

Pies stay cool over proposals by SQAFA

THE South Queensland Australian Football Association has given Southport the cold shoulder in proposals for the Queensland league's controversial 10-team competition — but the Magpies' feathers aren't ruffled in the slightest.

Southport club president Alan Mackenzie said the SQAFA proposals, which ignore the inclusion of Southport in next year's QAFI competition, were unfeasible and unlikely to be accepted because of the small say SQAFA had in QAFI affairs.

"SQAFA is a minority body, both in playing ability and numbers on the QAFI," Dr Mackenzie said.

"They probably see it (the QAFI) as being a wholly Brisbane competition which it really shouldn't be.

"They call it the Queensland Australian Football League. Their objective should be to promote the best possible football from throughout the State."

A report from a special QAFI investigation committee has recommended that Southport be added to next year's QAFI competition along with a combined team from SQAFA clubs, Sherwood and Mt Gravatt.

Wide open

A decision on whether to add the two teams to the eight which are currently in the QAFI competition was expected to be reached on October 5, but SQAFA has thrown the question wide open with its two fresh proposals.

They are:

● That Sherwood and Mt Gravatt be admitted to the QAFI as separate clubs on a three-year trial basis.

● That the QAFI remain an eight-team competition, with an amalgamation of Sherwood and QAFI club Western Districts, another amalgamation of QAFI clubs Kedron and Wilston-Grange, and

They're unlikely to be accepted

Mt Gravatt being admitted in its own right.

Both suggestions ignore the QAFI recommendation that Southport be included in the competition and SQAFA only off-handedly gives the club consideration by saying that teams from the Gold Coast and other areas might replace Sherwood and Mt Gravatt after three years if the two don't perform well.

SQAFA's bleatings could well fall on deaf ears in the QAFI.

The body has only one vote on the QAFI board of management out of a total of 13 or 14 voices.

Dr Mackenzie said it was unlikely the QAFI would agree to include Sherwood and Mt Gravatt separately because the idea was rejected last year and the year before that.

"So it's not likely they'll change their minds," he said.

"And both Kedron and Wilston-Grange have a lot of capital investment in the game so I doubt they would want to merge."

"Kedron won last year and are in the final this year. I can't see any incentive for them."

"Sherwood and Mt Gravatt have been negotiating for years to get into the QAFI."

"The QAFI has done a feasibility study and decided that because southern Brisbane and the Gold Coast are such rapid-growth areas, a club could be centred at Mt Gravatt and another could be centred on the Gold Coast."

"But SQAFA has suggested that they just put Sherwood and Mt Gravatt straight in."

"I don't think they'll do that," Dr Mackenzie said.

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