

Eye On

Queensland Soccer Federation
Official Magazine

Soccer

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page 4

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Cover: Ipswich Knights' Brenley Jeffer gives Rochdale's Brad Dilton very few options on this occasion during the match at Bundamba last Sunday. Rochdale defeated the Knights 2-1.

Editorial

The Brisbane Strikers began training this week under the tutelage of new coach John Kosmina.

Kosmina has a big job ahead of him this season and will need to instil some lost pride into the Strikers camp.

Some of the old faces have returned to the Strikers fold this season with Sean Cranney, Clint Bolton, Glenn Gwynne, Nick Meredith, Kasey Wehrman and Reece Tollenare all lining up this season.

The big losses in the off season have been player/coach Frank Farina and dynamic midfielder Troy Cranney.

Farina made the move to one of his old clubs, Marconi Fairfield, and was welcomed back as the prodigal son.

And even though he can be credited with putting Queensland soccer on the map, the smart money would be on him receiving a less than favourable reception at Suncorp in the first match of the 1998/99 Ericsson Cup season.

It is unknown whether Frankie will be lacing up the boots this season, but if he does, there are bound to be a few Strikers who will be out to prove a point!

Troy Cranney's departure to Sydney's Northern Spirit was a big loss for the club as he has formed an integral part of the engine room for many years.

There is a lot of new talent coming through the ranks and lets hope the Strikers can find someone to fill Troy's "big" boots.

The Miss Queensland Soccer Quest will be held at the Greek Club at West End on Saturday evening.

This promises to be a spectacular evening with entrants from a broad cross-section of the soccer community, all vying for the major prize of \$5,000 in overseas travel.

The response to this year's Quest has been absolutely fantastic and it is great to see so many soccer people getting behind a worthwhile cause.

Mt Gravatt scare leaders

Mt Gravatt managed to send a scare through the City camp last week when they got a 1-1 draw with the league's top side at Dittmer Park.

City coach Bobby Hamilton said he had no complaints about the result and believed Mt Gravatt deserved to get a point from the match.

"I always felt that it was only a matter of time before we scored the equaliser but they deserved a point," he said.

At Chris Green Park, Beenleigh played well in a losing 2-0 result against Taringa Rovers.

Beenleigh coach Steve Dolan said, "It was obviously a little disappointing not to get anything from the game, but it was a pretty good effort by the lads in hindsight".

Fourth placed Rochedale Rovers put a vital three points between them and the Ipswich Knights after they downed Ipswich 2-1 at Eric Evans Reserve.

Ipswich coach Mike Mulvey said despite the

loss, he was confident his side would be challenging for a finals spot at the business end of the season.

"One thing you have to remember is that the four teams above us are the teams that were expected to make the finals," he said.

"They feel that they have a God given right to be in the finals and we'll be trying to displace one of them on behalf of all the so-called "minnows" in the league."

At the Thabeban Sports Complex, the Wynnum Wolves scored a 3-2 win against the Bundaberg Waves.

Both coaches agreed that the quality of the pitch contributed to an entertaining game and it was sweet revenge for Wynnum who had lost to Waves on two previous occasions this season.

In the final match of the round, Brisbane Lions defeated the Gold Coast 2-1. Lions coach Miron Bleiberg said he was surprised that the Coast was not higher on the league ladder.

PREMIER PREVIEW - ROCHEDALE v BRISBANE LIONS

Rochedale Rovers and Brisbane Lions clash in the match of the round on Friday evening at Underwood Park.

Both teams have been in pretty good form of late and will be looking to back up from solid victories last weekend.

Rochedale made sure of fourth spot on the league ladder when they accounted for the Ipswich Knights 2-1.

Coach Peter Bannon said he was satisfied that his players had achieved the result they were after.

"It was not a bad effort at all by our guys," he said.

"It was a fairly solid performance as the lads competed for the full ninety minutes and got the result we wanted."

However, Bannon said he was not prepared to start celebrating a finals spot just yet as there was still plenty of football to be played.

"Everyone in the top five has to play each other and we can all still inflict some damage on each other," he said.

"I'm convinced that the make-up of the final four is going to go down to the wire and we'll be looking to repeat our last round performance against Lions."

That night, Rochedale gave Lions a footballing lesson winning 3-1 at Richlands.

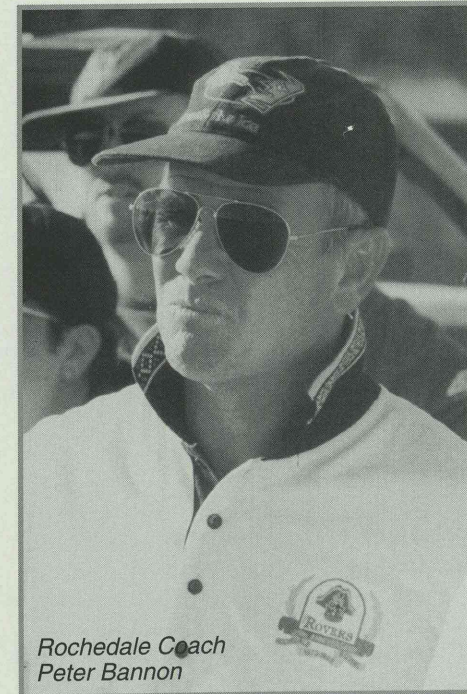
However, Lions coach Miron Bleiberg said he was confident of snatching the three points.

"What can I tell you? In the first round we beat them at their place and in the second round, they beat us at our place," he said.

"We are as confident that we can win this match as they are confident that they can win the game.

"In the last round, we are holding a one hundred per cent win record and we would like to keep it that way."

Lions are currently sitting on 42 points in second place, nine behind league leaders Brisbane City and one ahead of third placed Taringa Rovers, with Rochedale a further point back on 40.



Rochedale Coach Peter Bannon

ROCHEDALE v BRISBANE LIONS

Underwood Park, Rochedale
Friday August 7, 7.30 pm

ROCHEDALE ROVERS	BRISBANE LIONS
1 Elvis Guzic	1 Jason Lucas
2 Dwayne Good	2 David Lonsdale (c)
3 Ross Davidson	3 Darren Sime
4 Michael Lane	4 Steven Starr
5 Damian Harris	5 Paul Worroll
6 Alun Evans	6 Mark Geritz
7 Steve Fitzsimmons	7 Steve Jackson
8 Michael Legg	8 Frank Mengotti
9 Wade Baldwin	9 Anthony Brown
10 Clayton Koch	10 Michael Brockwell
11 (Not Allocated)	11 Marc Flemington
12 David Pilic	12 Roy Huth
13 Brad Ditton	13 Craig Rogers
14 Paul Grugan	14 Cameron Watson
15 Glen Kolpak	15 Warren Allen
16 Matt Olley	16 (Not Allocated)
17 Gary Brattan	17 (Not Allocated)
18 Andy Monement	18 Greg Di-Losa
20 Graham Ross	20 Darren Hillier
RGK Todd Rumble	Rgk Robert Farrow

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PREMIER PREVIEW - WYNNUM DIST v Gold Coast

The Wynnum Wolves will host the Gold Coast City at Carmichael Park on Sunday afternoon.

The Wolves inflicted some welcomed revenge on Bundaberg last week, winning 3-2 at the Thabeban Sports Complex.

It was an entertaining match and Wolves coach Peter Tokesi said he was happy to take the points.

"To be honest, we struggled to get two teams on the park last week as injuries and suspension have taken their toll on us," Tokesi said.

"But from what I understand they (Wolves) were struggling as well and in the end, all that mattered was that we played well and got the win.

"The field was in great condition and that made it not only enjoyable for the players, but a good spectacle for the spectators."

Form suggests that the Wolves will have a little too much muscle for the Gold Coast.

"I think we should win against them (Gold Coast) as we'll have most of our players back this week," Tokesi said.

"I feel quietly confident against them, but they haven't had a result for a while and will be looking for a win.

"Andy Brayshaw might be lining up for the Coast and he'll obviously be one we'll have to keep our eye on.

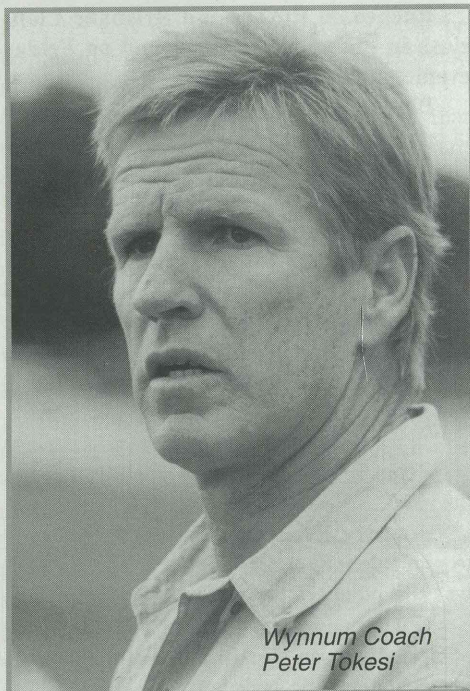
"But the thing that we'll really have to overcome is missing easy chances in front of goal."

The Gold Coast played quite well to lose 2-1 last week against Brisbane Lions.

Lions coach Miron Bleiberg said he was surprised that the Coast was not higher placed on the league ladder.

Both Wynnum and the Coast are playing for pride this week with neither side having any chance of making the final four.

Wynnum is currently in 7th spot on the ladder on 25 points, 12 behind 4th placed Ipswich, while the Gold Coast is in 9th position on 21 points.



Wynnum Coach
Peter Tokesi

WYNNUM DIST v GOLD COAST

Carmichael Park, Tingalpa
Sunday August 9, 2.45 pm

WYNNUM DISTRICT	GOLD COAST CITY
1 Garth McCulloch	1 Martin Simpson
2 Luke Adair	2 Damian Volker
3 (Not allocated)	3 Adam Hayward
4 Nigel McClure	4 Mick Richardson
5 Ricky McKinless	5 Trevor Wood
6 Tony McKinless (c)	6 Brett Adams
7 Matt Champion	7 Col Phelan
8 Paul Wilkins	8 Andy Brayshaw
9 Mark Wilkins	9 Troy Greenwood
10 Ben Wood	10 Peter Grierson
11 Nick Hadland	11 Aaron Bristow
12 Darrell Grundy	12 Rob Boxall
13 (Not Allocated)	13 Stuart Stevenson
14 Wayne Corbett	14 Brett Patterson
15 Andrew Davidson	15 Lee Vernon
16 Shane Gilroy	16 Neil Bertoldo
17 Calvin Gnech	17 Shane Steffanutto
18 Damian Rogers	18 (Not Allocated)
19 Bill McDermott	19 Adam Evans
20 Wade Cannon	20 Matt Minor

PREMIER PREVIEW - BRISBANE City v BEENLEIGH

League leaders Brisbane City will approach the game against bottom of the table Beenleigh with a little caution this weekend.

On paper, City will be at unbackable odds for this game and the fact that the match is being played at Spencer Park adds to the sky blues favouritism.

However, coach Bobby Hamilton said he would be focussing on ensuring that his players guard against complacency.

"Past results and form this season suggests that we should win this game, but no-one can afford to take any team lightly," he said.

"I think our come from behind draw last week against Mt Gravatt has given a lot of the players the shot in the arm that they required.

"I believe that a lot of the guys have been standing right over the winning post and have perhaps been taking things a little easy in recent weeks.

"We'll be ready to play on Sunday and the three points will go a long way to securing the premiership for us this season."

Beenleigh were outgunned 2-0 last week by a superior Taringa outfit.

Coach Steve Dolan said despite the loss, he was fairly pleased with the performance of his players.

"It was not too bad as games go as we played well in the first half and went into the break nil-all," he said.

"However, we made a few wrong choices when we had possession and they (Taringa) got a couple of quick goals in the second half which ended the match for us."

Dolan said he was under no illusions about the enormity of the task as his side sought to upset the runaway competition leaders in a classic "David and Goliath" match-up.

"It is certainly going to be pretty tough but we managed to compete with Taringa quite successfully for most of the match last week and their third on the table," Dolan said.



Wayne Strange

BRISBANE CITY v BEENLEIGH

Spencer Park, Newmarket
Sunday August 9, 2.45 pm

BRISBANE CITY	BEENLEIGH
1 Daniel Duke	1 Chris Balke
2 Warren Cooley	2 Kieren Galloway
3 Damon Voss	3 (Not Allocated)
4 Mark Bennett	4 Brett Jones
5 Wayne Strange	5 Steven Forshaw
6 Scott Elliott	6 Wayne Hinton
7 Mark Dessi	7 Michael Rooney
8 Chris Slater (c)	8 Jarrod Austin
9 Damien Waugh	9 Brett Drury
10 Danny Wright	10 Grant Drury
11 Shane Haddow	11 Alan Spiers
12 Angelo Cootes	12 Brad Kischowski
13 Carlos Echeverria	13 Daniel Stowers
14 Mark Battistin	14 Joel Smith
15 (Not Allocated)	15 Lee Preston
16 (Not Allocated)	16 Michael Kalic
17 (Not Allocated)	17 Paul Lederhose
18 (Not Allocated)	18 Marc Lederhose
19 (Not Allocated)	19 Cori Fisher
20 Adriano Taraborrelli	20 Ryan Clark

PREMIER PREVIEW - Ipswich Knights v Mt Gravatt

The match between the Ipswich Knights and Mt Gravatt looms as an unlikely rival for the Rochedale versus Lions game for match of the round status.

The Knights go into this game on the end of a three match losing streak.

Last week, Rochedale skipped three points clear of Ipswich when they defeated them 2-1 at Eric Evans Reserve.

Knights coach Mike Mulvey said although disappointed by the loss, he believed his side was still firmly entrenched in the battle for a finals spot.

"I'd be lying if I said things were going well as the loss last week did cost us some precious ground, but we're still in there fighting and have a good chance of making the final four," he said.

"Mount Gravatt have beaten us twice this season and we haven't scored a goal against them.

"But I don't believe in bogey sides and it's just been a case of them playing very well and getting the result against us in both games.

"We'll certainly be doing our utmost to win the game and maintain contact with the leaders."

Mt Gravatt will be full of confidence going into this game after holding league leaders Brisbane City to a 1-1 draw last week.

"We missed a penalty late in the first half and instead of being one ahead, we could have been two-nil up at half-time," Coach Danny Cox said.

"I would have loved to have taken the three points but they (City) had some good chances towards the end and a draw was probably a fair result."

Cox said he was delighted with the efforts of his players in recent weeks and was confident of taking the three points against Ipswich.

"We've started to play quite well and it's not just because of luck that we're starting to get results," he said.

"We won't be going up to Ipswich for anything less than the three points."



Ipswich Keeper
Barney Smith

IPSWICH KNIGHTS v MT GRAVATT

Glennon Park, Nerang
Sunday August 9, 2.45 pm

IPSWICH KNIGHTS	MOUNT GRAVATT
1 Barney Smith	1 Mark Bland
2 Andrew King	2 David Pryor
3 Nick Seeley	3 Drew Oberle
4 Reg Davani	4 Danny Cox (c)
5 Pat Boyle	5 Arif Azam Khan
6 Troy Mundy	6 Stu Collins
7 Brenley Jefferd	7 Robin Gosney
8 John Clark	8 Anthony McCullough
9 Damien Conquest	9 George Whyte
10 Peter McKendrick	10 Anthony Roche
11 Craig Collins	11 Andy Garw. Gowers
12 David Guest	12 Steve Morris
13 (Not Allocated)	13 Darren Stachowicz
14 Kevin Meacock	14 Nathan Carlos
15 Clint Scott	15 (Not Allocated)
16 Ken Caldwell	16 Luke Bowness
17 Wayne Adams	17 (Not Allocated)
18 Neville O'Sullivan	18 (Not Allocated)
19 Peter Vogler	19 Trevor Evans
20 Sam Ferguson	Rgk Paul Petersen

PREMIER PREVIEW - TARINGA ROVERS v BUNDABERG

Taringa Rovers are likely to prove too strong when they host the Bundaberg Waves at Jack Speare Park on Sunday afternoon.

Taringa held onto third place on the league ladder last week, when they knocked off the beleaguered Beenleigh side 2-0.

It was a good performance from John Ogden's team, but the coach knows only too well that three points this weekend could move the team into the all important second spot on the ladder.

Waves lost 3-2 at home last week to the Wynnum Wolves and coach Aldo Baretta said he was disappointed by the result.

"It was a fairly entertaining game with lots of end to end play and we had our chances to win the game but we didn't take them," Baretta said.

"But in saying that, I didn't think we played that well and in the end, probably didn't deserve the points.

"Also, our preparation wasn't up to scratch as only having eleven fit players meant we suffered due to a lack of depth."

Baretta applauded Peter Bock, Chris Wilson and Jason Chapman for their solid performances during the match.

In the two matches that the sides have played this season, Waves won the first encounter 3-1 at Jack Speare Park, while Taringa won revenge in round 2, thrashing Bundaberg 4-0 at the Thabeban Sports Complex.

Traditionally, Waves have played well in matches at Taringa and Baretta said his side was looking forward to the challenge of tackling one of the league's big guns.

"Even though we're playing away from home, we'll approach the match with the same positive attitude that we've tried to maintain all season," he said.

"We believe that we're going to get the three points this weekend and nothing less.

"We've been struggling a little of late with injuries and suspensions, but I'm sure that we'll give Taringa a good game."



Taringa's
Richard Hilli

TARINGA ROVERS v BUNDABERG

Jack Speare Park, Indooroopilly
Sunday August 9, 2.45 pm

TARINGA ROVERS	BUNDABERG
1 Scott Higgins	1 Michael Bainbridge
2 Scott Robertson	2 Andrew Donnison
3 Chris Day	3 Andrew Packer
4 Danny Britton	4 Altan Ramadan
5 Joel Hale	5 John Giovannoni
6 (Not Allocated)	6 Tony Roebuck (vc)
7 Des Hughes	7 Luke Graham
8 Demitri Theochari	8 Craig Hawkins
9 Robert Laslo	9 Nick Maas
10 Richard Hilli	10 Royce Brownlie
11 Cliff Tuck	11 Jason Chapman
12 Steven Bland	12 Chris Wilson
13 (Not Allocated)	13 Gary Blackford
14 Clinton McDermott	14 Peter Bock
15 Aaron Bakker	15 Tony Giovannoni
16 Shaun Molenda	16 Paul Fagan (c)
17 Cameron Williamson	17 Michael Giovannoni
18 Martin Matula	18 Matthew Barritt
19 Jason Poggi	19 Jimmy Cudd
20 Brett Dickens	20 Cale Driver

SOUTHERN SEMIPROS AND CONS

Inala to bounce back from loss

Inala will be looking to bounce back from an embarrassing 4-2 loss to cellar dwellers Slacks Creek, when they take on second placed Rocklea at home this Sunday.

After setting the southern competition on fire for the past couple of rounds, the loss came as a real blow for Inala, not to mention a bit of an embarrassment for the side.

And although the club retained fourth spot on the ladder, the loss has opened the door slightly for Souths United to sneak past them should they let any other games slip by.

Coach Derek Crawford, while disappointed with the loss, was philosophical about the result.

"We didn't put our chances away... it was as simple as that," he said.

"Obviously it's a bit of a hiccup for us because we could quite easily have snuck into third and been challenging Rocklea for second spot this weekend. Instead we now have a fight on our hands to retain fourth spot.

"But in saying that, it probably could do us a lot of good in the end. If there was any hint of complacency amongst the boys, I think last weekend's loss would have erased any of that."

The Inala coach said he would be using the loss as a major motivator for Sunday's clash, which could prove to be a real psychological edge for the winners, with finals approaching.

"The boys are keen to regroup and put the disappointment of last weekend behind them, so I think you'll see a much more committed effort against Rocklea," Crawford said.

The Inala coach said that with four rounds remaining, second place although seemingly out of reach, was not out of the question.

"I'd like to think we could still get second spot, but the semi finals are the goal at the moment," Crawford said.

Time running out for Olympic

Olympic's slim hopes of making the top four are fading, as the season draws to its inevitable close.

The side is currently on 21 points, eight out of the top four, with just 12 more points on offer to the club.

And while mathematically still a finals possibility, things aren't looking the best for a side that has probably been the real disappointment of this year's competition.

With 12 points still on offer, they are by no means out of the running just yet, and last weekend's 2-2 draw with close neighbours and frontrunners Rocklea, was an indication that the side has not given up hope.

Three points against Redlands this weekend, along with several favourable results going their way, would bring Olympic closer to the field.

However a loss would certainly spell curtains for the side, as would a draw.

For Redlands the match means very little, with the side well and truly out of finals contention.

However with Slacks Creek beginning to hit some form in recent weeks, the race to avoid the wooden spoon is heating up.

Currently Redlands are in second last spot on the ladder, one point ahead of Slacks Creek, and four adrift of Olympic.

A loss or a draw for Redlands could see them slip back into last place on the ladder and fighting hard to avoid the wooden spoon.

Defence will be the key for this Sunday's clash. Redlands have conceded a massive 60 goals so far this year but have scored a healthy 34 goals, three more than Olympic.

If their defence holds out this weekend, they could prove to be a very tough obstacle for Olympic.

SOUTHERN SEMIPROS AND CONS

Bulldogs out to break drought

The Capalaba Bulldogs are eager to break a drought, which has seen them not win a game for the past six weeks.

Incredibly, the Bulldogs have remained in third place on the ladder, although they now face a serious challenge from both Inala and Souths United for the last finals spot.

The club faces an in form Slacks Creek this weekend, a side that has rallied strongly in recent weeks to post some impressive results.

Included amongst those was a 4-2 win over Inala last weekend, which has allowed them to mount a genuine campaign to get off the bottom of the ladder and escape the dreaded wooden spoon.

And Bulldogs coach Alan Prentice is not taking Slacks Creek very lightly, as his side attempts to win its first match in seven weeks.

"They're certainly no easybeats," Prentice said. "The two games we've played against them the scoreline has flattered us, and they've had a couple of good wins recently so we'll be treating them with the utmost respect."

Prentice said he was not perturbed by his side's lack of winning form in recent weeks, suggesting it would not be long before his team "hammered" another side.

"The last three games we've played against Ipswich, Acacia Ridge and Toowoomba we've seen a marked improvement," the Bulldogs coach said.

"This week we'll work on creating a few more chances for our strikers, who have had to adapt following the loss of several of our key players."

Amongst Capalaba's injured are Sean Carey, Lee Henshaw and Liam Gleeson, who are all only a fifty/fifty chance of making it back by the end of the season.

Victory at all costs for Acacia Ridge

A win this weekend will be the only worthwhile outcome for semi pro south battlers Acacia Ridge.

The side is currently on 23 points, two wins out of the top four and fast running out of time to make an impact on this year's competition.

But things are not looking good for Frank Campbell's side, with their opponents this Sunday coming in the form of the highly rated Toowoomba Raiders.

The Raiders have streeeted the competition this year, amassing an amazing 52 points from their 20 encounters and dropping just two matches all season.

Those losses have come in the last few weeks however, with coach Gary Scott experimenting and resting several of his players before the business end of the season.

With the Raiders showing some vulnerability at the moment, anything is possible for Campbell's talented Ridge outfit.

Already this year they have strung together some very impressive victories and have proved themselves capable of mixing it with the top sides in the league.

Consistency has been the club's biggest problem however, with the top side struggling to string successive victories together.

Although not out of the finals race by any means, time is running out for Ridge, who really must take maximum points from Toowoomba this Sunday, if they are to mount a last ditch effort for the playoffs.

Despite Ridge's home ground advantage, it won't be an easy task. Toowoomba are coming off a solid 2-0 victory against another of the competition's high flyers Capalaba.

That win, whilst not all that convincing, was a good victory nonetheless.

Miss Soccer Quest looking better

The Miss Queensland Soccer Quest will be held at the Greek Club at West End on Saturday evening.

This year's Quest promises to be a gala affair with 25 entrants representing a broad cross-section of southeast Queensland's soccer community.

The Quest has been generously supported by Canale Travel, Ansett Airlines, Alitalia and Cadbury's Chocolates for a number of years.

The Queensland Soccer Federation's Media Manager, Morris McGiffin, said the support of "corporates" had helped make the Quest a key activity on the Queensland Soccer Calendar.

"Their (corporates) generous support will ensure the ongoing success of this great event," Mr McGiffin said.

"It's an extremely worthwhile cause as all funds raised benefit the represented clubs directly.

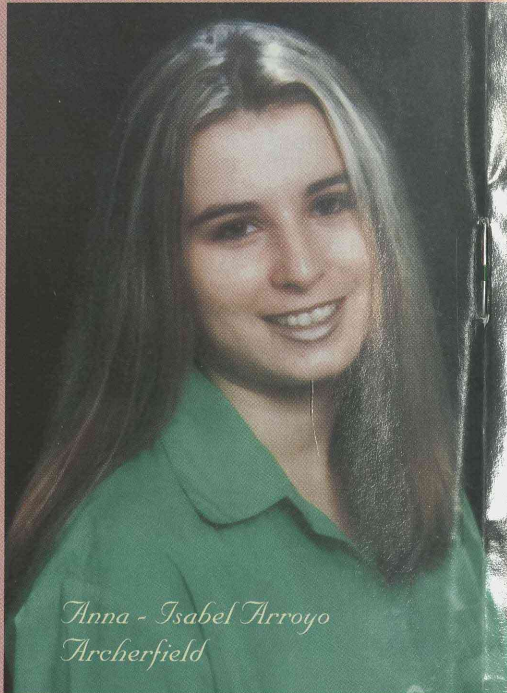
"It's an opportunity for all club's to top up their coffers and it's fantastic that so many take up the challenge."

The prizes at this year's event are comparable to any on record.

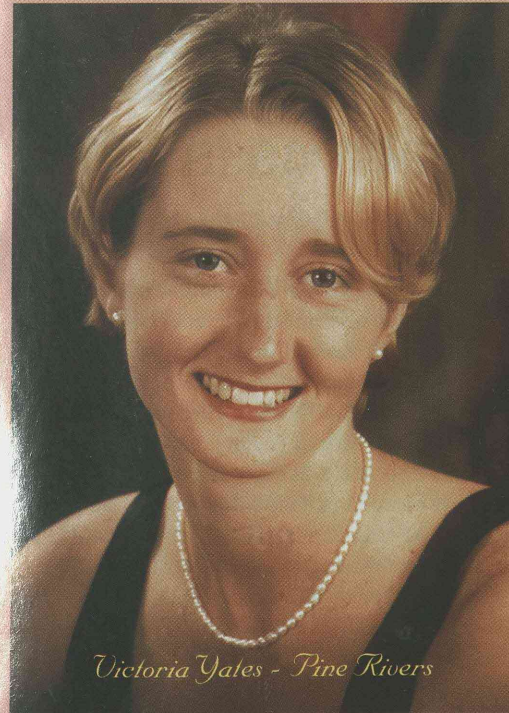
Miss Queensland Soccer will receive \$5,000 in overseas travel, with the runner-up receiving two airline tickets to Sydney.

Miss Queensland Soccer Fund-raiser will receive \$2,500 worth of air travel.

Each week, "Eye On Soccer" has profiled a couple of the young ladies in the lead-up to the event. Pictured are the remaining entrants.



*Anna - Isabel Arroyo
Archerfield*



Victoria Yates - Pine Rivers



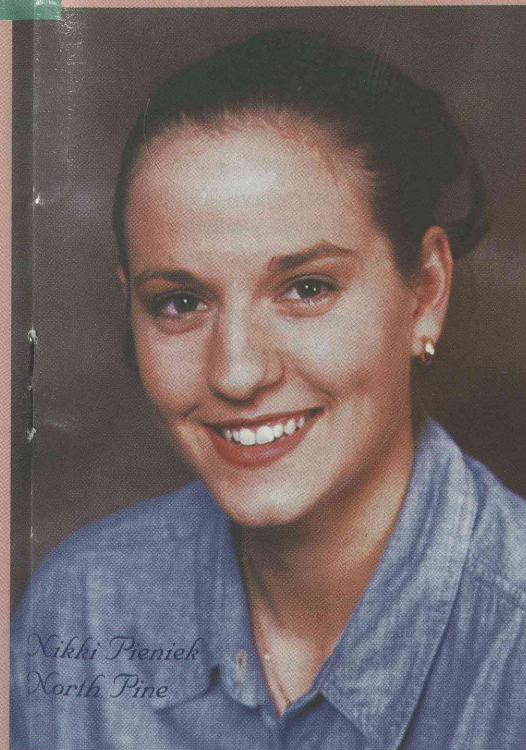
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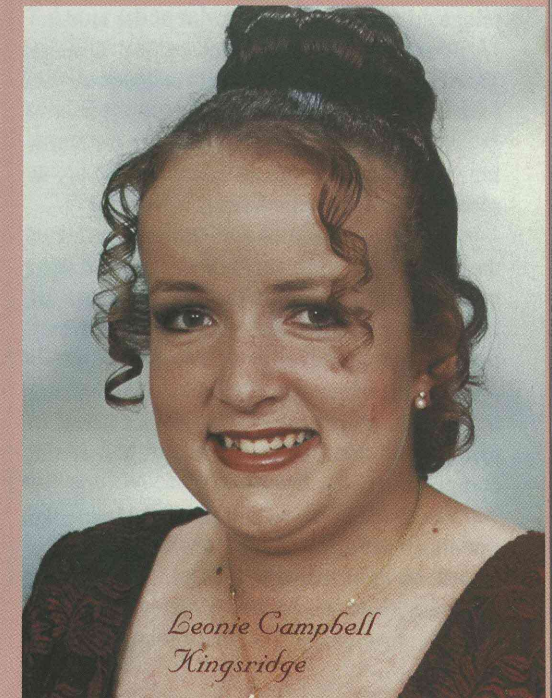
*Abbey Stewart
Slacks Creek*



*Brooke Roberts
Mt Gravatt*



*Nikki Pieniek
North Pine*



*Leonie Campbell
Kingsridge*

NORTHERN SEMIPROS AND CONS

North Star battle to climb off bottom Coach calls for commitment

North Star will have an enormous task ahead of them this Sunday when they attempt to move off the bottom of the semi-pro north ladder.

The struggling side must take on top two candidate Albany Creek this weekend, in a match that looks set to be a fairly one sided affair.

It's been a terrible year for North Star, with the club promising much yet delivering little in the top grade.

And with the side's last fixture win coming some months ago now, finals are well out of reach and the only genuine goal is to get off the bottom of the table and avoid the "wooden spoon".

North Star had a bye last weekend and Newmarket's surprise victory over The Gap relegated the club to the bottom of the ladder.

They now lie one point behind Grange Thistle and three points adrift of Newmarket, with four rounds left to play.

Albany Creek pose a big problem for North Star however, with the side battling to stay in second position on the ladder.

Creek have been one of the form sides of the competition throughout the second and third rounds, and although they remain out of Premiership contention, they would still dearly love to wrap up this year's Championship.

With the University of Queensland breathing right down their necks, they are not about to drop any matches, particularly against the competition cellar dwellers.

Albany Creek have the best attacking strike rate in the league and the third best defensive record, so they are certain to be a handful for the young North Star outfit, which has struggled to show any signs of their early season form.

Mitchelton coach Iain Fagan has called for much more commitment from his players as the regular season begins to wind up.

The call comes on the back of the club's 3-0 loss to league leaders Eastern Suburbs, however according to Fagan it is well overdue.

"It's disgraceful at the moment... we've just stopped competing," the Mitchy coach said.

"We're not winning the balls that should be won and not making the tackles that have to be made, and that's just unforgiveable."

"Fagan said he was bitterly disappointed with last weekend's loss because he believed his side blew three clear cut chances in the opening ten minutes.

However the Mitchy coach is hoping to put the match against Easts behind him, as the side battles to break back into the top four.

"Currently they are three points outside the four and Fagan concedes getting back in there will be a struggle.

"In all the years that I've coached, I've never been in a situation like this where you have a group of highly talented players who just stop competing," Fagan said.

"I'm at a real loss as to what we should do to get out of that frame of mind, so yes it will be a real battle to get back into the top four.

"The saving grace is that we have got to play Pine Rivers before the end of the season so our destiny is still in our own hands."

Mitchy meet the out of form Gap outfit this Sunday in a game that on paper they should win, however Fagan is well aware that his chickens have not yet hatched.

"It comes down to the players. If they want to win the matches then we will, because it's certainly not a case of not having the ability to progress," he said.

NORTHERN SEMIPROS AND CONS

Newmarket to improve on break Students chasing psych advantage

A revitalised Newmarket will be out to move further away from the bottom of the ladder when they take on Grange Thistle this weekend.

With several key players back in their side, Newmarket showed exactly what they could do last weekend, when they downed The Gap 2-1.

The victory was impressive to say the least, but even more so considering The Gap are still a top four chance.

What was also impressive from the Newmarket point of view, was that the victory came off the back of a 1-1 draw with Easts the previous week, indicating some consistency from the struggling club.

Last week's victory rocketed the side out of last place on the ladder and victory against Grange Thistle on Sunday would almost assure the side of escaping the dubious honour of taking out the wooden spoon.

Grange won't be an easy target however, with the club also in the middle of a somewhat purple patch.

Thistle have rallied well in the latter part of the season, not only winning several of their matches but also remaining competitive -with some of the big guns in the competition.

With several more experienced players joining the club midway through the season, the younger players in the side have been able to glean some of the finer points of the game.

The young Grange side narrowly went down 1-0 to fourth placed Pine Rivers last weekend, an indication that they are still playing good football at the right time of the season.

They too will be wanting to steer away from the possibility of winning the wooden spoon, so victory for them this weekend will be just as important as it is for Newmarket.

Northern conference improvers University of Queensland will be keen to establish a psychological advantage over Eastern Suburbs, when the two sides meet this Sunday.

Both sides look certain to feature prominently in the finals, which are just around the corner, and the winner of this weekend's match is sure to have a big mental edge on their opponents come finals time.

The match is also important for University as they attempt to consolidate their position in the top four and push for a top two finish.

Currently the students are on 32 points, three ahead of Pine Rivers and six ahead of fifth placed Mitchelton.

But they are also just one point behind second placed Albany Creek, the side they drew 2-2 with last weekend.

With the end of the regular season just around the corner, competition points are getting scarcer every week, so for Uni to finish in second spot, they must take full toll of any points that are on offer.

For Eastern Suburbs the match is of little significance other than establishing that mental edge over the students prior to the play offs.

The Tigers have all but sealed the Premiership with an outstanding display of class all season, that has seen them drop just the one match. They have been a "cut-above" the rest and deserve the accolades.

And with 47 points to their credit, virtually no team can catch them.

The league leaders are coming off an impressive 3-0 result against Mitchelton and no doubt will be looking to maintain that sort of form for the remaining four rounds of the competition.

BEFORE THE WHISTLE



With
Jim
Gilbert

I took in the first day's football of the Australian Secondary Schools Championships out at the new Brisbane Grammar complex at Northgate, and there was certainly some talented players participating in the maroon shirts.

A large number are already playing at a high level of club football, but there was certainly some very, very talented players from country schools that will bear watching for the future.

Things are getting tense in the Amateur divisions with only two matches to go and some finals-promotion-relegation places still wide open. I took in North Pine's 1-0 win over Eagles last Saturday which (almost effectively) has knocked the Eagles out of finals contention but proved again to me that North Pine are real contenders for the title. Redcliffe City appeared to have sewn up third spot and all credit to them for having such a tremendous second round of fixtures, but fourth spot is still a little bit open.

Things don't get much tighter than Division 2, with two teams still vying for fourth spot. In Division 3 the lead has changed yet again and it's still even money who will take out the title.

It is equally as tight in the lower divisions, but they will become a lot clearer next week, as promotion does not necessarily hinge on their final positions in these grades.

With the Miss Queensland Soccer Final on Saturday night, that means all matches this weekend will be spread from Friday night to Sunday with no Saturday night fixtures.

Semi Pro Div 1 North

All matches on Sunday and the local derby between Newmarket and Grange looms as a very important match, the hosts are now off the bottom of the table for the first time in many months, can they climb to more respectability, I think so. Second placed Albany Creek make the trip to O'Callaghan Park where current form dictates it should be an away win, the Mitchelton v The Gap match is now virtually make or break for both sides, to try to break back into the four,

both sides suffered humiliating losses last week and morale will be their biggest problem, if it's a draw it won't help either side.

Potentially the match of the round is the University v Easts game, the visitors still don't have both hands on the title as yet, but a win here will certainly do that, whereas Uni are desperate to retain their current position, it points to an away win, to me anyway.

Semi Pro Div 1 South

Again all matches are on Friday night, but congratulations are due to the Toowoomba Raiders who have now secured the title with still five matches to go, such is their big lead at present, congratulations to them all.

Rocklea make the short trip up to Inala with both sides having disappointing results last weekend, Rocklea drew at home and Inala lost away, both sides will have to look inwardly to determine what is required on Sunday, I think desperation points to a home win.

Slacks Creek's visit to Capalaba is certainly no sinecure win for the hosts, witness last weekend's results, I still think the home side will get up as they have more to lose if they lose. Toowoomba's visit to Acacia Ridge could be a most interesting match, as the title is already secure on the Downs, the Ridge could pop up with a surprise, I don't think they will be strong enough for a win but a draw is highly likely. Olympic's credible away draw last week will stand them in good stead with their match against Redlands, and it could be a rare three pointer to Goodwin Park.

Amateur Div 1

Five of the six fixtures are on Saturday afternoon so most people will be able to enjoy the Miss Soccer Final that evening.

Brothers' visit to South Star looms as one of the most important, as an away win will keep Brothers in with a chance at fourth place, South Star appear to be almost safe from relegation, so an away win is the prediction.

Southside Eagles, if they can continue to play their current attractive brand of football, should be too strong for hosts Latrobe, the improving Bayside have the hot and cold Moggill as their visitors, and the Lota team is certainly not safe from relegation yet, so they could pick up at least one in this one. Bottom marker Goodna make the trip down to Margate where the hosts appear to have (finally) got some good form, home win, and Annerley should maintain their push for the title with a home win over the inconsistent Darra.

Top match in prospect on Sunday between North Pine and Redcliffe, both sides playing an attractive brand of football and now that the Bayside club's defensive frailties appear to have been fixed, a draw here would not surprise.

Amateur Div 2

It's uncertain if Greenbank will fulfill their obligations for the remainder of the season, as having picked up their first win last weekend, last reports were comatose bodies were strewn all over the park and still celebrating! Seriously, congratulations to the consistent boys from Barry White Field. They back up against Ipswich City who are now in with a definite shot. Two surprise losers from last week meet in Oxley and Pine Hills, with the visitors keen to avoid a loss.

Bethania have title aspirants Samford and this really is an excellent match. Current leaders Jimboomba have a disappointing Kingsridge as their visitors and I can't see anything other than a home win, remaining match has Archerfield looking after the welfare of Clairvaux, watch out for the hosts finishing with a flourish.

Amateur Div 3

Friday night sees Mooroondu making the trip to Samford where they will repair their morale and title hopes with a three pointer, the only Saturday match should see a win for Park Ridge at Oxley, with the remaining games all on Sunday, and there should be wins for Annerley over Moggill, North Pine should be too strong for Margate whilst it will be just a touch (!) tighter between Woodridge and Logan City Kings, the hosts are now outside the four,

and I can't see Logan City dropping all three points, maybe two.

Amateur Div 4

In the only Friday night match Newmarket will be successful in their visit to Albany Creek. On Saturday, Acacia Ridge should cement their semi final place at the expense of Lions, Slacks Creek will attempt to keep all the teams above them honest with a three pointer at The Gap, Easts will be looking for a three pointer over North Star just prior to their Qantas Cup semi final, Taringa will be far too good for Mitchelton and put both hands firmly on the title, whilst it'll be a great deal tighter in the Knights v Capalaba match, it has all the makings of a draw.

Amateur Div 5

Mt Gravatt have now snuck back into the lead and they should cement that position with a three pointer away to Albany Creek. Second placed Wynnum should repair last week's dropped points with a win over Slacks Creek. Uni will have a very tight match at Souths where it wouldn't surprise to see a home win. Friday's match may see a rare win for Samford over Capalaba. On Saturday Grange meet Brisbane City and the remaining game will see Ipswich successful over Pine Rivers.

Amateur Div 6

In the Friday night matches there should be a win for the hosts and the visitors, with the Knights successful over Newmarket and University picking up a three pointer at Lions.

On Saturday Redlands will have no joy at Taringa, similarly North Star will allow Easts to pick up a rare three pointer, Queensland Uni will be too good for Beenleigh and Capalaba will win the premiership with a three pointer at Annerley.

Qantas Cup - Semi Finals

Tuesday 11th August - Perry Park
Easts Div 4 v S'side Eagles Div 1 at 6.30pm
Wynnum Div 5 v Buderim Div 1 at 8.30pm

Ansett Cup - Semi Finals

Wednesday 19th August - Perry Park
Grange Thistle v Uni of Qld at 6.30pm
Toowoomba Utd v Newmarket at 8.30pm

READ' between the LINES

With
Brent
Read

The battle for the top four continues to change on a weekly basis, with the four teams chasing City swapping positions with monotonous regularity.

Less than a month ago, the Ipswich Knights were looked at as genuine contenders for Brisbane City's title.

But the Knights have slipped up in recent weeks and are perilously close to dropping out of contention.

Fortunately, they have a good run home but you have to question whether the Knights have enough experience to maintain their position while under enormous pressure.

Taringa, Lions and Rochedale are perennial finals contenders. In recent memory, those three sides have continually battled in the finals.

The Knights, or formerly Coalstars, have been on the fringes, never getting past the first round of finals football.

There's no doubt the loss of Kasey Wehrman has had a big impact on the side. Coach Mike Mulvey needs a fully fit Brenley Jefferd if his team is to make any sort of finals charge.

Jefferd, along with Nick Seeley, Craig Collins and Peter Vogler, hold the keys for Mulvey's outfit.

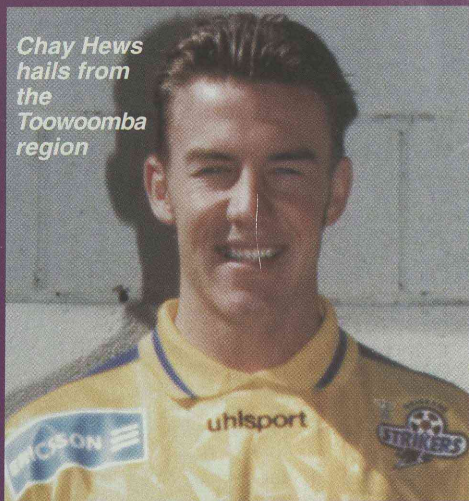
All four have a wealth of experience and love nothing more than winning. Without at least three of those four firing, you can write off the Knights in season '98.

In lower divisions, Toowoomba and Easts continue to charge away with their premierships and both are known to be keen to enter the XXXX Premier League in coming seasons.

The Toowoomba Raiders have made it known they want to join next year and barring any unforeseen catastrophes, they should get their wish.

The Raiders have been the dominant team in Division One South and deserve a shot at the XXXX League.

Chay Hews
hails from
the
Toowoomba
region



The area has been a nursery for some of this state's best players, including Brisbane Strikers midfielder Chay Hews.

Talking from experience, no one ever fancied the trip up the Cunningham Range to Toowoomba.

It's cold, windy and the locals love nothing more than to knock over the boys from the big smoke.

But I will say this, there's no more pleasant bus trip home than when you score a big win.

If Toowoomba are to enter the XXXX Premier League, it begs the question - who will be the side to make way.

The obvious choice would have to be Beenleigh, who have had a tough time on the park this season and cut their players wages mid-season.

Beenleigh play in the shadows of Rochedale and despite their impressive facilities, will always struggle to recruit players.

When wages are being cut and Rochedale is a stone's throw away and throwing money around like it's going out of fashion, Beenleigh is facing an uphill battle.

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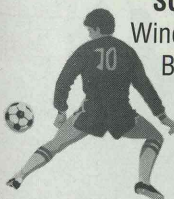
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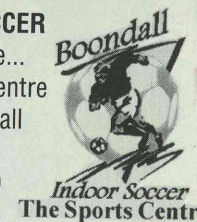


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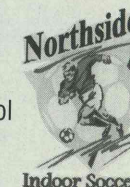
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