



# It will be tough, but Eagles have what it takes, says striker Zulu

## NONDUMISO ZAKWE

**STRUGGLING** Royal Eagles head coach Kosta Pasic will have to create a soccer miracle and win the bulk of the remaining National First Division (NFD) games to make the playoffs come the season's end.

But striker Nkosivumile Zulu believes his team can overcome the odds stacked against them.

The Ashdown-born forward, who joined the local club at the beginning of the season, raised his hand for more first-team appearances in future during Sunday's 2-1 defeat to Jomo Cosmos at the Vosloorus Stadium.

Speaking to *The Witness* yesterday, Zulu said he was pleased to cap his first

start with a goal, after making five appearances from the bench, although it was not enough to give them maximum points.

"I'm really happy to have opened my account for the club. The best feeling as a striker is to score a goal.

"So for me it's a weight off my shoulders, but I wish we had won the game," he said.

Now, with 16 games left to play, the Midlands club find themselves in 14th position — 13 points behind Cosmos and Pretoria University who currently occupy the play-offs positions.

Eagles have only won on two occasions this season, with six defeats and the same number of draws. Nonetheless, Zulu is adamant they can still

bridge the gap.

"It's looking very bad for us at the moment, but I think the quality of football that we play is reason for optimism.

"What we need to do is just to remain focused and win our games and not look at what our opponents are doing.

"It will be tough, but we need to keep pushing game by game."

The well-funded club will close the first half of the league season with a home fixture against Ubuntu Cape Town at Harry Gwala Stadium on Saturday.

But before that, Eagles have a tricky visit from an on-form AmaTuks tomorrow afternoon as they start their quest for Nedbank Cup glory.

Kickoff at Sugar Ray Xulu Stadium in Clermont is at 3 pm.

The 16 NFD teams play over these next two days and the eight match winners go through to the last 32, or first round proper, of the national knockout tournament.

### NEDBANK CUP PLAYOFFS FIXTURES:

#### Today

Super Eagles v Black Leopards  
Stellenbosch v Mombela United

#### Tomorrow

Jomo Cosmos v Ubuntu Cape Town  
Witbank Spurs v Richards Bay FC  
Cape Town All Stars v TTM  
Mthatha Bucks v Uthongathi FC  
Royal Eagles v University of Pretoria  
Highlands Park v Real Kings

### STANDINGS

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Highlands Park	14	9	2	3	21	8	29
Jomo Cosmos	14	7	4	3	24	13	25
Pretoria Univ.	14	7	4	3	19	15	25
Mbombela Utd	14	7	2	5	17	16	23
Stellenbosch	14	5	7	2	11	10	22
Real Kings	14	5	6	3	15	10	21
TTM	14	5	4	5	13	20	19
Witbank Spurs	14	3	9	2	15	13	18
Black Leopards	14	4	6	4	11	10	18
CT All Stars	14	5	3	6	11	12	18
Uthongathi	14	3	7	4	10	11	16
Super Eagles	14	4	4	6	11	16	16
Mthatha Bucks	14	3	4	7	13	21	13
Royal Eagles	14	2	6	6	17	21	12
Ubuntu CT	14	1	7	6	11	15	10
Richards Bay	14	1	7	6	8	16	10

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