

Falcons Take Care of Rebels

THE Geelong Falcons took advantage of the school holiday break to give some of their squad members a solid hit-out in their latest round TAC Cup win.

With about a dozen regulars missing because of injury or state commitments, the Falcons were able to call on many of their APS players and they led the side to a comfortable 17.11 (113) to 6.8 (44) win over the North Ballarat Rebels at Craigieburn.

The win consolidated the Falcons on top of the ladder and has almost assured them of a top four finish, as they remain two games clear of their nearest challengers. Brothers Nick and Scott Dixon and Joe Maishman were solid contributors while defender Jayden McHenry showed signs that he's overcome an ankle problem that's troubled him all season.

An eight goal third quarter helped to set up the Falcons 59-point win. They held the Rebels scoreless after leading by 21 points at half-time. Scott Dixon, Billy Beardsall and Matt Boag all kicked three goals. Boag has now kicked 17 goals for the season from nine matches.

Falcons coach Andy Allthorpe said it was McHenry's best match for the season. "He's had no luck at all this year," Allthorpe said. "He rolled it (his ankle) at training in a really simple drill pre-season. He was definitely having some doubt and was a bit down on himself.

"But he's starting to get a bit of confidence now. He's got to play the last five games now so he's starting to get a bit of continuity there.

"He's got plenty to offer, it was just a matter of him getting his confidence back. It's defending really well, taking the first options with the ball in his hand. He reads the ball really well in the air, he's a very flexible player."

After a slow start, Kody Spokes is showing encouraging signs of improvement and Allthorpe said he gave the side a bit of speed on a wing. "He's got some good attributes to his game. He uses the ball really well and he's a great kick," Allthorpe said.

"It's just about challenging him to get his intensity up and work harder for longer periods. He's putting pressure on others to perform." Allthorpe is hopeful classy forward Meyrick Buchanan has overcome a knee problem that saw him miss last Saturday's game.

The Falcons are back at Geelong's Simonds Stadium this Saturday to take on the Oakleigh Chargers as part of a double header with Geelong's VFL side. The Cats take on North Ballarat from 11am with the Falcons game on at 2pm.

MEANWHILE last Friday 17-year-old Falcons forward Pat McCartin showed his potential by booting five goals for Vic Country in their after-the-siren loss to Western Australia at Simonds Stadium in the AFL under-18 national championship.

McCartin, son of former GFL ruckman and former Geelong-listed player Matt, is not eligible to be drafted until next season.

Vic Country finishes their campaign against arch rivals Vic Metro at Etihad Stadium on Wednesday.

Brad Green

SCOREBOARD

	QT			HT			3QT			Final Score		
Geelong Falcons	2	5	-17	6	7	-43	14	8	-92	17	11	-113
North Ballarat Rebels	1	3	-9	3	4	-22	3	4	-22	6	8	-44

Geelong Falcons

Goal Kickers: M. Boag 3, B. Beardsell 3, S. Dixon 3, L. Donne 2, P. Bright 2, K. Spokes, T. Batarilo, J. Maishman, C. Floyd.

Best Players: N. Dixon, S. Dixon, B. Beardsell, J. Maishman, K. Spokes, J. McHenry.

North Ballarat Rebels

Goal Kickers: K. Mason 2, S. Hooper, N. Weightman, M. Bowman, D. Butler.

Best Players: S. Bennett, L. Cassidy, R. Marshall, A. Armstrong, N. Mabon, X. Vearing.