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Tigers lose key defender

Swan out as Tigers battle late injury concerns

By Andrew Johnston
■ AUSSIE RULES

AFTER enjoying a standout season that saw him earn NSW/ACT representative selection, gun Queanbeyan defender Andrew Swan had looked set to play a major role in the Tigers title charge.

Instead, the 19-year-old will be watching on

from the sidelines on grand final day after succumbing to a debilitating knee injury that could see him ruled out of the game for up to 12 months.

Swan's troubles began after suffering what had appeared to be a relatively innocuous knock in Queanbeyan's final regular round match against Tuggeranong last month.

After sitting out Queanbeyan's two semi-final matches, the Tigers youngster had been hopeful of returning to the field this weekend before MRI scans on Monday revealed Swan had suffered a ruptured anterior cruciate ligament.

Swan's loss is a blow Queanbeyan can ill-afford with the teenager one of the Tigers best in

the club's remarkable rise from the NEAFL basement to premiership contention.

It's also a heartbreaking blow for Swan whose 2011 season was cruelled after tearing the posterior cruciate ligament in his opposite knee midway through last year.

"I was absolutely devastated when I found

out," he said. "When [the physio] rang me I thought he'd be calling to give me some good news so it was pretty heartbreaking.

"To go the whole season without a bit of strapping and then have something like that happen in the third quarter of the last game of the season sucks really but what can you do?"

And Swan says he'll still be on hand to do his part in helping lift the Tigers' title hopes when they take on Sydney at Manuka Oval on Sunday.

"It probably won't be the best feeling but I'll still be there helping the boys out

wherever I can," he said. "I was down at training this week so I'm still as much a part of the team as anyone else and that's how I'm looking at it."

The Tigers have yet to confirm who will fill Swan's role in the grand final with the defender just one of a number of injury concerns being managed by the Queanbeyan coaching staff.

Paul Franchi, Steve Jolliffe and Toby Conroy all pulled up sore following the Tigers win over Eastlake last weekend and were due to be assessed at training last night.

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Queanbeyan Tigers defender Andrew Swan (left) has been ruled out of this weekend's NEAFL grand final with a knee injury. Photo: Ben Southall



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