

Injury Blow to Taylor – Season Ends for Talented Falcon

THE Geelong Falcons have an injury blow on the eve of the TAC Cup finals with star rover Lewis Taylor ruled out for the rest of the season with a serious foot injury.

The 18-year-old, rated a top 10 prospect for November's AFL national draft, will have surgery next week after scans diagnosed a stress fracture in his left foot.

Taylor has played with the problem for most of 2013 before the pain got worse in the past fortnight. It forced him to miss the Falcons final round win over Dandenong last weekend before being told the bad news by a specialist earlier this week.

Falcons coach Andy Allthorpe said Taylor would be sidelined for up to 10 weeks, meaning he will miss out on doing the fitness testing component at October's AFL Draft Combine.

Allthorpe said Taylor had his long-term future to consider ahead of the Falcons' tilt at a premiership.

"He's so driven to support the team that he wants to play," Allthorpe said. "But we've talked to him about his future and what's best for him.

"The team can survive without him. What Lewy needs to do is get himself right for the opportunity that's ahead of him for the next 10 years or so. At the next level they will be making sure he'll have the right orthotics.

"It (Taylor's injury) will give someone else an opportunity."

The injury is unlikely to impact on the draft prospects of the 174cm goalkicking on-baller, who has impressed with the Falcons all season and with Vic Country at the AFL under-18 national championships – where he earned All-Australian selection.

The Falcons, who ended the season on top-of-the ladder for the first time since 2009, take on the Calder Cannons in a qualifying final at Carlton's Visy Park this Saturday.

Allthorpe said 17-year-old key forward Patrick McCartin is set to return to the line-up after missing last week's win against the Stingrays because of a head injury.



Lewis Taylor in Action

Brad Green