



1934 Round 1 Wednesday 25th April Leichhardt Oval



Western Suburbs 18

def.

Balmain 5

Frank McMILLAN (c)
 Vince SHEEHAN
 Stan TANCRED
 Alan BRADY
 Alan RIDLEY
 Vic HEY
 Les MEAD
 Max GRAY
 Charlie CORNWELL
 Jack McCONNELL
 Ray HANCOCK
 Bob LINDFIELD
 Alan BLAKE

Fullback
Wing
Centre
Centre
Wing
Five-eighth
Half
Lock
Second Row
Second Row
Front Row
Hooker
Front Row

Charlie RICHARDS
 Harold MATTHEWS
 Syd CHRISTENSEN (c)
 Sid GOODWIN
 George FRANKLAND
 Tommy GRAHAME
 Len RUE
 Bill BALLARD
 Bill WILLIAMS
 Mal FALLON
 Michael PACE
 George BISHOP
 Bill JOHNSON

Tries

Stan TANCRED
 Les MEAD
 Vic HEY
 Charlie CORNWELL

Bill JOHNSON

Goals

Les MEAD (3)

Syd CHRISTENSEN (1)

Match Description

Balmain: Full-back: C Richards; three-quarters: G Frankland, S Goodwin, S Christensen (capt), H Matthews; halves: T Grahame, L Rue; forwards: W Ballard, M Fallon, Williams, M Pace, G Bishop, W Johnson
Western Suburbs: Full-back: F McMillan (capt); three-quarters: A Ridley, S Tancred, A Brady, V Sheehan; halves: V Hey, L Mead; forwards: M Gray, C Cornwell, J McConnell, R Hancock, R Lindfield, A Blake **Referee: H Irvine (Rugby League News 5th May 1934)**

With rain falling almost continuously the ground heavy and the ball greasy, the game, which promised to be a brilliant one, was spoiled but it was not wholly wet weather tactics that won for Western Suburbs. The presence of the Kangaroo members of the team was a most important factor. Hey and Mead, the half backs, were the outstanding players. They did many clever things and made brilliant moves while other players were having difficulty in keeping their feet. Each scored a fine try, that by Hey being a superb piece of work Hey received the ball from Ridley about 30 yards from Balmain's line. With Sheehan in support, the five eighth dashed towards the corner flag, then side-stepped and cut in towards the centre, beating eight men before touching down between the posts. This score had followed Mead's try, the half back having intercepted Richard's pass near Balmain's 25 yards, had shown surprising speed to score easily and Balmain was down 10 points to nil after having had the better of the play territorially. Towards the end of the first half Balmain pressed hotly and Johnson followed a kick diving across the line for a try, Christenson's goal making the scores 10 points to 5 in favour of West at half time.

In the second half Balmain at times had Western Suburbs defending strenuously but solid tackling prevented a further score by the home team while Western Suburbs added two tries, Mead making an opening for Cornwell to score and Tancred shining in an individual effort when he picked up a rolling ball near Balmain's 25 yards and sped across. Both teams suffered a depletion in their ranks in the second half. The Western Suburbs' forward Gray who replaced Sponberg suffered an injured leg and was forced to leave the field and Goodwin (Balmain) and Hancock (Western Suburbs) were sent off the field by referee Irvine who kept strict control throughout. In the concluding stages Balmain had Hey subdued and Mead was seen in some fine defensive play, saving his side on many occasions. McMillan showed to advantage early but made some mistakes in the second half and Richards for Balmain was his equal on the day. Brady in the centre did not get many chances but figured in one fine dash and Ridley had a perfect understanding with Mead. .. There was an excellent crowd. Scorers for Western Suburbs (Mead Hey Cornwell and Tancred tries Mead converted three; for Balmain Johnson a try converted by Christenson. **(The Sydney Morning Herald 26th April 1934)**

Notes: There were significant changes for this opening game of the season. Bill Brogan and Cecil Rhodes had both retired so the front row needed to be replaced, although Bob Lindfield was backing up again. Cliff Pearce had an injured leg and would miss this season. On the other hand, the Kangaroos: Ridley, Mead and Hey, were back and all had been stars on the Kangaroo tour. Max Gray made his debut, replacing Sponberg, but was forced to leave the field with an injured leg. At that stage Balmain had 12 men to 11, with Sid Goodwin for Balmain and Ray Hancock for Wests having been sent off early in the second half. Hancock played the following week so he wasn't suspended. This match marked the official opening of Leichhardt Oval as Balmain's home ground after receiving a £5000 revamp. Even though it was raining and the ground was muddy (ambulance men had to remove mud from players' eyes), the play was quite open and Wests scored a couple of brilliant tries. Vic Hey showed his class, running across field, and swerving to beat eight men and score under the posts. Les Mead also foreshadowed his great season to come with a very dominant display.