

A great start by Sharks, but...

by GARRY HOWE

SOUTHPORT began Sunday's Queensland Australian Football League grand final showdown with Windsor-Zillmere like a premiership team.

The Sharks' smaller brigade of Craig Crowley, Bernie Harris and Chris Van Wyk were on top early.

Despite plenty of attention from their Zillmere opponents, they were providing drive up forward for Sarcevic, who kicked two goals in the first 10 minutes.

Handling and disposal errors, however, let Zillmere back in and goals to Cameron Buchanan, Robert Dickfos and John Blair gave the Eagles a seven point buffer — 3-4 to 2-3 — at quarter time.

Best

Zillmere looked like forging away in the second quarter, with Andrew Martyn goaling after only two minutes.

But Southport fought back and played their best football of the game — kicking four goals in less than 10 minutes.

Crowley, providing good drive from the half-back line, delivered a perfect pass to rover Gordon Coventry for a much-needed goal at the 10-minute mark.

Ray Sarcevic and Adrian Bassett combined to goal a minute later and Jason Cotter added another, after some clever roving, to put Southport back in front.

Bassett then snapped truly from about 20 metres out to give the Sharks a nine-point break — 6-3 to 4-6.

Southport seemed to have moved up a gear

Grand final scoreboard

SENIORS
WINDSOR-ZILLMERE 3-4, 8-7, 11-4, 13-13 (91) d SOUTHPORT 2-3, 6-3, 7-4, 9-5 (59).
BEST: Windsor-Zillmere — Martyn (best on ground), Dickfos, Ugle, Horan, Blair, Southport — Snare, Howell, Handley, Riewoldt.
GOALS: Windsor-Zillmere — Blair 5, Ugle 3, Martyn 2, M Brittain, Dickfos, Buchanan; Southport — Bassett 3, Sarcevic, Cotter 2, Kennedy, Coventry.

RESERVES
WINDSOR ZILLMERE 3-4, 10-4, 18-8, 25-11 (161) d SOUTHPORT 2-4, 2-5, 3-8, 7-11 (53).
BEST: Windsor-Zillmere — G. Zonder, M. White, M. Haddon, D. Dickfos, B. Jarrett; Southport — M. Robbins, M. Ashcroft, R. Cavanagh, A. Feltell, P. Dent.
GOALS: Windsor-Zillmere — M. Haddon 8, P. McRae 4, G. Walters 4, G. Power 3, P. Baker 3, G. Lawrie 2, G. Zonder; Southport — C. Hedland 3, M. Ashcroft 2, S. Mirkovic, D. Williams.

but, unfortunately, that was the last time in the game the machine really clicked.

Zillmere pegged back the lead with two goals to Blair and others to Michael Brittain and Paul Ugle to go into the break 17-points ahead.

The second half was all Zillmere. Martyn, Ugle and Dickfos were running riot in the forward line and the back line had the numbers to repel any attacking move by the Sharks.

Southport were still within striking distance at the last change — trailing 11-4 to 7-4 — but were not playing well enough.

Inspirational

Dickfos, after an inspirational run from the centre, gave Martyn the first goal of the quarter from straight in front and a clever Ugle snap only minutes later sealed the premiership win.

A Bassett mark and goal at the 15-minute mark gave the Sharks their first major score since early in the third quarter. Kennedy notched another — but it came too late.

To Southport's credit, they fought the game right to the end. But most of their attacking moves late in the game were thwarted by the well-drilled Eagles' defence.

Snare comes out on top



Southport's Chris Van Wyk (left) looks on as team-mate Paul Snare gets the better of this boundary line duel with Windsor-Zillmere's Ian Anderson during Sunday's QAFL grand final. Snare was among the Sharks' best players.

KEY PLAYERS LET COACH DARE DOWN

by GARRY HOWE

SOUTHPORT coach Norm Dare awoke in a sombre mood yesterday morning, knowing a lack of discipline by key players had cost his side any chance of winning a second consecutive QAFL premiership.

Dare knew his normally well-drilled machine had to fire on all cylinders to beat a revenge-hungry Windsor Zillmere outfit in Sunday's season finale at Windsor Park.

But a few vital cogs gave way under pressure, giving the Eagles the momentum to run away to a 32-point win.

"I'm taking the day off tomorrow," Dare said after the game. "But instead of laughing this time I'll have a headache and wake up in a sick mood."

The master coach had been let down.

Potential match-winners like Ray Sarcevic, Craig Crowley, Bernie Harris and Adrian Bassett began with a flurry, but were unsighted in a second half dominated by the Eagles.

"Our key players tried hard, but lost a bit of their zip and touch under pressure," said Dare.

And he refused to give Windsor Zillmere all the credit.

"We put a lot of pressure on ourselves the way we used the ball," he said. "We mucked around with it too much."

"At three-quarter time I told the players again to kick it long to the key players — but our first three kicks after the break went about 10 metres.

"It's no good having a height advantage if you spread the ball wide."

Dare went into the game worried about the Zillmere forward line.

"I told the team we had to keep them to 10 goals to win the game — and they got 13," he said. "But I



Norm Dare... day off with a headache

thought our back line did a good job for the amount of ball they got."

The major stumbling block was Zillmere's reluctant centre half-forward Andrew Martyn.

He did not relish the move from his favoured centre half-back position — but the decision by coach Wayne Brittain proved a match-winner.

Martyn, the Grant Memorial Medal winner, gave the Eagles a target up forward and Dare admitted to moving 'half the team' on him to curb his brilliance.

"They got drive from centre half-forward and we couldn't," said Dare. "That's because they got the ball to the centre half-forward and we didn't."

The performance of the younger players was one of the good points to come out of the game for Southport.

"Those young players had some big shoes to fill — and they did the job well," said Dare.

'Trump cards' didn't turn up

SOUTHPORT took the field on Sunday without two of the three 'trump cards' named in their grand final side.

Former Sharks stalwart and VFL champion Gary Dempsey was foiled by a breakdown in communication at the club and Darren Carlson was declared unfit by the Brisbane Bears medical team.

Coach Norm Dare denied Dempsey's selection was a red herring.

'Breakdown'

"We could have had him but there was a breakdown in communication," said Dare. "He rang the club on Saturday morning and someone told him he wasn't playing."

The Sharks named Carlson, sidelined most of the year with knee injuries, but maintained throughout the week he would not play unless he was 100 per cent fit.

"The Bears physio wasn't happy with him so he didn't play," said Dare. "I'm not complaining — I would have been disappointed if they (the Bears) didn't say anything."

"He's got 10 years left in him. If he got hurt he would have ruined a VFL career."

The other ace up the Southport sleeve, captain Zane Taylor, took the field but lacked match fitness.

Risk

"I knew before the game it was a risk — but I didn't know whether it was a good one or a bad one," Taylor said yesterday.

He conceded he had 'bitten off more than he could chew'.

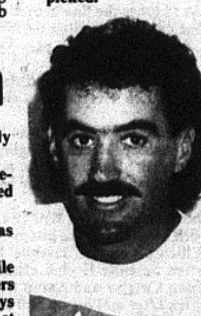
"We were chasing all day and when you're chasing and not fit you look a lot worse," he said.

"The way it turned out it was probably the wrong decision — but no-one was to know."

Dare defended Taylor's selection.

"I thought he did real well," said Dare.

"Zane Taylor 80 per cent fit was a lot better than any 20th man we could have picked."



Zane Taylor

The agony of defeat once again

by PHIL McCLUSKEY

SOUTHPORT reserves suffered the agony of defeat for the second consecutive year at the hands of Windsor-Zillmere in the QAFL reserve grade grand final on Sunday.

Sharks' coach Des Kennedy watched helplessly from the sidelines as the Eagles systematically destroyed the under-manned Southport opposition.

The Eagles easily ran out winners 25-11 (161) to Southport 7-11 (53).

After the match a bitterly disappointed Kennedy described Windsor-Zillmere as one of the best reserve grade teams he had ever seen.

"They're a great team, just too strong for us and a bit too good for us. They deserved the win," said Kennedy.

"We gave it our best shot but, unfortunately, it wasn't good enough.

The Sharks, ably led by captain Mick Robbins in the ruck, tried hard all day but really failed to get the flowing, running game going.

Marcus Ashcroft, Anthony Feltell, Phil Dent and Mick Viney flashed in and out of the game without

really influencing the match as much as Kennedy would have liked.

For Zillmere it was centreman Gordon Zonder, defender Mark White and rover Steve Berg who powered Zillmere through in what was a convincing win.

Eagles' coach Eric Ralton described the win as even more satisfying than last year's victory.

"Last year's side was really strong and stable while this year we had to spend a lot of time working players into position. It was a tremendous effort by the boys because they never grew cocky or lost sight of the fact they had the potential to beat us."