

Eagles end winless run with superb goals against brave AmaTuks

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A DOMINANT second half from Royal Eagles saw them score three goals as they beat the University of Pretoria 3-0 in a Nedbank Cup qualifier match at the Sugar Ray Xulu Stadium yesterday.

Superb strikes from Sandile Kubeka, substitutes Joshua Sauls and Mkgothi Thabo were enough to secure the Pietermaritzburg-based side the win and progression into the first round proper of the competition.

The home side were certainly the better team throughout the match,

with striker Nkosivumile Zulu causing a number of problems for Shaun Bartlet's defence in the early exchanges.

Zulu, the 21-year-old Ashdown-born forward, who netted his first goal of the season in Sunday's 2-1 league defeat to Jomo Cosmos in Vosloorus, nearly opened the scoring for the hosts in the 17th minute, but his effort went narrowly wide of Dallyan Hawes' goal.

The next effort on goal only came in the 27th minute, when un-marked David Zulu forced Dallyan Hawes into a fine save with a well-taken volley from close range.

However, the score remained goalless as the sides entered the halftime break. Coach Kosta Papić made changes at the start of the second half, as Dumisani Tau came on for Dillan Solomons while David Zulu replaced Joshua Sauls.

Eagles eventually broke the deadlock in the 69th minute as forward Sauls latched onto a pass from Nkosivumile Zulu before firing past the AmaTuks shotstopper from close range.

The Midlands outfit continued to pile on the pressure as the half went on and doubled their lead seven min-

utes later as Sandile Kubeka found the back of the net. At this stage, the hosts were all over Shaun Bartlet's side, and Thabo Mkgothi netted the third goal in stoppage time.

Eagles managed to see out the closing stages so the score remained 3-0 at the full-time whistle, as they ended their five-game winless run across all competitions. The 16 Absa Premiership clubs automatically qualify for the last round of 32.

The well-funded outfit, Eagles will next be in action on Saturday, as they close their first half of the National

First Division season at home to Ubuntu Cape Town. Kickoff at Harry Gwala Stadium is at 3.30 pm.

LAST NIGHT'S RESULTS:

Jomo Cosmos 1 - 1 Ubuntu Cape Town (Ubuntu won on penalties)

Withank Spurs 1 - 2 Richards Bay FC

Cape Town All Stars 2 - 0 TTM

Mthatha Bucks 2 - 1 Uthongathi FC (won on extra-time)

Royal Eagles 3 - 0 University of Pretoria

Highlands Park 2 - 1 Real Kings (won on extra-time)

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