

Campbell waits for Thunder

CENTRALIAN Paul Campbell continues to knock on the door of NT Thunder selection after another eye-catching display in CAFL action at the weekend.

The smooth-moving on-baller was the catalyst behind Pioneer's 13-point comeback win over Rovers at Albrecht Oval on Saturday.

Campbell finished with 23 touches including nine in the second term, where the Eagles' fightback began.

The younger brother of former North Melbourne Kangaroo Matt Campbell said he was happy with how things were tracking this season after an injury-hampered 2013 when he battled hamstring problems.

He failed to play a game for the Thunder after clocking up seven straight NEAFL matches to finish 2012.

"It was a tough year but I'm glad to be back on the park and playing consistent footy," he said. "I was happy with my performance at the weekend."

While Campbell conceded it would be tough to break into a star-studded Thunder outfit, sitting pretty on top of the ladder with a 7-1 record, he wanted to play at least one game this season.

"I would love to have another crack up in Darwin," he said. "But with the Thunder going so well, I'm obviously going to have to wait my turn."

"I guess it's all about training well and putting my hand up in the CAFL."

But for now, it's all about helping Pioneer avenge their heartbreaking grand final loss to Federal last season.

"There's definitely that motivation there after letting the premiership slip last year," Campbell said. "We just need to keep playing every game like it's a grand final - I still think we're the benchmark of the competition."

Young makes strong return

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Young, the current player-coach of the Saints, hasn't played a game this season due to a knee injury suffered while lining up for the Central Australia Redtails last summer.

While his movement was far from 100 per cent, his strong marking and kicking for goal was sensational.

Young, who played with his knee heavily strapped, was the main focal point for the Saints and finished with a game-high seven majors in his side's thrilling 27-point win.

The imposing swingman said while he was happy to get through his first competitive hit-out of the season, he didn't expect to play in the seniors for a while.

"Probably not anytime soon, probably later on in the season," he said. "But it was good to get through without re-injuring my knee."

The Saints' next match is against South at Albrecht Oval on Saturday.

Demons slide to four losses on trot as Saints soar

Jordan McArdle
CAFL PREMIER LEAGUE

FEDERAL'S nightmare CAFL premiership defence continued at the weekend, with Ltyentye Apurte handing them their fourth straight defeat.

The Saints recovered from a slow start to dominate the game after quarter-time in the 16.9 (105) to 12.9 (81) win.

Coach Darren Young was delighted with his side's

improvement in a fortnight. "Two weeks ago against Pioneer was very disappointing," he said.

"But the way we have improved is pleasing."

Young admitted the Saints left too much to too few in the earlier rounds, but felt their win was a great team effort.

"I think everyone contributed and played their role," he said.

Jason McMillian was the

Saints' best, presenting well on his way to a seven-goal haul.

Fittingly, it was his mark and goal which put the game on ice midway through the final term.

Debutant Percy Tucker, who transferred from Western Aranda during the week, was sensational in the ruck, with Gordon Mulladad and Desmond Nandy also instrumental.

The return of key trio Jai

Pumphrey, Jason Wilmot and Chris Atkinson was not enough to get the Demons over the line.

Bradley Turner and Lucas Relic were good through the midfield and Jamie Mavromihalas was solid down back, while Jayden Prior continued his good season with four majors.

Ryan Lucas was impressive on debut at full-forward, kicking two goals.

The Demons had a blistering start to the match, booting the first four goals and dominating the inside-50s.

But the community side hit back hard with five of the next six majors to take the lead late in the first half.

Lucas Relic, Feds' best in the first half, snatched back the half-time lead with his second.

Bradley Turner booted the Demons' only goal in the third term.

CAFL SCORES

Round 6

Pioneer 11.15 (81) d

Rovers 10.8 (68),

Ltyentye Apurte 16.10

(106) d Federal 12.8 (80),

South 23.14 (152) d

Western Aranda 10.5 (65)



Rovers' Cody Marriott take a solid mark over Pioneers' David Porter.

Picture: CHARLIE LOWSON

Eagles' 'lucky' win

Jordan McArdle
CAFL PREMIER LEAGUE

PIONEER co-coach Stephen Hayes credited NT Thunder-listed Paul Campbell's performance in his side's 13-point comeback win over Rovers at Albrecht Oval on Saturday.

Hayes said the Eagles were lucky to get away with their start, and it wouldn't have been possible without Campbell.

"We can't start like that every week and expect to win," he said.

"It was a great escape and to the players' credit, they stuck at it and worked their way back into the game.

"Pauly did his Thunder re-

call chances no harm, we would have lost the game without him."

The Eagles trailed by as much as 37 points late in the first half, but flicked the switch soon after to notch up their fourth win of the season, 11.15 (81) to 10.8 (68).

The second half was dominated by Pioneer midfielders Campbell and Lloyd Turner, while Gibson Turner provided the highlights up forward with four second-half goals and under-16 Liam McDonald had 18 touches.

Campbell was best on ground and easily Pioneer's most consistent player all afternoon, gathering 23 touch-

es - including nine in the second term.

The Double Blues were well serviced by forwards Cody Marriott (four goals) and Tosh Kunoth (three goals), with Tom Clarke and Harry Weeks also impressive.

But the tough assignment was simply too much without star duo Gareth Remfrey and Luke Farrows.

Rovers dominated the opening term thanks to a three-goal effort from Kunoth. Eric Campbell kicked the only major for Pioneer before quarter-time in their worst term for the season so far.

It was then Marriott's turn to get in on the action, scoring

three goals on the trot to have his side up by 37 points midway through the second quarter.

But like all good teams, Pioneer hit back hard to get within 15 points at the main break.

It could have been a lot closer if it wasn't for the Eagles' poor kicking in front of the sticks.

Pioneer's stars all lifted another notch, with Thomas Gorey kicking his first of the day to start the half.

The lead changed three times in the third quarter, but a three-goal term to Gibson Turner made sure Pioneer was up by seven points at the final change.

SOUTH stretched their unbeaten run to five after a comfortable 87-point win over Western Aranda at Albrecht Oval yesterday.

While it wasn't their most convincing win of the season, the Roos kept their spot at the top of the CAFL ladder intact with the 23.14 (152) to 10.5 (65) triumph.

Coach Darren Talbot said he was pleased to keep his side's unbeaten run in-tact, and felt it was a good win apart from the second quarter.

"I thought we were great in the first, third and fourth quarters, it was just a bit of a lapse in the second term there," he said.

"But they definitely realised that after half-time and got the job done."

Athletic on-baller Charlie Maher was at his brilliant best, gathering the ball with ease throughout the match.

Maher was best on ground by a mile and even popped up for six goals, the majority of which were on the run.

"I think he's just really enjoying his football at the moment," Talbot said.

He was one of five multiple goalscorers for the Roos, with Daniel Stafford, Shaun Cusack and Murray Liddle booting three apiece.

NT under-18s representative Daniel Myers was solid in the back line, as was Caleb Hart. As always, Aaron Sharpe was among the Dogs' best and was seemingly all over the park before hurting his finger late in the match.

Sharpe kicked two majors, as did playing-coach Malcolm Kenny. Alias Malbunka impressed, with Michael Coulthard and Hector Ratarata also among the best.

It was a whirlwind start from Darren Talbot's men, who led by as much as eight goals in the second term.

Western Aranda got themselves back into the match with the last three goals of the first half.

The Bulldogs continued their momentum shortly after the main break and took it up to their highly fancied opponents on a number of occasions.

But the class of South was simply too good, with the blue and whites holding a match-winning lead by three-quarter time.

In-form youngster Michaelis McMasters was sick and didn't play for South.