

IT'S COLDSTREAM OR OLINDA FOR THE FLAG

For the first time in the history of the E.D.F.L. two "local" teams, Coldstream and Olinda will fight out the Third Division grand final.

Who will win? It's difficult to say as Coldstream's sudden change of form has thrown the issue wide open. But the Blues could still pull it off.

The general opinion is that the fresher side has the better chance but the Blues, who are one of the strongest and fittest eighteens in the league, seem to thrive on hard work.

Take, for instance, the way they bounced back in the last quarter of the preliminary final against Wandin this week, to score five goals and clinch the match.

After the hard-fought 100 minutes with Wandin, the Blues must still be feeling the strain, but they are a lion-hearted mob and are sure to be full of fight, determined to take out that elusive premiership.

On many occasions through the season Coldstream's stamina has paid dividends.

Consistent

Olinda, on the other hand, are a side that have played consistently, if inconspicuously, throughout the season, winning matches, but with not the same dash as Coldstream.

Many fans classified the second semi a preview of the grand final, with Coldstream in the box seat.

But it didn't turn out that way, and to add to their worries, they have to "front" the same predicament as the league team, Collingwood, which won 11 matches straight, and was placed under a great strain endeavouring to maintain its unbeaten record.

Coldstream have won all but one game this season, and the team that stopped

them was Olinda. They will be flat out to repeat the dose on Saturday.

Another thing, Coldstream are playing in a senior grand final for the first time, and will suffer from "nerves" whereas Olinda, with a wealth of experience in the M.D.F.A. are seasoned "veterans".

In the second semi their back line of Fowler, Gammon and Raynor was steady and stubborn and gave the Coldstream forwards many headaches.

Reliable

In the forward zone the "Bloods" are well served, with rotors Jones and Milic reliable around the packs, and the McCarthy boys supplying good drive from the centre.

However they have two weaknesses that were exploited by Coldstream, in the second semi-final.

The first and major fault is the looseness of the half back line. In the second semi-final they made "shabby" clearances, time and again allowing Coldstream to keep the initiative and place greater strain on the last line of defence.

Olinda's second weakness is stamina. Towards the end of each quarter in the last clash they slackened off, and gave their opponents the chance to gain valuable points.

Coldstream's greatest worry is their slowness at getting into "gear". They

are strong and evenly balanced, and if they can calm down and accept the grand final as just another game, they are as good as "home and hosed."

Hard To Pass

Their defence is not as compact as Olinda's, but Pearce, McHarry, Madden and Crossland have given many fine displays this season, and will be hard to pass.

In attack they have the tireless "Mike" Gooden, with experienced Fletcher and Davenport, reliable stand-byes.

In the ruck Van Zetten works untiringly and has shown he can out-jump most opponents.

Their strong, systematic play, long, accurate kicking and high marking could again prove winners for Coldstream — if they settle down quickly.

The main thing Olinda will have to overcome is the sheer determination and "never-say-die" spirit coach Fletcher has drilled into his team. This, we feel, should give Coldstream that little "extra," and enable them to win their first premiership in this division.



Should be a great match between Coldstream and Olinda for the premiership of the third division of the E.D.F.L. at the Lilydale oval on Saturday.

Coldstream went through the season undefeated and were pipped by Olinda in the second semi. The Blues then repaired their damaged reputation with a good win over Wandin in the preliminary final and are sure to be anxious to avenge their defeat at the hands of Olinda in the grand final on Saturday.

This column goes for a fresh and consistent Olinda to just take the points in a hard, close match.

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