

Presani Debuts with Six – Falcons Move to 8-0

IT was a debut to remember for Colac's Steven Presani as the Geelong Falcons marched to an impressive 81-point win over the Sandringham Dragons in the latest round of action.

Presani booted six goals as the Falcons continued their unbeaten start to the season with a 16.11 (107) to 4.2 (26) win over the Dragons at Werribee's Avalon Airport Oval. Normally a defender, Presani was thrown forward during the Falcons pre-season trial games and impressed coach Andy Allthorpe with his marking ability and skills.

The 17-year-old represented Vic Country at last year's under-16 national championships in Sydney, but has been forced to bide his time with Colac's under-18 side in the Geelong Football League until his opportunity came.

"We decided to play him as a forward because he's very good overhead and he uses the ball well. He kicks the ball well," Allthorpe said of Presani. "We've been blessed with key position players this year he's just had to bide his time (with Colac), keep training well and playing well.

"He's been solid (for the Tigers). They have used him in a variety of roles, such as ruck rover to get his workrate up and going. We played him deep forward and we asked him to really compete and bring the ball to the front of the contest. "He's been training in all our structures so he had a good understanding of that and he performed pretty well and got the rewards with six goals."

To highlight their outstanding depth, ruckman Jack Berry and midfielder Campbell Floyd also played their first TAC Cup matches for the Falcons on Saturday. Darcy Gardiner, Matt Boag, Reid Adams and Jackson Nelson were all rested.

In their eight matches-to-date, Allthorpe said the Falcons have already used 43 players. The Falcons are unbeaten, two games clear of their next opponent the Eastern Ranges. "It's been fantastic. Each boy who's come in really wants to have their opportunity and that's a great position to be in," Allthorpe said.

After leading by two points at quarter-time and 20 at the main break, a seven-goal third by the Falcons term broke the game open. They added another five goals in the final term while holding the Dragons to just one point.

Allthorpe said he was pleased the Falcons had improved in a lot of key areas after last week's below par performance against the Bendigo Pioneers. "Even though we won, there were areas we were poor in both individually and as a group so we refocused and worked on turning those around," Allthorpe said.

"We beat them in the contested ball, tackles and won the stoppages. We had 20 more tackles than last week."

Co-captains James Tsitas and Alex Hickey showed great leadership while Lewis Taylor and George Cameron were important players in the midfield.

Jye Cross returned to the side from representing Vic Country the previous weekend and showed he's taken his game to another level, producing a strong performance at centre half-back.

The TAC Cup has another bye this weekend with the Falcons likely to have several players in the Vic Country side for their next match of the AFL under-18 national championships against Tasmania at Visy Park on Sunday.

The Falcons take on the Ranges at Geelong's Simonds Stadium on Saturday, June 16 at 2pm.

Brad Green

SCOREBOARD

	1QT	HT	3QT	Final Score
Geelong Falcons	2 2 -14	4 8 -32	11 8 -74	16 11 -107
Sandringham Dragons	2 0 -12	2 0 -12	4 1 -25	4 2 -26

Geelong Falcons

Goal Kickers: S. Presani 6, G. Cameron 2, N. Bourke 2, J. Tsitas 2, M. Thompson, M. Buchanan, B. Beardsell, J. Hudson.

Best Players: L. Taylor, J. Tsitas, G. Cameron, S. Presani, J. Cross, A. Hickey.

Sandringham Dragons

Goal Kickers: B. Maynard 2, N. Smith, T. Langdon.

Best Players: L. Daidone, B. Maynard, T. Grace, L. Marchetti, A. Hodges, J. Gabron-Uhe.