to take out the grand final.

The side repeated that effort again last year and also took out the Champion of Champions Trophy in the semi-pro division.

But Faulkner realises this year will not be as easy as the last two.

"The top clubs in the XXXX League are packed full of good, experienced players, and are always hard to beat," Faulkner said.



Steve Faulkner is in his thirteenth year of coaching and third season with Mt Gravatt

"But this has spurred our players on in the past and I think they relish any opportunity they get against quality opposition."

Faulkner is entering this year's XXXX League with a relatively inexperienced squad, and he believes the key to his club's chances in 1998, rests with his young players.

"If they can adapt quickly to the competition and become comfortable with the weekly grind, I know we'll be competitive this season," he said.

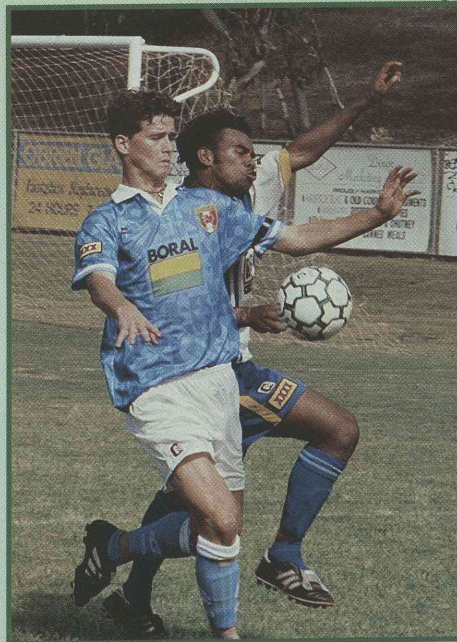
"We have got some experience in guys like Danny Cox and George Whyte, but I believe success will depend on how quickly the young players can come up to the standard of the XXXX League."

But success may also depend on whether or not Faulkner can stick to a rigid pre-match game plan.

A highly superstitious man, Faulkner said he goes through the same personal routine before each match.

"I have lots of superstitions," he said, "...I have to eat pancakes for breakfast, wear certain clothing, and listen to the same type of music prior to every match."

Faulkner's hoping the superstitions will end this year however. 1998 marks his thirteenth year of coaching.



Wynnum's Ben Wood proved a handful for the Ipswich Knights... on this occasion outsmarting Nick Seeley. The Knights won the match 3-2.

Despite being part of a losing side, Richard Hilli showed plenty of determination against City, Chris Slater got all tangled up with Shaun Molenda, while Man of the Match Damon Voss was outstanding in the City defensive line.



ACTION REPLAY



The ten teams in this year's XXXX League... players show off their club's strips at last week's season launch.

Semi-Pro Div 1 North Results

Newmarket 2 def North Star 1
 Pine Rivers 1 drew Albany Creek 1
 Eastern Suburbs 1 def Grange Thistle 0
 Mitchelton 3 def Uni of Qld 1

Semi-Pro Div 1 South Results

Redlands Utd 3 def Slacks Creek 1
 Capalaba 4 def Inala City 3
 Toowoomba Utd 2 def Souths Utd 1
 Olympic Utd 3 def Acacia Ridge 1

LAST WEEK'S RESULTS

Semi-Pro Div 1 North Round 2

Uni of Qld v Bye
 Albany Creek v Newmarket
 The Gap v Grange Thistle
 Eastern Suburbs v Pine Rivers Utd
 North Star v Mitchelton

Semi-Pro Div 1 South Round 2

Capalaba v Bye
 Slacks Creek v Souths Utd
 Acacia Ridge v Inala City
 Toowoomba Utd v Olympic Utd
 Rocklea Utd v Redlands Utd

THIS WEEK'S GAMES

EYE ON SOCCER TABLES

XXXX LEAGUE	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
ROCHEDALE ROV	1	1	0	0	3	0	3
GOLD COAST	1	1	0	0	3	2	3
IPSW KNIGHTS	1	1	0	0	3	2	3
BRISBANE CITY	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
BRISBANE LIONS	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
BEENLEIGH	1	0	0	1	2	3	0
WYNNUM	1	0	0	1	2	3	0
MT GRAVATT	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
TARINGA ROVERS	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
B'BERG WAVES	1	0	0	1	0	3	0

XXXX RESERVES	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
ROCHEDALE ROV	1	1	0	0	7	1	3
TARINGA ROVERS	1	1	0	0	3	0	3
BRISBANE LIONS	1	1	0	0	6	5	3
GOLD COAST	1	1	0	0	4	3	3
IPSW KNIGHTS	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
WYNNUM	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
MT GRAVATT	1	0	0	1	5	6	0
BEENLEIGH	1	0	0	1	3	4	0
BRISBANE CITY	1	0	0	1	0	3	0
B'BERG WAVES	1	0	0	1	1	7	0

XXXX YOUTH	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
IPSW KNIGHTS	1	1	0	0	5	2	3
BRISBANE LIONS	1	1	0	0	5	3	3
BRISBANE CITY	1	1	0	0	3	1	3
BEENLEIGH	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ROCHEDALE ROV	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
MT GRAVATT	1	0	0	1	3	5	0
TARINGA ROVERS	1	0	0	1	1	3	0
WYNNUM	1	0	0	1	2	5	0

SEMI PRO DIV 1 NORTH	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
MITCHELTON	1	1	0	0	3	1	3
NEWMARKET	1	1	0	0	2	1	3
EASTERN SUBS	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
ALBANY CREEK	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
PINE RIVERS UTD	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
THE GAP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NORTH STAR	1	0	0	1	1	2	0
GRANGE THISTLE	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
UNI OF QLD	1	0	0	1	1	3	0

SEMI PRO DIV 1 N RES	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
PINE RIVERS UTD	1	1	0	0	5	0	3
NEWMARKET	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
EASTERN SUBS	1	0	1	0	2	2	1
GRANGE THISTLE	1	0	1	0	2	2	1
MITCHELTON	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
UNI OF QLD	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
THE GAP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NORTH STAR	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
ALBANY CREEK	1	0	0	1	0	5	0

SEMI PRO DIV 1 NORTH YOUTH	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
MITCHELTON	1	1	0	0	6	0	3
GRANGE THISTLE	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
NORTH STAR	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
PINE RIVERS UTD	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
THE GAP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ALBANY CREEK	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
EASTERN SUBS	1	0	0	1	0	2	0
NEWMARKET	1	0	0	1	0	2	0
UNI OF QLD	1	0	0	1	0	6	0

SEMI PRO DIV 1 SOUTH	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
OLYMPIC UTD	1	1	0	0	3	1	3
REDLANDS UTD	1	1	0	0	3	1	3
CAPALABA	1	1	0	0	4	3	3
TOOWOOMBA UTD	1	1	0	0	2	1	3
ROCKLEA UTD	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
INALA CITY	1	0	0	1	3	4	0
SOUTHS UTD	1	0	0	1	1	2	0
ACACIA RIDGE	1	0	0	1	1	3	0
SLACKS CREEK	1	0	0	1	1	3	0

SEMI PRO DIV 1 SOUTH RESERVES	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
CAPALABA	1	1	0	0	5	0	3
REDLANDS UTD	1	1	0	0	3	1	3
SOUTHS UTD	1	1	0	0	3	1	3
OLYMPIC UTD	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
ROCKLEA UTD	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SLACKS CREEK	1	0	0	1	1	3	0
TOOWOOMBA UTD	1	0	0	1	1	3	0
ACACIA RIDGE	1	0	0	1	0	2	0
INALA CITY	1	0	0	1	0	5	0

SEMI PRO DIV 1 SOUTH YOUTH	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
CAPALABA	1	1	0	0	4	0	3
TOOWOOMBA UTD	1	1	0	0	4	1	3
REDLANDS UTD	1	1	0	0	3	0	3
ACACIA RIDGE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
OLYMPIC UTD	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ROCKLEA UTD	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SOUTHS UTD	1	0	0	1	1	4	0
SLACKS CREEK	1	0	0	1	0	3	0
INALA CITY	1	0	0	1	0	4	0

CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Brisbane Lions	3	3	0	0	12	8	9
Ipswich Knights	3	2	1	0	9	5	7
Rochedale Rovers	2	2	0	0	10	1	6
Gold Coast	2	2	0	0	7	5	6
Brisbane City	3	2	0	1	4	4	6
Taringa Rovers	3	1	0	2	4	4	3
Wynnum District	3	0	1	2	5	9	1
Bundaberg Waves	2	0	0	2	1	10	0
Beenleigh	2	0	0	2	5	7	0
Mt Gravatt	3	0	0	3	8	12	0

PREMIER LEAGUE LEADING SCORERS

2	Gls	Peter Grierson (Gold Coast)
2	Gls	Clayton Koch (Rochedale)
1	Gls	Brett Adams (Gold Coast)
1	Gls	John Clark (Ipswich Knights)
1	Gls	Brett Druery (Beenleigh)
1	Gls	David Guest (Ipswich Knights)
1	Gls	Roy Huth (Brisbane Lions)
1	Gls	Michael Legg (Rochedale)
1	Gls	Brenley Jefferd (Ipswich Knights)



ANSETT AUSTRALIA
One of the world's great airlines.

WOMENS' WRAP

by Toni Slater

The first round of the Atlanta Cup was played last weekend in all divisions except Premier League and Reserves.

In Division One, Rochedale 2 defeated Brisbane Lions 3, Margate flew home with 11 goals to defeat Tiwiwarren 0. Tiwiwarren have just moved up from second division to fill in the gap left by 1997 grand final winners, Souths who have, from all reports, disbanded.

Also in Division One, Taringa 2 defeated Beenleigh 1.

In Division Two, Greenbank won over Clairvaux 1-0, Albany Creek 3 beat The Gap 2 and Taringa drew 2-2 with Jimoomba.

Newcomers to the competition Cuscatlan (division 6B) enjoyed an easy win over Capalaba 6 goals to nil and Annerley comfortably won, defeating southerners Loganholme 2-0.

The Ansett Australia Summer Series National Women's League has wound down for another year. Now in its second season, the series has again proved a success and looks set to continue.

New South Wales defeated South Australia 3 goals to 2 in the Grand Final. New South Wales' Julie Murray scored a hat-trick for the victors.

In the first elimination round, Victoria 2 defeated ACT 1.

The major semi-final turned out to be a prediction of the grand final when New South Wales defeated South Australia 3 goals to 2. South Australia then had to defeat Victoria in the Preliminary final to secure a spot. This they did by winning 2-1. Last season's champions were Queensland.

The Ansett Australia Summer Series Player of the Year was also recently named.

Sharon Black won the Julie Doland medal, Julie was one of the first players to represent Australia.

Lots of work has been happening at the home of women's soccer, Geebung, with the fields being top-dressed and re-seeded over the break.

Unfortunately the grass hasn't taken in several spots leaving a few bare patches.

This means the fields won't be ready for this weekend's first Premier League games. WSQ would like to thank the Brisbane City Council for the financial support and work they've put in to the grounds.

Just when we were getting used to saying QUT/City, it is no longer. Last year QUT merged with Brisbane City to form their team. 1998 sees the team drop the title City and QUT has relocated to their home ground in Finsbury Street Newmarket, just up the road.

Finally a call to all women's teams. If you have any big news or photographs of your games, please give us a call. We'd love to report on the happenings at your club and are always looking for photos to include. Pretty soon you'll be receiving a request for information and photos of key players in your teams, so get your thinking caps on and get those cameras clicking!!



Quinn confident of victory

East's are confident they can continue their winning ways and break a points drought against Pine Rivers, when they host Frank Pimblett's side this Sunday.

Rivers took six points away from the Tigers last year and East's coach Jim Quinn is eager to set the record straight this weekend.

"They've always been tough for us... they've got a good team and are very well coached," Quinn said.

The East's coach singled out striker John Preston as Rivers' main danger man, however the Tigers are not short in the talent department themselves.

"Craig Collins has returned to the club, along with Billy Ingledeew, Shaun Clark and James Gowans," the East's coach said.

When you add to this list the likes of former Wynnum defender Rob Hilton and the possible signing of Ibro Cahut, the Tigers should be a real force this season.

"We've recruited as well as anyone in the off-season, we're not flashing the cheque books around or anything, but we're pretty happy with who we've signed," he said.

"But the best thing about our recruiting is that they're all former East's players who want to play for the Tigers again.

"For once the club is attracting players."

One of the new signings who will be on show at Heath Park on Sunday is young Townsville striker Matt Allen, whose clearance did not come through in time for last weekend's 1-0 win over Thistle.

Tatters to boost Newmarket

Victory against North Star last weekend has given Newmarket coach Peter Carey plenty of confidence going into their second round clash with Albany Creek.

The side defeated North Star 2-1 last weekend in trying circumstances, after they were left with just ten men with 25 minutes of play still remaining.

"The boys dug deep in that last part of the game and it really was a gutsy win when you consider North Star were throwing everything at us," Carey said.

But the Newmarket coach is aware this weekend at Albany Creek won't be any picnic either.

"They're very tough to play at home. They're a good side... they've been around for a few years now and play with a lot of pride at home," he said.

Carey would not give too much away about his side's game plan for Friday night's match, but he did make it clear he wanted his team to concentrate more on possession.

"Our passing was terrible last weekend," Carey said. "We gave away far too much possession and that's something we'll have to work on against Albany Creek."

Carey's team will be boosted this week by the return of skipper Paul Tatters.

Out last week with a groin injury, the central midfielder returns on Friday night, and Carey's confident his presence on the field will go a long way towards his side securing three second round competition points.

"Paul's a true leader on and off the field, and I think it was clear last week how much he was missed, so we're really looking forward to having him back on the park."

North Star needs commitment

North Star are looking for a much more committed effort when they host Mitchelton at O'Callaghan Park on Sunday.

The match features last year's Premiers and runners-up, with both teams having developed a fierce rivalry in recent years.

"Many of the players and even the coaches have featured for both clubs and I think last year's result just stirred that rivalry up even more," North Star Football Manager Don Eltherington said.

Lee Scriggins is one former North Star player now with Mitchelton, and Eltherington singled him out as the main danger for his young side on Sunday.

"He's definitely one player we'll have to watch out for, but they're a tough side all round," Eltherington said.

"However that all aside, if we're going to get the points we'll have to make some big improvements on last week's 2-1 loss to Newmarket."

Eltherington said his side had plenty of chances to at least come away with a draw from that match, but the strikers could not capitalise.

One of the players North Star will be looking to this Sunday is former Brisbane City midfielder Simon Eslick.

He's one of the side's more experienced players now, after the club endured a mini exodus of players, including Michael Brockwell and Ben Dwyer.

"Simon's begun a little slowly but he's started to come good in the last couple of weeks, and we'll need him to shine if we're to make a big impact in this league."

Big names at Gap 'Gators'

A new look Gap side is confident of victory against traditional rivals Grange Thistle, when the two sides meet at the Walton Bridge Reserve this Sunday.

A new strip, new mascot, new coach and plenty of new faces will feature in the game, which has always been one of the semi-pro division's traditional grudge matches.

After taking a year off from coaching, Mauro Saftich is confident he can take the side back to its glory days of old.

"The Gap's always been a strong junior club but we've never really been strong in the senior ranks," Saftich said.

"And that's what we're hoping to achieve in the next few years, with our ultimate aim being to get into the XXXX League."

Saftich is hoping the side will begin to chase that goal with a first up win this weekend.

The Gap 'Gators', as they will now be known have attracted some big names this season. Into the side come Cameron Pearse, Darren Bender and Shaun Sleep, players who have all had XXXX League experience.

"It's good to have players their calibre on your side," Saftich said. "Their experience rounds the team off nicely and I'm confident with the balance we have, we will be a force this year."

Saftich is nonetheless expecting a tough match against a Grange outfit, which is coming off a 1-0 loss to East's.

But he believes his seasoned campaigners will stand out against the young Thistle side.

DFB coach to pass on tricks

Local coaches are set to get the benefit of years of experience with German coach Bernhard Streun in Queensland for a series of coaching courses.

Streun works with the DFB in Germany and also runs courses in Africa and France, normally designed for elite coaches. However the courses in Queensland are designed for coaches at all levels, from the grass roots instructor to the elite.

Streun's first course will commence this Sunday, when he will be working with Brisbane North Director of Coaching Rob Kaiser. He will then move on to Bundaberg the following week and continue his clinics throughout the state over the next two months.

Anyone interested in attending should call Rob Kaiser on 07-3369 8455 or 0417 617 152, or State Director of Coaching Peter Kelly on 0412 422 327.

THE XXXX REPORT

ROCHEDALE ROVERS 3 v BUNDABERG WAVES 0 (2-0) at Underwood Park

SCORERS **Rochedale** - Clayton Koch 2 (inc pen), Michael Legg

MAN OF THE MATCH Michael Legg

Rochedale: Ross, Wickstein (Davidson), Lane, Harris, Fitzsimmons, Legg, Koch, Weatherby (Alley), Evans, Kolpak (Monement), Brattan.

Bundaberg: Bainbridge, J Giovannoni, Roebuck, Trebbin (Wilson), Madigi, Cooper, Chapman (Wilson), Bock, T Giovannoni, Fagan, Mack (Maas).

IPSWICH KNIGHTS 3 v WYNNUM WOLVES 2 (2-2) at Eric Evans Reserve

SCORERS **Ipswich** - David Guest, John Clark, Brenley Jefferd

Wynnum - M Wilkins, Own Goal

MAN OF THE MATCH Peter McKendrick

Ipswich: Smith (Ferguson), Scott (Jefferd), Seeley, Wilkinson, Boyle, Spence, Guest, Clark, Conquest (Gacesa), McKendrick, Hinks.

Wynnum: Tatton, Davidson, McKinless, Adair (Rogers), Wood, Gilroy, P Wilkins, Popplewell, Campion, M Wilkins, Hadland.

GOLD COAST CITY 3 v BEENLEIGH 2 (1-1) at Glennon Park

SCORERS **Gold Coast** - Peter Grierson 2 (inc pen), Brett Adams

Beenleigh - Brett Druery, Alan Spiers

MAN OF THE MATCH Peter Grierson

Gold Coast: Simpson, Protuder, Hayward (Bristow), Richardson, Wood, Adams, Greenwood, Grierson, Vernon (Evans), Elliott (Casey).

Beenleigh: Balke, Jones, Druery (Kalic), Galloway, Skordou, Hinton, Ditton, Bettridge (Lederhose), Stowers, Forshaw, Spiers.

TARINGA ROVERS 0 v BRISBANE CITY 1 (0-1) at Jack Speare Park

SCORER **Brisbane City** - Chris Slater

MAN OF THE MATCH Damon Voss

Taringa: Higgins, Dawe (W Allen), Hughes (Laslo), Theochari, Molenda, Starr, B Allen, Hilli, Inunciago, Robertson (Bastian), McDermott.

Brisbane City: Duke, Voss, Bennett, Strange, Elliott, Wilkinson, Slater (Battistin), Waugh, Wright, Anderson (Cooley), Jenkins (Kidd).

BRISBANE LIONS 1 v MOUNT GRAVATT 0 (1-0) at Lions Stadium

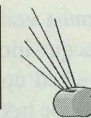
SCORER **Brisbane Lions** - Roy Huth

MAN OF THE MATCH Roy Huth

Brisbane Lions: Farrow, Lonsdale, Geritz, Hillier, Mengotti (Watson), Rogers, Huth (Cannon), Brown (Brockwell), Flemington, Worroll, Jackson.

Mount Gravatt: Bland, Cox, Pryor, Georgiou (Evans), Gosney, Bethell (Garwood-Gowers), Collins, Roche, Carlos, Hews (Ferguson), Carter.

BEFORE THE WHISTLE



With
Jim
Gilbert

As the well known pigeon fancier from Melbourne is wont to say, "it's all happening here in Brisbane"!

All divisions commence fixtures this weekend with Semi Pros having the benefit of one week's games under their belt in an attempt to gauge the quality of oppositions in weeks to come.

I, along with quite a few other interested referees and assorted club officials, took in the first official match of the season last Friday at the Cleveland Showgrounds and we were all entertained by a fast freeflowing match between Redlands and Slacks Creek. Come the final whistle, the home side had already equalled their total number of wins for the whole of the 1997 season, with a hard fought, but nevertheless fairly convincing 3 - 1 win.

Unfortunately, my weekend was completely overshadowed by the receipt on Friday, of four letters from four separate clubs withdrawing a team from a number of the Amateur divisions, thus necessitating a great sequence of byes in some areas. A highly undesirable state of affairs a mere 5-7 days before the commencement of fixtures, so, hopefully, those teams who now discover they have an "off" weekend due the aforementioned bye, please don't take it out on the Federation!

Semi Pro Division 1 North

Albany Creek have the honour of the Friday night game this week with a home tie against Newmarket, Creek had a good away draw to Pine Rivers last week whilst Newmarket rolled XXXX contenders North Star at home, so this should be a most interesting tussle. Home ground advantage points to a home win. The remaining three matches are on Sunday with The Gap now coming back to full strength hosting Grange Thistle who went down to a lone goal to Easts last week, this has all the earmarks of a

score draw. At Heath Park, Pine Rivers are the visitors, but on this occasion I strongly favour Easts to get up, as their pre-season form has been quite dramatic. The remaining fixture is between North Star and Mitchelton, and whilst the Stars have recruited well in the off-season, this may be a real tussle and it will either be a score draw or an away win.

Semi Pro Division 1 South

Local derby time at Usher Park between Slacks Creek and Souths United, both sides were first up losers, so will be most interesting to see how the two fare after a week's inquest into where they went wrong! The Matt Carson trained Souths have a strong side this week so the Creek certainly won't have it their own way and a score draw would not be a big surprise. In the Sunday games, Acacia Ridge host Inala City, again both sides were last start losers, but judging by their goal scoring capabilities, it looks like this could be an away win. A most intriguing tussle will take place at Dunn Road where Redlands are the visitors, both sides had identical 3 - 1 wins to their credit last week, so again, it will be interesting to see if that form carries through another week, however I think the points will remain with Rocklea. The most interesting match in this round is Olympic's visit to Toowoomba, with both sides coming off convincing wins in round 1, Olympic's away form in the past hasn't always been that great, so this will be a severe test for them, but the home crowd may just tilt the balance Toowoomba United's way.

In the Cup, University and Capalaba meet in their first round match, and going by last week's form, the Bulldogs should take the points.

Amateur Division 1

In a lot of cases tipping in the Amateur divisions this year particularly in the early rounds will be much of the "close your eyes and use a

pin" variety. I must confess I don't know much about player acquisitions, I have kept my ear to the ground picked up a few snippets of information, so it will be interesting to see how accurate I am after round 1!

Opening match is on Friday at Bellbowrie between Moggill and Latrobe, home side are always tough to beat, whereas Latrobe have lost a few players, I fancy a home win. In the five Saturday games there will be an absolute bottler between Annerley and Margate with last year's Division 2 premiers up against a traditionally strong home side, you really could not have asked for a better tester to gauge the quality of Division 1 than this match as far as the boys from the Peninsula are concerned, if Margate can take even one point from this game they should do exceedingly well in Division 1.

Brothers make the trip down the Peninsula to visit Redcliffe City, and whilst Redcliffe are always tough at home, again, the promoted side from Division 2 may take the points. North Pine make the long trip up to Goodna on Saturday afternoon where I fancy the visitors should be successful, just down the road at Darra, Bayside United make their first outing in Division 1, and they will certainly be out to prove their inclusion in Division 1 this year was justified, a score draw or even an away win, is quite on the cards.

The only match on Sunday has South Star hosting Southside Eagles, with the Eagles out to prove that their 1997 form was a one-off and should not be construed as a forerunner of things to come, meanwhile the hosts have lost a few, and also acquired a few players, so a low scoring draw may be on the cards.

Amateur Division 2

This is the first of the divisions to which I referred in my opening remarks that had a withdrawal, with Browns Plains having "retired" from participation in QSF fixtures. Therefore Bethania, unfortunately, have an extra week's training without a match!

In the Saturday games, Archerfield will have a very tough encounter with highflying Park

Ridge, and if last year's form is any guide, it will be a top notch match, but the Ridge should pick up the points. Samford, newly relegated from Div 1, will be out to make every post a winner this year, and they host Greenbank, whom may well be a little shellshocked come the whistle at 4.30pm. In the other two matches, Kingsridge host Oxley United, and by all reports the visitors will certainly not be the easy beats they were in 1997, so they will give Kingsridge a run for their money, very difficult to predict as Kingsridge have been promoted from Div 3 whilst Oxley's form can only improve from that from last year. The remaining match is between Clairvaux and Jimboomba, and this may well be a "pin" job, I'll stay safe and tip a draw. One match on Sunday between friendly rivals Ipswich City and Pine Hills, with City out to show that their own form from 1997 should be discounted, this is a new year, therefore all posts will be winning posts! Having said all of that, Pine Hills' new coach former Gold Medal winner John Preston, may have a lot to say in the outcome of the points in this game, so it will certainly be an interesting match, but I still think the points will remain at Sutton Park.

Amateur Division 3

The Knights have withdrawn from this division so we yet again have another bye, Moggill being the luck recipients on this occasion. One match on Friday sees a new look game completely with Margate fielding a third team hosting Logan City Kings who have come back into the fold. The distance and home ground advantage dictates the points to remain on the Peninsula. In the two Saturday matches Woodridge should account for near neighbours Park Ridge, whilst Bayside, struggle through they might in this division at times, should still be too strong for Oxley. Two games on Sunday of contrasting form, with Annerley's third team hosting Samford, and the visitors may be out to prove a point in this division, but by all accounts Annerley should acquit themselves very well also, score draw could be the result, whilst in the remaining match Mooroodu who have dropped a team from last year, host North Pine,

and it would be disappointing if Mooroodu crashed completely which could spell the end of their seniors, hopefully that will not occur and they will have a favourable year, even though the lads from Dakabin will not relish my statement in this game.

Amateur Division 4

This is where the art of tipping becomes more luck than anything, as a number of teams in these divisions are certainly unknown quantities, none more so than the case of the Ipswich Knights who are now fielding players from former Coalstars-Ipswich St Helens together with new recruits, and will certainly be difficult to predict. Their Friday night match pits them against last year's Div 4 premiers Taringa, so the Knights will be in for a torrid time and a win to the visitors would not surprise. In the other Friday night match, North Star host Lions, with an away win also the forecast. On Saturday, Newmarket host neighbours The Gap and judging by last year's form (a most dangerous attribute) hosts to win, Easts, the Division 5 runners up from '97 make the trip to Mitchelton, where I suspect they could be highly successful, two old foes from way back Capalaba and Albany Creek meet with the points to remain with the southern club, while Acacia Ridge could well be too strong for the boys from Slacks Creek.

Amateur Division 5

Another division with a bye with Redlands United having withdrawn their team, Grange Thistle are the recipients so have an extra week to prepare themselves for their 1998 premiership tilt. In the three Friday night matches, Samford make the long trip up the highway to Ipswich where I suspect the points will remain, I also think another win for the home side with Albany Creek making the trip up to Pine Rivers, however in the remaining Friday match Slacks Creek should return home full of joy after their visit to Souths United.

In the Saturday game University's all round strength should be too much for Brisbane City, whilst in the Sunday morning game Mt Gravatt

should keep the points away from the bayside club of Wynnum.

Amateur Division 6

Again we have three Friday night matches, such is the joy of teams participating in the lower divisions, they all like to play on Fridays and have their weekends to themselves, a wise move I might add. In the first match to be previewed the all round strength of University should carry them to victory over hosts North Star, Redlands United, despite their player recruiting problems, should be too good for Easts, whilst Brisbane Lions will keep the points away from Beenleigh.

On Saturday there is now only one game, with Wynnum having withdrawn their team, therefore Capalaba versus the Knights is the only match, and if you look at last year's points table it is second v first, I wonder if the composition of the teams remains the same? I'll play safe and tip a draw, whilst in the last match on Sunday, Taringa should be too good for Annerley.

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Olympic back young guns

Olympic are hoping their young guns will fire again this weekend, when they travel up the range to meet semi-pro high fliers Toowoomba on Sunday.

Last weekend, it was three of Olympic's teenage players who did the damage in the side's crushing 3-1 win over Acacia Ridge.

"Damian Kirby, Demetri Bellas and Cristian Aguirre were the pick of our players last weekend," Olympic coach Tibor Hagymas said.

"Between them they took all of the player points and the best thing is they are all under 20 years of age."

Hagymas was pleased to see the young players rise to the challenge last weekend, particularly after he was left without six of his regular first teamers because of injuries and suspensions.

Among those players were the experienced Harry Makradakis and Dean Drakos, who are both out for several weeks with long term injuries.

"With players like that out of action for a while, we need our young guys to fire, so from that point last week's match was very satisfying," Hagymas said.

New to Olympic this year, Hagymas is confident of a good season with the club, although he admits he knows little of his opponents for this weekend.

"I know they did particularly well last year and I've heard they are very good at home," Hagymas said.

"And for that reason we're not really looking forward to the trip up the range, but we're still confident of coming away with at least a point."

Rocklea ready to rock-n-roll

After their strongest pre-season in recent years, Rocklea United can not wait to open their 1998 season against Redlands United this Sunday.

Coach Allan Hughes has lured several key players to the club this year, and after an impressive 3-1 Ansett Cup victory against The Gap last weekend, he is confident the side will make a solid start to its semi-pro campaign this weekend.

"I was very happy with the way the boys played last weekend," Hughes said.

"We're only a fairly young team but I believe we're a lot more disciplined than last year's squad and I think that showed against The Gap last weekend."

Two of Hughes' acquisitions this year are young midfielders Matthew Robb and Michael Babic, and the veteran coach believes they will make a big impact in this year's semi-pro ranks.

"They're two very promising young lads and all we need now is to get two or three more experienced players working around them and I think we'll have the makings of a premiership winning side."

Hughes admits he knows little of the new look Redlands side, but he said he would be treating them with plenty of respect this weekend.

"They had a good win over Slacks Creek last week and I've heard they have a few new players, so we won't be taking them lightly."

Axe hovers over the Ridge

The axe is set to fall on several Acacia Ridge players this week, with coach Frank Campbell still seething about his side's below-par performance in a 3-1 loss to Olympic last Sunday.

"I think they're expecting it really," Campbell said.

"I'll forgive players once for having a bad game, but I won't forgive them twice."

Campbell's set to bring at least three new players into the side to meet Inala this Sunday, including striker Adam Wratten and young midfielder Tony Bloor, who's returning from suspension.

"I've got to shake them up," the Ridge coach said. "There'll be at least three changes and maybe four."

Despite his side's poor start to the season last weekend, Campbell remained optimistic about this Sunday.

"I've heard Inala's lost the backbone of their side from last year, but they've also picked up a lot of players from Darra," Campbell said.

"If that's the case, then I think they may lack some stability and could struggle against us, especially at home."

"I also know that we can't play much worse than we did last Sunday night and the lads have done a lot of soul searching since then."

"If we play to our potential then there's no reason why we can't give our home supporters something to smile about by coming away from the match this Sunday with the three points," the Ridge coach said.

Key players back for Creek

The return of several key players has given Slacks Creek coach Danny Docherty a wealth of confidence coming into their match with Souths United this weekend.

Docherty's expecting the clearances of centre-half Steve Smith and midfielder Adrian Thompson to come through this week, while young striker Ryan Wandschneider will also come back into the side after serving a suspension.

"These lads will all add another dimension to our team," Docherty said. "They're all very skilful players and will be important to our title chances this year."

Docherty criticised his players for "day dreaming" in their 3-1 loss to Redlands last weekend.

"Granted we didn't have a full strength side, but we just weren't sharp enough," the player/coach said.

Docherty said he was looking forward to the clash with the young Souths United outfit this weekend because traditionally they have been highly attacking matches.

"Usually they're very high scoring games so they make a good spectacle for the public," Docherty said.

"That suits our style of play because we like to attack and I think if we stick to our game plan, I'm fairly confident we can come away with a win."

Docherty was not too concerned about any particular Souths player. At this stage the former XXXX League identity just wants to get the right balance happening in his own side.

"It may take four or five weeks to settle down, but when we get all of our players who are available to us back on the pitch, things should get back to normal."

READ' between the LINES

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One week of fixtures have been played and the surprises have already begun.

The Gold Coast's win over Beenleigh caught a few of the experts off guard, including this columnist.

Led by Peter Grierson, the Coast kicked off their season on a positive note. Not many people know much about Grierson, but by the end of the season he'll be a marked man.

Last year, playing for the Gold Coast against Taringa in the Queensland Cup, he led the Gamblers to a win.

When he was missing for the second leg, the Coast stumbled. Make no mistake, as long as he's in the Coast's ranks they'll be very competitive.

From what I've seen, he's the best midfielder in the state league.

Mt Gravatt, after being ranked one million to one to win the league in this column last week, were unlucky not to steal the points from Brisbane Lions.

Mt Gravatt coach Steve Faulkner chased me down the Lions tunnel after the game, imploring me to change the club's odds.

But if Mt Gravatt couldn't beat a Lions side that played as badly as it did on Sunday, their chances of winning the league may have shot out to two million to one.

In what was truly a shocking game of football, Mt Gravatt hit the bar and had one shot cleared off the line in the second half.

Those in the crowd who managed to keep their eyes open would have left the ground thinking the visitors were a little unlucky.

But that's the difference between a premiership side and one of the also-rans. Lions managed to hold on for an undeserved win while Mt Gravatt failed to grab the points in a game they should have won.



A Roy Huth goal last weekend has blown Mt Gravatt's premiership winning odds out to two million to one.

A premiership side wins the games they should lose and Lions did that on Sunday..and that's all that matters.

Away from the premiership, the Queensland Soccer Federation's decision to implement an FA Cup style competition should be applauded.

This columnist called for it last year and probably the year before. Let's only hope the concept can be a success and become a prestigious competition throughout the state.

If it proves successful in Queensland, perhaps we could look at taking the concept to a national level.

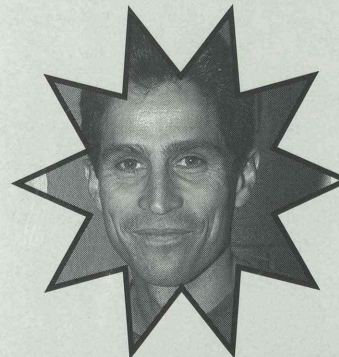
Finance would be the big stumbling block, but it's worth investigating. The idea of a third division side from Queensland taking on National Soccer League giants Marconi has a certain appeal.

Just how realistic is it? I don't know. That's for the powers-to-be to decide.

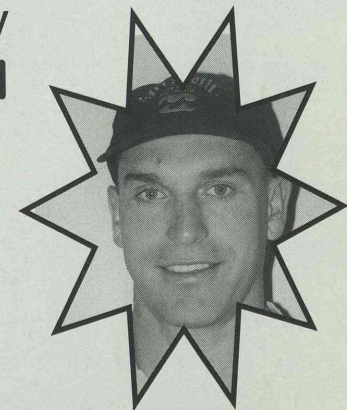
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