



1961 Round 15 Saturday 29th July Cricket Ground



Balmain 13

Bob BARRETT
 Ron MACK
 Bill BISCHOFF
 Gilbert MacDOUGALL
 Bob MARA
 Alan MASON
 Laurie FAGAN
 Peter PROVAN
 Rex PERCY
 Bob BOLAND
 Don AMOS
 Bede GOFF (c)
 Harry RAVEN

def.

Western Suburbs 11

Fred NORDEN
 Dave BARSLEY
 Peter DIMOND
 Bill BROWN
 John MOWBRAY
 Roger BUTTENSCHAW
 Keith HOLMAN
 Kevin SMYTH
 Kel O'SHEA
 John HAYES
 Denis MEANEY
 Noel KELLY
 Nev CHARLTON (c)



Tries Bill BISCHOFF
 Ron MACK
 Bob MARA

John HAYES

Goals Rex PERCY (2)

Keith HOLMAN (4)

Match Description

Balmain: Full-back: R Barrett; three-quarters: R Mack, W Bischoff, G McDougall, R Mara; five-eighth: A Mason; half: L Fagan; forwards: P Provan, R Percy, R Boland, D Amos, B Goff (c), H Raven

Western Suburbs: Full-back: F Norden; three-quarters: D Barsley, W Brown, P Dimond, J Mowbray; five-eighth: R Buttenschaw; half: K Holman; forwards: K Smyth, J Hayes, K O'Shea, D Meaney, N Kelly, N Charlton **Referee: L Bruyeres (As per program Rugby League News 29-30th July 1961 + Sun/Mirror validation 29th July 1961)**

Balmain Tigers yesterday clawed their way to a last-minute, hysterical 13-points to 11 victory over the premierships leaders Western Suburbs in the main Rugby League match at the Sydney Cricket Ground. As winger Bob Mara hurtled through space for almost 10 yards to touch down for the winning try, the time-keeper's hand held the bell to toll the end of the mighty effort. Mara almost went into orbit to score the try. The crowd, friend and foe alike, went home in a delirium of delight. It was the most dramatic finish to a Rugby League match on the SCG for years. Balmain held the lead right until eight minutes before full-time. Holman kicked a penalty goal to put Wests ahead 11-10. It looked at this stage that Wests were home and hosed. But three minutes later the Tigers came back with a rousing raid on Wests' line. They catapulted the ball from one side of the field to the other, and fought it out tooth and nail 10 yards from the line. As time ran out only a mighty effort could cause them to snatch the burning brand from the fire. It came, WITH ONE MINUTE TO GO! Laurie Fagan, Balmain's tigerish half-back, saw a chance in a million. He veered towards the left wing where Bobby Mara was licking lips in anticipation. Out the ball came. Bill Bischoff shot through and moved smartly towards Mara. He threw a long pass and the winger flew 15 yards for the line. He dived over in the corner to the maddening applause of the Balmain supporters. The Tigers hugged one another; the crowd was intoxicated with excitement. Both teams were wildly acclaimed as they left the field. Wests were strangely lethargic. ... They were sluggish in their movements; their feet seemed water-logged. Wests could not possibly win the premiership on the bargain-basement football they displayed yesterday in the earlier stages. But their second-half onslaught redeemed them. Balmain were as virile as cubs from kick-off to full-time. They deserved their victory, even if they almost lost it through a stupid penalty in front of goal, 40 yards out. ... For Western Suburbs, Kel O'Shea stood out like a lonely little petunia in an onion patch. Balmain took the lead 13 minutes after the kick-off. Big Rex Percy sent a short pass to winger Ron Mack, who side-stepped four opponents. Mack sent Bischoff in for a try which Percy converted with a fine kick from the sideline. A penalty goal by Holman reduced the lead to 5-2. Then came an incredible try by Balmain after 24 minutes. McDougall side-stepped half a dozen players, and kicked through when he came to full-back Norden. Winger Barsley followed through to save the try, but missed the bounce of the ball over the line. Mack, who had backed up McDougall, fell on it to score. Balmain 10-2. Ten minutes after the resumption, Wests reduced the lead after a full-blooded offensive. It was their first real sign of life. The ball was tossed around until; from a dummy-half position, Hayes flummoxed the opposition by running right through to score. Balmain 10-7. A penalty goal by Holman reduced the lead to 10-9. It was then the joy-bells began to ring for Wests. The football became thrilling, with O'Shea and Charlton in the thick of every foray for the line. It ended as previously described. Eight minutes before the bell, Holman kicked the penalty goal that put Wests ahead for the first time in the game. .. **(Sunday Mirror 30th July 1961)**

Notes: This match was literally lost in the last minute when Bob Mara launched himself to score in the corner. In a mistake-ridden match, Kel O'Shea was the best player on the field, while John Mowbray 'bombed' a certain try. John Hayes' try was from a dashing run from dummy-half. It was a thrilling match but a critical loss for Wests in the race for the minor premiership.