

Teachers eye semis

Teachers-Uni could sew up the fourth Illawarra rugby union semi-final berth today with a victory against Waratahs at Teachers' College Oval.



● VINCE FESTER

● By TIM MULLINS

But they would have to rely on competition leaders Vikings to down Tech College at Vikings Rugby Field — with that a far from forgone conclusion.

There are four games to go, including today's.

Vikings lead with 31, followed by Goulburn on 29, Kiama 26 and Teachers-Uni 24.

Tech are next on 22 with Camden on 20.

Well out of the running are Shoalhaven on 15, Shamrocks and Port Kembla 13, Waratahs 10, Weerona 8 and Bowral 5.

In other games today, Port Kembla plays Shamrocks at King George V Oval, Bowral meet Kiama at Erridge Park, Goulburn play Shoalhaven in Goulburn and Weerona tackle Camden at Wiseman Park.

Teachers-Uni have made just one change to the side which ground out a 6-0 win against Camden at Teachers College Oval last Saturday.

No 8 forward Paul Wright is out and John Searle comes back into the side.

Chance to tie up fourth spot

Searle is no stranger to firsts, having taken club man of the match points for the college side in their win against Goulburn.

Winger Brad Sewell is still sidelined with a broken hand, but his spot is being well-filled by former Thirroul league player David Braithwaite.

Teachers-Uni coach John Patterson hopes to open a four-point gap between them and fifth-placed Tech College after today's round.

"We're not taking Waratahs lightly, especially after their recent good form," he said.

"But if Vikings do their stuff and we play to ability, we should cement that semi-final place."

The students haven't made the semi finals since that 1978 season.

Waratahs have made one change to the side which beat Port Kembla last week. Gene Ross comes back as fullback in place of Mick Greenhalgh.

Inside centre Rob Reynolds is in some doubt, and if he pulls out today, Kevin Everingham will replace him.

The 'Tahs are looking for a win to celebrate at their annual ball tonight.

The Tech College outfit which went down 10-0 to Goulburn last week is unchanged for the tilt with Vikings, who accounted for Shoalhaven last game.

Tech College won the first round battle with the Blues on a windswept Tech College oval and are looking to make it two from two to keep alive their final four hopes.

Goulburn will have almost a second grade back-line taking the field against Shoalhaven, with five-eighth Vince Fester a late withdrawal with hamstring worries, a legacy of last week's match against Tech.

Centre Paul Southwell is out because of the Wally selection trials.

Gary Brimms will move from the wing to centre to cover for Southwell with Phil Searl the new winger.

Centre Mark Coleman moves from centre to five-eighth and second centre Barry Fitzgibbon is promoted.

Goulburn have dropped breakaway Willie Watt for not training and if he does play today against his old club Shoalhaven, it'll be in seconds.

There also is some doubt over hooker Luke Condylis' availability, following the death of his mother during the week.