

# BLUES' COLOURS SHOWED UP IN THE LAST 15 MINUTES

COOLANGATTA finished strongly in the last 15 minutes to win their first grand final before a huge crowd of Aussie Rules supporters at Salk Oval, Currumbin, on Sunday.

Southport made a brave bid for victory after a slow start and delighted their army of supporters when they levelled the scores with two quick goals in the final term.

However, it was the staid, more purposeful Blues who prevailed when they repulsed the strong challenge of the Magpies to go away to a great win.

Coolangatta's first premiership ended a wonderful run of three flags in a row to the Magpies.

The jubilant Blues, joined by their exultant supporters on the ground for the presentation of the premiership cup, figured in unforgettable scenes of elation with their triumphant players before they trotted off on a lap of honour with the 1978 premiership cup held aloft.

## Deserved

Much of the game was played in light rain which made the ball greasy and difficult to handle and also brought the small, clever players into the game.

The season's honours and the flag were deservedly won by the Blues, but much admiration was earned by Southport for the dogged way they contested throughout.

Southport half-forward, Ken Clark, although hampered by an injured knee, played well and posted his 100th goal for the season during the third quarter. A great effort.

An early sensation was the selection of Zane Taylor for the Magpies. He was considered extremely doubtful following a thigh injury in last week's preliminary



A WELL-deserved drink for Southport Magpies' man-of-the-match, centre man, Zane Taylor, following Sunday's Australian Rules grand final clash with the Coolangatta Blues at Salk Oval. Taylor is a Queensland Australian Rules representative.

final, but the champion Southport defender played a great game and showed little sign of his injury.

## Chances

A stiff easterly blew across the ground for the opening of the grand final.

The Blues were getting plenty of chances from a winning centreline where John Nierdie and Steve Law were prominent and Leon Tucker looked in great form with two early goals.

Zane Taylor marked safely three times to stop Coolangatta attacks, but the Magpies' forwards could make little impression on the strong defence of the Blues.

The Pies were looking for Bill Ryan at goalkick but the big forward was being closely guarded by a swarm of defenders whenever the ball was forwarded.

Neither side was gaining any significant advantage from the ruck duels but the Coolangatta rovers were quick to pounce on the loose ball and the Blues' handball was opening up the play.

Steve Allen and Taylor were having a great go on the 'Blues' half-forward line.

Allen looked sharp and dangerous but Taylor was keeping a close watch on the Coolangatta forward.

The Magpies were contesting fiercely but couldn't score goals. Several chances went begging under pressure from the Coolangatta defence and only behinds were scored.

The Blues led comfortably at quarter time and looked ominously strong despite the Magpies' determined play.

## Hard clashes

The pace was a cracker and the clashes hard but fair as players sought the ball fearlessly.

The Magpies were now matching the Blues' speed and their determination had upset the rhythm of their smooth teamwork.

Robert Simpson was going great guns on a flank and the Magpies hopes rose when Bill Ryan goaled twice.

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