MATCH REPORT v NORTHERN KNIGHTS

It was a scrappy affair at RAMS Arena for the Cannons Round 7 clash with the Northern Knights and it wasn’t the result that Cannons were hoping for, ultimately falling to the visitors by 29 points.

The first quarter left a lot to be desired in the Cannons coach’ box, as we were slow to get off the mark, failing to register a major score for the entirety of the period. Northern converted two goals from free kicks in their forward 50 to put the pressure on early and didn’t slow down – piling on another two to our 2 behinds. It wasn’t for a lack of effort however as the Knights defence stood up against multiple late entries.

The second quarter started much the same but Calder wrestled dominance back and were rewarded for repeat forward 50 entries, piling on three quick goals to zero. Daniel Hanna and Tye Browning found plenty of the ball early, both registering 12 and 11 disposals respectively. Per the quarter time address of head coach Ross Smith, the Cannons played a much more direct style of football in the second quarter, avoiding ‘cute kicks’ and ‘safe football’ and focused on aggression at the fall of the ball. Jack Evans and Nathan Croft picked up the first half where they left off last week, setting the tone for tackling pressure, both amassing five each.

The first 10 minutes of the third quarter was an arm wrestle, that the visitors took first advantage of the struggle, breaking free and scoring two quick-fire majors that put all of the pressure back on the good guys, who were fumbly in the quarter. Curtis Taylor spent his longest stint this season in the midfield and showed why he is one the radar of a number of AFL clubs, his cleanliness was a shining in a game that was a little hard on the eyes at times.

With only two kicks the difference at the beginning of the final quarter, both teams came out with a full head of steam and pressure finding another gear. The Cannons found themselves two important players down with Cooper Lamb and Jez O’Sullivan being helped from the ground after two separate collisions. The boys attempted to control the tempo of the game and were met with an extremely impressive Knights defensive unit, which continually held up to repeated entries, making the lives of our forward line very difficult on the day.

Despite our intensity lifting late, we couldn’t make the most of our oppurtunities and the game was put out of our reach with a late goal from the visitors, who were very efficient going inside 50 thirty four times for 20 scores.

**KEY STATS
Curtis Taylor** had one of his best games of the year and relished spending an extended stint in the midfielder where he showed his agility and cleanliness, whilst also hitting the scoreboard. He finished with 20 possessions, 7 clearances and a team high 2 goals. **Daniel Hanna** continued his blistering form with a near best on ground performance, he amassed 22 possessions and 6 tackles to his name. **Nathan Croft** had a massive pressure game and finished with a game high 14 tackles and a 9 possession final quarter. 23rd player **Abou-Eid**  was extremely impressive with 16 touches, 5 clearances and 6 tackles.