

Celtic endure tight contest to up-end Stormbirds

JUSTIN RAYMOND

THE up and down season of reigning Southern Zone FICA Men's Premier League champions Celtic continued with a thrilling win over Stormbirds at Ross Park on Saturday.

Celtic rebounded from a 5-2 defeat at the hands of MPH Vikings the previous week to edge Stormbirds 3-2.

It was an interesting clash

with three of the five goals scored coming from penalties.

Elijah Spackman was the difference maker for Stormbirds as he kicked both of his team's goals from penalties.

It was a tight contest throughout with Celtic holding a slight advantage in its output through the midfield.

Spackman was afforded the opportunity to score the opening goal off a penalty.

Celtic then had the chance to equalise moments later but Todd Fishwick missed the penalty when he sent the ball soaring over the crossbar.

But the equaliser eventually came to the patient Celtic just before halftime when the ball came through midfield, allowing Yuji Nojima to latch on to the ball and score.

With momentum now in its favour, Celtic took a 2-1 lead

when Lukas Blom found the back of the net.

Blom had taken on the Stormbirds defenders and then put the ball past goalkeeper Enoch Tetteh.

Momentum then swung back Stormbirds' way when they were given the chance to equalise when a penalty was awarded for a handball in the box by a Celtic player.

Spackman stepped up to

take the penalty and kick his final goal of the game.

With the game still hanging in the balance and a draw looking likely, Celtic's final thrust for victory took place in the dying minutes of the close encounter.

Stormbirds keeper Enoch Tetteh came out to try and win the ball but seemed to hurt himself in the process.

With Tetteh down, mid-

fielder Jamie Pipinis pounced on the loose ball and then went on to score an opportunistic goal and seal victory for Celtic.

Next up for Stormbirds, who are still searching for their first win of the season, is a clash with topside MPH Vikings on Saturday.

In the other game, Celtic take on Verdi, back from its FFA Cup semi loss to Darwin Olympic.

A mistake a quarter splits top from last

STEVE MENZIES

ONE dropped ball, or missed pass, a quarter was the difference between Federal Trusty Glass and Seasons Complete Fencing & Steel Sales in their KFC A-grade netball clash on Saturday.

This was the message that Seasons acting coach Darrelle Windsor was giving to keep the Seasons players spirits after Federal won 53-45.

There were more turnovers during the game than the one in every quarter.

Seasons were particularly guilty of firing ball out of the reach of Mai Segi in the attack circle at least six times in the second half alone.

The team battled hard but Federal was able to steady when it mattered most.

Federal seemed to have control of the contest for most of the 60 minutes but Seasons managed to mount challenges throughout.

These almost brought Federal coach Deb Gray out of her seat on the sidelines as she continually urged her team on.

A magic second quarter by Federal (scoring 19 goals to 11), when Tegan Hatzimihail scored 12 goals at 92 per cent proved to be decisive as there was only one goal difference between the teams in the other three.

The defenders from both sides played well, in particular Alicia Kruske (back as goal keeper in the absence of Katelyn Paterson) who bodied up against the bigger Segi and did not give her space at any stage and the scoring was a credit to the respective centre courts.

Jorja Weily was in commanding form for Federal in the centre of all the action while Seasons had teens Ella Adami and Janaya Kopp run against her.

While Hatzimihail and Segi were the go to players in the attack circle, both had good support players in Sophie Gaynor and Bec Miller respectively.

Gaynor had one of her best games for the year netting 20 goals to Hatzimihail's 33.

The result means that Federal sits undefeated on top of the ladder after 11 games while Seasons are yet to score a win.

Their closest result to a win was a 55-55 draw against Federal in round five.



West's wing attack Courtney Summers, being defended by Rovers Lucy Nicolai, looks to send the team into attack on Saturday.

Picture: JAMES MCINNES

Second place sewn up as Wests adds players

STEVE MENZIES

THE return of Dani Trindle Price and Courtney Summers to the Alice Springs Netball courts gave Wests Gillen Club the look of a KFC A-grade premiership contender.

Wests took control against Rovers Complete Construction from the start, largely through Trindle-Price's dominance at wing defence, and led 7-1 after five minutes before winning 46-36.

Trindle-Price, 26 today, has

not played netball in Alice Springs since she was a teenager but she has played for Cairns Marlins in the Queensland State League and Night-cliff in Darwin.

"It is good to be back playing in Alice Springs although it is only ever second week due to working at The Granites," she said.

"It was a really good game although the girls have not played with me before.

"Rovers are a strong team and it took a total team effort,

especially when they challenged, to come out in front.

"We had some really good passages of play where we got the ball to do the work."

When that happened there was Jess Kittle waiting in the attack circle to finish the good work of her teammates.

Kittle scored 36 goals as she was constantly given the ball by Iesha Smith, who showed she had lost none of her shooting prowess.

The two Wests shooters had a great battle with Rovers

defenders Teagan McClure and Tracey Meekings.

When Rovers attacked young shooters Molly Southam had to contend with the defence of Margaret Smith, who was back close to her best, and Carlee Warburton.

But the young Rovers duo persevered and kept the scoreboard ticking over to keep Rovers in the game.

Trailing by six goals at half time, Rovers coach Leanne Southam made three changes to the centre court with dy-

amic Lucy Nicolai moving to centre, Shannan King going to wing attack and Trinity Klarerbeek to wing defence.

But the third quarter was a disaster as Rovers only scored five goals to slip further behind.

The win lifts Wests to three games clear in second place ahead of Rovers with seven games to play.

This is despite a horror year when the team has lost Ebony Miller, Monique Chong and Kathleen Axten.