

Eagles fend off stubborn visitors

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By BRENT O'NEILL

AUSSIE RULES ► Ipswich Eagles have sent a timely reminder to AFLQ Division 2 leaders Robina and Kedron after a gutsy 31-point win over Beenleigh on Saturday.

On a surprisingly dry Limestone Park, the third-placed Eagles survived a second quarter fightback from the visitors, who would have leapfrogged the home side with a win, to seal the 13.7-85 to 7.12-54 victory.

While coach Mike O'Neill identified youngsters Will Saver, Steve Medved and Todd Berger as key contributors, he saved special mention for forward Clint Vessey, who booted four goals.

"He knows how to use his body and he's an accurate kick. He's just really clever. If he can't mark it, he'll bring it down to the ground," O'Neill said.

"He's been really important since we moved Luke (Konstanciak) to the centre from full forward. When Clint gets good footy coming out of the centre, he's a gun."

Ipswich's top side, and the reserves, who did not play on Saturday due to the soggy ground, travel to Redcliffe's Rothwell Park this Saturday.



■ Flying high ... An Ipswich player tries to jump over his Beenleigh rival in the Division 2 AFL match. INSET: A Beenleigh player tries to spoil a mark for an opponent.

Smith ideal man for the top job

HANDBALL ► When the Australian Handball Federation (AHF) appointed its new president last month, they could hardly have chosen a more qualified candidate than Paul Smith.

The Bundamba man became the first Queenslander to take on the presidency, and just the fifth president in 24 years of the AHF, when he stood unopposed at the federation's annual general meeting in April.

With a wealth of experience in sports administration, law, and government - he was admitted as a Barrister in 1982, has served on the Queensland Judiciary for the last nine years, and joined the AHF board in 2007 - Smith said he was well-equipped for his newest role.

"There are 164 nations that play and 60 million registered players. We're trying to build up a much stronger regional handball environment. My focus is strongly on youth," Smith, who has lived his entire life in Ipswich, said.

While he admitted his first love was hockey, which saw him aid in the establishment of the Western Suburbs Hockey Club in 1969 and gain Ipswich Hockey



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■ Head honcho ... the Australian Handball Federation president Paul Smith.

Umpires Association Life Membership, Smith said his focus was now squarely on handball.

"It really is an Australian sort of sport because it has elements of AFL, basketball and the rugby codes.

"I formed a club, the Western Saints, in our local region, so trying to keep that going and doing things nationally and for the state, it's difficult juggling things."

Smith will continue the juggling act when he travels to Egypt on Tuesday as Australia's delegate at the International Handball Federation's World Congress.

PAUL SMITH'S CV

- Founding member of Western Suburbs Hockey Club (Ipswich) in 1969.
- Life Member of the Ipswich Hockey Umpires Association.
- Law (1982) and Arts (1985) Degrees holder.
- Admitted as a Barrister in 1982.
- Harvard-trained Mediator and Negotiator.
- Awarded an Australia Day Achievement Medallion in 1995.
- Previously held the role of A/Deputy Director General, Premier's Department, Queensland.
- Has served as a member of the Land Court of Queensland in the Queensland Judiciary for the last nine years.
- Received a Queensland Hockey Association Award of Merit in 2001.
- Western Saints Handball Club founding president.
- Became an AHF director in 2007.
- Elected AHF president last month (the first Queenslander to hold the role).

Jets stumble as Norths roll home

RUGBY LEAGUE ► Just when you think the Ipswich Jets have got their Queensland Cup campaign back on track, a slip-up comes.

On Sunday, the slip-up came in the side's trip to Norths', where a 16-8 half-time lead, and the chance to move into sixth spot, was squandered.

Despite the absence of Titans-contracted halfback Ian Lacey, the Jets took an eight-point lead into the break courtesy of two tries to Ramon Filipine and one

each to Luke Walker and Brendan Marshall.

But that was as good as the day got for the visitors who now sit in eighth spot - three behind sixth-placed Redcliffe.

In lower grades, the Jets Colts made it two wins in a row with a 32-12 win, before the FOGS Cup side was downed 32-16.

The Queensland Cup side travels to Mackay on Saturday night while the Colts and COGS Cup teams play away to Souths-Logan.

Well beaten

RUGBY LEAGUE ► A g-gression was not enough to get defending Ipswich Rugby League premiers Brothers over the line against unbeaten Goodna on Saturday.

In a spiteful replay of last year's grand final, two players from each team were sent to the sin-bin for fighting.

The competition pace-setters ran out 38-14 winners to seal their eighth-consecutive win. In other matches, second-placed Norths kept the heat on the Eagles with a 29-22 victory over West End at Cribb Park while Fassifern recorded a 40-22 win over Swifts.

Rosewood had the bye after South Burnett withdrew its A-grade side.

Rangers denied in thrilling finish

RUGBY UNION ► Heart-break was the only emotion resonating from Ipswich fans at Woodend Park on Saturday after a thrilling round 8 Barber Cup clash.

With the Ipswich Rangers clinging to a three-point lead against Brisbane Irish with just seconds to go, the visitors snatched victory with a try on last play of the game.

The 19-17 loss was a bitter pill to swallow for the Rangers, who had earlier rallied from a 14-5 half-time

deficit to move into a 17-14 lead.

The side's only first-half try went to flanker Chris Farnham before fullback Tom Dwyer touched down twice in the second stanza.

In the Pegg Cup, the Rangers benefitted from a Brisbane Irish forfeit, while the Colts were beaten 34-17 away to Easts.

This weekend, the Barber and Pegg Cup teams take on Beenleigh at home.

The Colts are playing away to GPS.

Swifts solid

HOCKEY ► Swifts remain the only unbeaten side in the Ipswich Hockey Association's women's A grade competition. The side extended its nine-match unbeaten run on Saturday with a comprehensive 4-0 over Newtown.

Hancocks remain in second spot after a tight 2-1 victory against Easts, while Norths Too-woomba (3-2 against Red Lion), Rangeville (5-1 over Bellbowrie) and Norths Ipswich (3-1 against Wests) also tasted victory.

In men's A grade, Easts made it seven wins from eight games downing Hancocks 5-2.

Bellbowrie also had a big win, trouncing Rangeville 6-2 after Red Lion and Newtown had earlier notched triumphs.