



AmaTuks at TuksSport's Myth Day. Photo: Shaun Sproule.

AmaTuks season review

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This season has been a challenging one for AmaTuks. Inconsistent performances have seen them drop to 9th on the log in the National First Division. Out of 21 games, AmaTuks have won eight, drawn five and lost eight, which highlights their middle table position. This season AmaTuks have conceded more goals than they've scored, which seems to point to weaknesses in the defence that have hindered them.

The team looked promising when they handed log leaders, Thanda Royal Zulu, their only defeat of the season on 25 February. However, since then they have lost 3-2 to Real Kings and most recently 2-0 to Mbombela United, both teams being below them on the log. In their game against United, AmaTuks failed to take their chances as at least three attempts hit the frame of the goal rather than the back of the net.

Former Bafana Bafana striker and AmaTuks coach, Shaun Bartlett, said that despite last year's disappointing season, the team is different and so is the vision. He explained, "For me there is a different energy and desire and I'm hoping that we achieve our goal, which is being back in the PSL where this university belongs because we need to compete at the highest level and elite football for us is PSL".

In order for the team to get back into the PSL, they would have to drastically improve their performances for the remainder of the season. Currently there is a 15-point gap between AmaTuks and log leaders, Thanda Royal Zulu. In order for AmaTuks to close this gap, they would need to string together a succession of positive results and hope that Thanda Royal Zulu drop some points.

Despite Thanda Royal Zulu's dominance, there is only a five-point gap between Black Leopards in second position and AmaTuks in ninth. This should encourage AmaTuks because it leaves the possibility of promotion firmly on the table, provided they improve their performances. The team's two top scorers, Ryan Chapman and Anthony Gordinho, will have to assume even more responsibility if the team is going to improve their position on the log. Chapman and Gordinho have scored seven goals between them and will be looking for some assistance from the rest of the team.

Bartlett said that the team's focus is on "mental strength" and that there needs to be a holistic approach to football: "It's not just producing better footballers, but better men". Fans will be hoping that some of this mental strength will translate on the pitch. The team's next three fixtures are against Royal Eagles and Santos.

