

Vic Country Selectors Reward Soaring Falcons

THE Geelong Falcons perfect start to the TAC Cup season has been rewarded with the club dominating the make-up of the Vic Country squad for this year's AFL national championships.

The Falcons sit unbeaten and on top of the ladder following a clinical 65-point win over the Dandenong Stingrays at Bendigo's Queen Elizabeth Oval in the country round of matches. Vic Country selectors must have been impressed with what they saw – and what they've witnessed in the first three rounds of the season – as the Falcons have a staggering 19 players in the squad of 60 that will gather in Melbourne for the first selection trials this weekend.

Falcons' coach Andy Allthorpe said the huge number of players chosen to try out for the Vic Country side is a great reward for their efforts in the first month. But, he said one of the pleasing aspects about their 18.10 (118) to 7.11 (53) victory was how the players stuck to the "team first" focus.

"A big focus was playing your role and working hard defensively and sticking to our structures and the way we did that was fantastic," Allthorpe said. Big man Fraser Fort continues to develop as a key forward and booted 4.3 for the game while Matt Boag, Hugh Goddard, Jacob Sharp, Scott Dixon, Pat McCartin and Doug Bond each kicked two.

Boag and George Cameron were among the best for their tireless work in the midfield while Sam Russell earned praise for his job on Dandenong's Clay McCartney. Allthorpe said Zaine Cordy, brother of Western Bulldogs' big man Ayce, is also developing nicely as a running defender.

The Falcons have a bye this weekend and will regain their AIS-AFL Academy players James Tsitas, Lewis Taylor and Darcy Gardiner after the break. Allthorpe is satisfied with their 3-0 start. "If you looked at our first block of games pre-season, I would have been certainly happy to take that," he said.

"The older boys are certainly leading the way at the moment and given the younger ones a chance to transition into the team. That's the strength of group at the moment."

The Falcons next encounter is against reigning premiers the Oakleigh Chargers at Warrawee Park on April 27.

Brad Green

SCOREBOARD

	1QT			HT			3QT			Final Score		
Geelong Falcons	4	2	-26	8	5	-53	13	7	-85	18	10	-118
Dandenong Stingrays	2	1	-13	4	4	-28	5	11	-41	7	11	-53

Geelong Falcons

Goal Kickers: F. Fort 4, M. Boag 2, H. Goddard 2, J. Sharp 2, S. Dixon 2, D. Bond 2, P. McCartin 2, T. Batarilo, M. Thompson.

Best Players: G. Cameron, F. Fort, M. Boag, T. Batarilo, Z. Cordy, S. Russell.

Dandenong Stingrays

Goal Kickers: T. Lamb 2, A. Scott , N. Gardiner , T. Tohiariki , J. Bastinac , J. Soroczynski.

Best Players: Z. Jones, T. Lamb, A. Patolo, J. Pickess, D. Capiron, J. Bastinac.