

GEELONG Falcon Lewis Taylor is rapidly emerging as a 'smokey' selection in next month's Greater Western Sydney (GWS) mini-draft.

The goalkicking rover's stocks have risen among AFL recruiters after an impressive season in the TAC Cup where he averaged just under 22 possessions and two tackles a game and booted 16 goals from 14 games.

The 17-year-old, who comes from Mortlake, was one of the Falcons best in their semi-final loss to the Sandringham Dragons with 26 touches and two goals.



Lewis Taylor (#1) in semi-final action vs Sandringham

He also polled eight votes in the Morrish Medal.

Taylor is one of 16 nominations from around Australia for the mini-draft with two players guaranteed to find a new home on an AFL list by October 26.

Falcons regional manager Michael Turner said ``a few'' AFL clubs had contacted him about Taylor in recent weeks.

``I think that interest will build now that (AFL) clubs are starting to look at their lists for next year and the name Lewis Taylor has been mentioned,'' Turner said.

``We played him right from the start because he's such a good player. He's had a fantastic year and he's a very exciting player, very quick.''

``I personally think he's ready to go to an AFL club now and, if he doesn't, we'll look at relocating him here next year. I've spoken to his dad and his mentors about that.

``To get the best result for him, if he doesn't get drafted with one of those two GWS picks, we'll probably look to relocate him into a family down here in Geelong so he can access our program three or four times a week rather than one so he can get the best result for his footy next year.''

Taylor is one of three Falcons nominated for the mini-draft along with Nick Bourke and Grovedale's James Tsitas, who was one of Vic Country's better players during this year's under-18 national championships,

GWS have to trade the two picks with other clubs, who can then chose one of the players from the talent pool.

Western Australian pair Jack Martin and Jesse Hogan remain the most likely selections along with North Ballarat's Matt Crouch – whose brother Brad was picked by Adelaide in last year's inaugural GWS mini-draft.

If Taylor is overlooked, he will be eligible to be drafted next year.

``He's ready to go and I would prefer him to be at an AFL club next year than with us,'' Turner said.

Brad Green