

## Leo Joyce

..... was born at Peak Hill in the central west of NSW, but came with his family to the town of Young as an adolescent. He played his junior rugby league at Young and made an impression playing for the Young team and making his first appearance in the Maher Cup in 1925. His football prowess was noticed by other Group teams, and in 1926, and he was offered a position in the town of Griffith which ultimately was not taken up as he played again for Young the following season.

Leo (Curly) Joyce has left Young to take up a position at Griffith obtained for him by that well-known sportsman, Mr. Joe. Gleeson. He will be a distinct loss to the Young Football Club, for which he has played great football, earning the eulogiums of some of the best judges of the game.

Gundagai Independent 23 August 1926

Up until the end of 1927, Leo Joyce had played six Maher Cup matches with Young, and no doubt innumerable Group matches against other towns in the greater district. Maher Cup Football had been played since 1920 but it wasn't until 1925 that Young challenged for the Cup. Leo Joyce played in the second ever Young team that played Maher Cup football, while Wests Joe Mansted, Wests player #228, came from Wests in 1924 to captain the first ever Young team to challenge for the Maher Cup in 1925.

In 1928, Leo Joyce trialled with Wests and was immediately selected to play in First Grade against Newtown in the opening round of the competition. He played three games in First Grade in the early part of the season.

L. Joyce, who played great football at the opening of the season, but fell away later, is a tower of strength to Wests' reserves. Is playing in fine form now, and was instrumental in several of Wests' tries.

The Sun 2 July 1928

In 1929 he played just the one Third Grade game. It is not clear why he did not play much football while with Wests, and no record has been found of him playing elsewhere at that time. In his two seasons with Wests, Leo Joyce played three First Grade, three Reserve Grade and one Third Grade games. In the seven matches he played with Wests, he scored six tries for a tally of eighteen points.

In 1930, Leo returned to Young and took up where he had left off at the end of 1927. He was a regular for the Young team, playing a further twelve Maher Cup matches between 1930 and 1933 and many more local matches.



**Young Maher Cup Team 1930**

L to R: "Jockey" Kelly, Ken Rintoul, "Curly" McWhinney, Bill Douglas, Reg Bladwell, Roy Keogh, Harold Hoban, Sep Watt, Jack O'Malley, Fred Quinlivan, Micky Flynn, "Dummy" Punt, Leo "Curly" Joyce

Leo Joyce a Barman by occupation from the early 1930's until the Second World War, resided in a series of hotels. He lived at the Empire Hotel at Young in 1932-33. The Empire Hotel provided more than accommodation and employment, when in February 1934 the Young Chronicle announced Leo's upcoming nuptials. The bride to be was Miss Gladys Smith, step daughter of the Empire's publican, W.H. Glenfield.

At St. Mary's Church at 3.30 p.m. to-morrow the popular footballer, Mr. Leo ("Curly") Joyce, will enter the ranks of the benedicts. The bride will be Miss Gladys Smith, the youngest daughter of Mrs. Glenfield, and step-daughter of Mr. W. H. Glenfield, the well known and genial host of the Empire Hotel.

Young Chronicle 6 February 1934

While Leo's playing days with Young and Maher Cup football appeared to be behind him, he had one more season left in him. Norman Johnson, Wests player #278, who was a teacher, had been transferred to the western slopes town of Kandos and took up a player/coach role with the Kandos Rugby League team in 1933 and 1934.

In 1934 Kandos assembled a very strong team with players such as Les Midson, Wests player #300, and Tom Ezart, a lower grade Wests player at that time, who would be a future Canterbury player and Australian Selector. Leo Joyce also joined Norman Johnson's Kandos team. It is not known exactly why he went to Kandos, but it may have been Norman Johnson's influence or perhaps the opportunity for work, as Leo and his new wife, Gladys were living at the Kandos Hotel in 1934.



#### Kandos Rugby League Football Club 1934

**Back:** L Smith, A Guthrie, J Montgomery, C Jones (Committee), D Gillespie, J Lynch, R Kupke

**Standing:** V Selig (Ref), R Gilchrist, S Heaps, W Rutledge, E Robinson (Solicitor), R Dowsett, G Garland, T Kerwin, A Guthrie (Train)

**Sitting:** L Joyce, R Burgess, J Junge (Pres), E Channon, C Lewis (Patron), L Midson, A Rutledge

**Front:** J C McLaren (Treasurer) F Beusnel (C), N Johnson (Coach), J Smith (Mascot), T Ezart, C Junge (Secretary)

Leo returned to Sydney in 1935 and for a number of years resided at the Concord Hotel, Concord, in Wests heart land. After the Second World War he moved to the Sydney suburb of Greenacre before returning to his home town of Young towards the end of his life. In 1968 he was living at the St Joseph's Home at Young.

Leo Joyce died at Young, NSW in May 1971 and his memorial is at Young Cemetery.