



Thanda back in the big league

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BIG-TIME football will reach Richards Bay for the first time next season after Thanda Royal Zulu confirmed their promotion to the Absa Premiership with a 2-1 home victory over Stellenbosch FC at the Umhlatuze Sports Complex yesterday.

Goals from Khotso Malope and Michael Gumede took Thanda out of reach of second-placed Black Leopards in the standings. With three rounds left to play, Amabhushi are 13 points clear and cannot be overhauled by the Limpopo outfit.

Cape side Stellenbosch dropped to third after Leopards drew their game goalless away to Royal Eagles in Pietermaritzburg. Stellenbosch's loss ended their chance of compet-

Results & Standings

Thanda Royal Zulu 2 Stellenbosch 1
 Mthatha Bucks 0 Pretoria University 0
 Santos 1 Jomo Cosmos 1
 Royal Eagles 0 Black Leopards 0
 Magesi 1 Cape Town All Stars 0
 Real Kings 1 Witbank Spurs 1
 Mbombela United 3 FC Cape Town 1
 Milano United 1 AmaZulu 0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Thanda Royal	27	15	11	1	46	21	56
Black Leopards	27	12	8	7	39	33	44
Stellenbosch	27	12	7	8	36	27	43
Royal Eagles	27	11	8	8	47	35	41
AmaZulu FC	27	12	5	10	44	34	41
Witbank Spurs	27	11	8	8	36	34	41
Mbombela United	27	11	7	9	39	27	40
Mthatha Bucks	27	8	13	6	35	35	37
Real Kings	27	9	9	9	35	30	36
Jomo Cosmos	26	9	8	9	27	26	35
Pretoria Uni	27	9	6	12	29	39	33
CT All Stars	26	6	11	9	19	26	29
Milano United	27	9	2	16	33	52	29
Magesi	27	7	7	13	27	39	28
FC Cape Town	27	6	10	11	32	45	28
Santos	27	3	10	14	15	36	19

ing for the solitary automatic promotion spot.

Thanda's 15th win of the

season, in which they've lost once, returned them to the PSL following an eight-year absence.

It's a significant turnaround for the coastal unit, who were almost relegated to the third tier of local football last season.

However, the management kept faith with coach Roger Sikhakhane who oversaw an unbeaten run of 16 games, until their defeat at University of Pretoria earlier this year.

All going well it could be four KZN teams in the top flight, if AmaZulu or Royal Eagles, or even both teams, qualify for the play-offs.

However, AmaZulu and Eagles will need Stellenbosch and Leopards to drop further points in order to overtake them over the remaining three rounds.

