



Déjà vu in Final Round

It was déjà vu for the Mission Queensland Firebirds whose finals hopes were dashed by a formidable Fever in Perth today.

It was standing room only at Challenge Stadium and the Firebirds, who had their season on the line faced a team with nothing to lose.

From the first whistle, the Fever came out strong, quickly putting five points on the board, before the Firebirds could get one.

The Firebirds soon started contesting the ball and got their form back, stemming the flow of the Fever, but it wasn't enough to take the lead and they ended the first quarter down four goals at 17-13.

In the second quarter, it was a different Firebirds team with strong plays across the court, which meant they easily snatched the lead from the Fever.

The Firebirds defensive pressure and outstanding shooting from Romelda Aiken and Natalie Medhust helped change the game.

On a mission to make the finals, it was the same team who smashed records at home against the Tactix last week and the Firebirds ended the first half up two goals, 32-30.

Heading into the third quarter and a number of changes to players reinvigorated the Fever and they were ready to cause trouble for the Firebirds, whose line-up stayed the same.

In the circle Laura Geitz struggled against the height of Caitlin Bassett who was on form with her shooting, while Leah Shoard provided a challenge for Amy Steel.

With nothing to lose, the Fever quickly took advantage of the Firebirds nerves and snatched the lead away, ending the third quarter four goals up.

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The pressure was on in the fourth quarter for the Firebirds, who despite fighting valiantly, could not turn their passion into goals.

The Fever kept the pressure on and took the lead to 10, then slowed down the game to prevent the fire from igniting in the Firebirds. The final score was 67-59.

It was a season-ending game for the Firebirds, who will finish the 2010 season in the same place as 2009, fifth and just outside the elusive final four.

On a positive note, Mission Queensland Firebird, Amy Steel was announced as the final nominee in the inaugural MARS Red Best Young Player Award.

She is just one of five nominees for the award, with the winner to be announced at the ANZ Championship Grand Final.

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