

Disjointed Bulls lose focus

THE FNQ Bulls looked anything but premiership material on Saturday night when they slumped to a 3-1 loss to the Whitsunday Miners at Borzi Park.

A disjointed Bulls did not resemble a side about to play in their maiden Queensland State League finals series and produced one of their worst displays of the season.

Bulls coach Peter Tokesi said his side did little right on the night.

"There were too many players out of sync," he said.

"It was poor. It was a poor performance and there's no other way to describe it.

"We were second to the ball

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all game and at no stage did we control the midfield."

The Bulls' first touches and passing lacked precision most of the night, with the home team giving the impression they were playing alongside each other for the first time.

Scores were 0-0 at the break before Bulls striker Josh De Nittis broke the deadlock in the 58th minute.

A poor clearance from the

Miners defence was promptly rebounded into the attacking third by the Bulls, with De Nittis coolly slotting the chance when the ball found its way to his feet.

But instead of invigorating the Bulls and deflating the Miners, De Nittis' goal had the opposite effect on the respective sides.

With nothing motivating them but pride, the Miners upped the tempo and were rewarded with an equaliser when striker Kevin Nguyen scored in the 61st minute.

Better was to come for the visitors. Miners midfielder Nelson Burgess scored a brilliant individual goal 25

minutes later when he lobbed Bulls keeper Angelo Serafin after expertly controlling a cross delivered to his chest.

Ben Schaper sealed the Miners' victory in the 88th minute when he found the net after a goal-mouth scramble.

With a home semi-final against the NQ Razorbacks to prepare his side for in just under two weeks, Tokesi said it would do no good to dwell on Saturday night's defeat.

"We just need to forget about it and move on," he said.

"It's probably better it happened now than in the next couple of weeks."



Pressure: Bull George Koroma controls the ball.

Picture: JIM HATCHMAN



Challenge: Leichhardt's Pasco Rogato and Stratford's Aaron Bull vie for the ball yesterday.

Picture: MIKE WATT

Lions hold on for win over Dolphins despite injuries

LEICHHARDT powered through injury concerns to post a 1-0 win over the Dolphins yesterday as pressure intensified on the Lions to have fit men before finals.

Both teams failed to spark any real goalscoring chances during the first 15 minutes of the Round 18 FNQ Football men's premier league match at White Rock.

Fears a landslide loss was looming for the Lions was quickly quashed with the club managing to pull together a strong team despite battling a wave of injuries.

For close to a month Leichhardt players Mark Pinto (hamstring), Kevin Frisch (hamstring) and Pasco Rogato (ankle) have carried niggling injuries.

Possession was shared evenly between the clubs with Stratford generating the game's first genuine chance for a goal in the 20th minute after a header from a corner.

An Aaron Bull rough tackle earned the Dolphins' player a yellow card while tensions remained blanketed despite Stratford targeting the Lion's injured men.

"It was obvious they were targeting Pasco but

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he's got too much heart," Leichhardt coach Chris Pennington said.

Stephen Sproul recorded the game's only goal 25 minutes into the first half, with the Lions player weaving a free kick through a wall of defenders.

Neither team looked threatening after the goal with the half closing at 1-0.

The Dolphins entered the second half with renewed vigour but could not convert grit to goals.

Stratford's Josh Craig should have scored within a minute of the restart but squandered an open shot at goal.

Teammate Connell Breton narrowly missed the net with a free kick minutes later while Bull also butchered a goal chance during a one-on-one with the goalie.

Both teams exchanged shots at goal before the game finished favouring the Lions at their home ground.

"I'm very happy with the win and the efforts from the boys today," Pennington said.

Rangers end Innisfail's hopes

THE Rangers racked up their 11th win of the season after beating Innisfail 4-1 on Saturday night.

Marlin Coast's Gabby Mason bagged two goals in the Round 18 FNQ Football men's premier league match at Trinity Beach.

The Rangers went into half time with a 2-0 lead thanks to goals from Justin Van Matre and Ryan McLelland.

Mason recorded his first goal in the 59th minute before finding the back of the net half-an-hour later.

A late goal to Brayden Fichera put Innisfail on the board and added some dignity to the scoreline.

Mason was also given a yellow card while teammate Chris O'Hare recorded a yellow as well.

Innisfail players Evan Veivers and Fichera also received yellow cards.

The loss rules out a finals berth for Innisfail, who sit in fifth position on the ladder with three rounds left until finals.

In the other match, Edge Hill cemented their spot in the finals with a 4-1 trouncing of Mareeba at Borzi Park on Saturday night.

Pressure was mounting on Edge Hill coach Rob Wales to secure his team a finals' appearance.

But the coach has a tough road leading into the business end, with games against Stratford and Marlin Coast before the season's end.

FNQ Fusion had the bye.

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