

Falcons Edge Jets

GEELONG Falcons coach Andy Allthorpe was pleased by his players' response to their humiliating loss the previous week in Saturday's hard-fought win over the Western Jets. The Falcons bounced back having been pumped by 108 points at Geelong's Simonds Stadium the previous round by the Eastern Ranges – their worst loss since 2011 - to topple the Jets by three points at Williamstown.

The Jets' James Sicily had a mark disallowed by the umpire that would have given him a set shot at goal after the siren 30 metres out on a 45 degree angle. It was deemed he had taken the mark after the siren sounded. The 10.7 (67) to 9.10 (64) victory keeps the Falcons a game clear of the Ranges on top of the TAC Cup ladder.

But Allthorpe said he was more pleased by the way his players approached every contest and willed themselves to overrun the Jets in the second half. “(Our focus) this week was about maintaining our effort and competing in every contest and not reacting to what the scoreboard says,” Allthorpe said.

“It was definitely a game that they had to be on for long periods, maintain their intensity and efforts. “Every time we dropped a little they capitalised and took their chances going forward. Four or five of our better players the game before (against Eastern) were our inexperienced players so we were looking for our middle tier to stand up and a few of them really did that and played their best games.”

The Jets led by seven points at quarter time and by 14 at the main break. But Allthorpe was confident the Falcons could come back if they fixed a few structural issues. “Our effort was great (in the first half) but our execution was poor in general,” he said.

“Our kicking was well down on what we're capable of. But our tackling (was impressive). We were just hunting them ridiculously. “Once we got things right structurally, we started to get on top of them.”

Just two goals were kicked in the final term with the Falcons able to cling on to a confidence-boosting win. “Both sides threw everything at each other and it was a fantastic contest,” Allthorpe said. “We were lucky to hang on.”

Lewis Taylor led from the front with 37 possessions and was well supported in the midfield by George Cameron, Nic Bourke on a wing and Jacob Sharp and Alex Hickey across half-back.

Luke Davis continued his consistent form in the ruck while Matthew Boag booted three goals and Billy Beardsell two in the win.

Vic Country's next match in the under-18 AFL national championships will be played this Friday in Geelong, meaning the Falcons will be without several players for their clash next Sunday at Craigieburn against North Ballarat Rebels.

But Allthorpe said with the APS having a break for a couple of weeks, the Falcons are likely to regain the likes of Aaron Christensen, Tom Batarilo, Scott and Nick Dixon and Sam Russell.

Brad Green

SCOREBOARD

	1QT			HT			3QT			Final Score		
Western Jets	3	2	-20	7	4	-46	8	8	-56	9	10	-64
Geelong Falcons	2	1	-13	5	2	-32	9	4	-58	10	7	-67

Western Jets

Goal Kickers: B. Payne 3, D. Iaccarino 2, M. Norton, L. Hickey, J. Greiser, J. Sicily.

Best Players: B. Ferrari, D. Iaccarino, C. Menadue, J. Sicily, D. Viojo, J. McKenzie.

Geelong Falcons

Goal Kickers: M. Boag 3, B. Beardsell 2, L. Donne, M. Thompson, S. Crawley, N. Bourke, P. Bright.

Best Players: L. Taylor, G. Cameron, N. Bourke, J. Sharp, A. Hickey, L. Davis