

# Spirited win by FNQ Bulls

THE FNQ Bulls rediscovered their attacking mojo at Borzi Park on Saturday night, reaffirming their top-four credentials with a comfortable 4-1 victory over the Bundaberg Spirit.

The Bulls remain fourth on the Queensland State League ladder but the win keeps alive their hopes of a top-two finish before the start of the finals series in August.

Last week, Bulls coach Peter Tokesi set his side an assignment to win at least five of their last six games.

With the equation now reading four wins from five matches, Tokesi said the

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dream remained alive.

"You've got to set yourself those types of goals," he said.

"It (second place) is still a long way off but it's still in our hands because we will still have to play everybody again."

Despite playing a rejuvenated Spirit team, who have turned around their season the past three weeks, the Bulls were as dominant as they have been all year.

After fluffing a few early chances, the Bulls took a 1-0



**Contest:** Bull David Ruiz (right) vies for the ball.

Picture: JIM HATCHMAN

lead in the 33rd minute when striker Joe Rusch scored from the penalty spot after

he was brought down by the Spirit keeper.

The home side appeared

certain to take their advantage into the break before the Spirit scored in the final minute of the half through Elliot Causer.

Buoyed by their equaliser, the Spirit started the second half enthusiastically and remained in the contest even after Bulls' forward David Ruiz slotted his 13th goal of the season in the 68th minute.

But Tokesi's decision to move Rusch from the forward line into the midfield effectively ended the Spirit's resistance.

Rusch's composure and distribution skills settled the Bulls, allowing Nathan Bird

and substitute Josh De Nittis to score two late goals.

Tokesi said his side deserved the win.

"I thought the score was a reflection of the game," he said.

"There was a good feeling afterwards because it felt like it had been a long time since we'd won.

"Even though we beat Mackay (two weeks ago) 1-0 it was a bad feeling because we knew we didn't play well."

The Bulls next game is a friendly against Papua New Guinea side Hekari United FC at Borzi Park on Wednesday night.

Kick-off is at 7pm.

## Physical draw for Fusion and Innisfail

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THE Fusion pushed through one of their most physical showdowns to log a 2-2 draw with Innisfail, in one of the closest signs yet that the young club is attuning to premier grade.

The development squad was unlucky not to take a win during the Round 13 FNQ Football A grade game last night at White Rock. Goals to Simon Fernandez and Ryan Hogan had Fusion leading 2-1 with about 10 minutes left.

But a late John Reaney goal, coupled with Damien Musumeci's earlier successful strike, squared the game.

Fusion coach Martin Docherty said dips in concentration cost his young brigade their third win of the season.

"It's probably one of the games where we have competed for the full 90 minutes," he said. "They compete well but lags in concentration cost them."

In other games, last-placed Mareeba pulled off a shock win after sinking ladder leaders Leichhardt 1-0 on Saturday night at Mareeba.

It was the home club's second giant-slaying performance in less than a month after beating Stratford 2-0 in Round 10.

The Lions still own top spot on the ladder but could lose poll position if Stratford beat Edge Hill tomorrow.

The club's leading goalscorer Shawn Owens bagged Mareeba's only goal in the first half during an ill-disciplined display from the Bulls who racked up four yellow cards.

Ross Malfitana and Angelo Tatti will miss this week's game against Innisfail after conceding their fourth yellow for the season.

Mareeba's assistant coach and president Alex Srhoj was happy with the win but was determined to get consistency into the squad.

"Consistency is a problem and being able to perform for 90 minutes," he said.

"Our players have all the potential and they realised what they can do."

In the men's premier youth division, Mareeba beat Leichhardt 5-3.

Kieron Ball bagged two goals for Mareeba while teammates Joseph Turpin, Robert Hodgson and Jamahl Hassem all got one each.

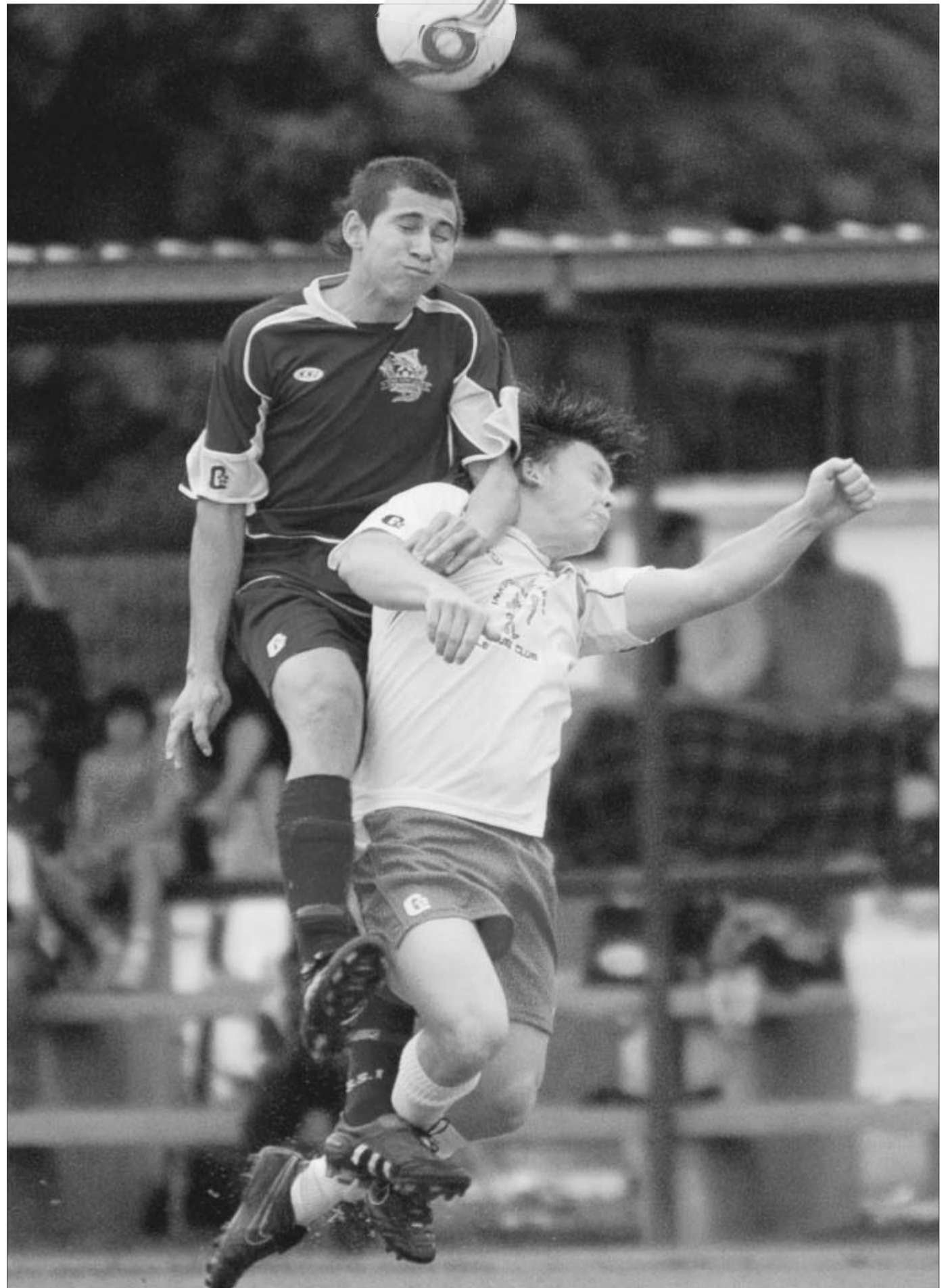
Leichhardt players Jeremy Hodges, Martin Scott and Frank Gibson all also scored one goal each.

Marlin Coast Rangers beat FNQ COE 3-2 on Friday night while FNQ COE trumped Innisfail 5-1 last night.

In the women's division, Leichhardt thumped Mareeba 4-0.

Two goals each to Chantelle Maugeri and Rachel McCormick gave Leichhardt the big win.

Innisfail put on an incredible performance to beat FNQ COE 9-1.



**Up high:** FNQ Fusion's Paul Eigl gets above his Innisfail opponent to head the ball yesterday.

Picture: MIKE WATT