



1954 Round 4 Saturday 17th April Cricket Ground



South Sydney 31

def.

Western Suburbs 15

Clive CHURCHILL
 Ian MOIR
 Joe RENSHAW
 Kevin WOOLFE
 Les BRENNAN
 Johnny DOUGHERTY
 Ray MASON
 Les COWIE
 Jack RAYNER (c)
 Bernie PURCELL
 Denis DONOGHUE
 Ernie HAMMERTON
 Jim RICHARDS

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

George BAIN
 John THOMPSON
 Jack FITZGERALD
 Dev DINES (c)
 Barry OWEN
 Don GRAHAM
 Bob TUCKER
 Nev CHARLTON
 Doug SMITH
 Bill OWENS
 Max CALDWELL
 Jim FLEMING
 Eddie HOOPER



Tries

Les BRENNAN (3)
 Johnny DOUGHERTY
 Ian MOIR
 Jack RAYNER
 Kevin WOOLFE

Barry OWEN (2)
 Nev CHARLTON

Goals

Bernie PURCELL (5)

George BAIN (3)

Match Description

South Sydney: Full-back: C Churchill; three-quarters: I Moir, J Renshaw, K Woolfe, L Brennan; five-eighth: J Dougherty; half: R Mason; forwards: L Cowie, B Purcell, J Rayner (capt), J Richards, E Hammerton, D Donoghue

Western Suburbs: Full-back: G Bain; three-quarters: J Thompson, J Fitzgerald, D Dines, B Owen; five-eighth: D Graham; half: R Tucker; forwards: N Charlton, D Smith, W Owens, M Caldwell, J Fleming, E Hooper **Referee: A Oxford (The Daily Mirror 17th April 1954)**

South Sydney Rugby League team, after a sloppy display in the first half, cake-walked through a weakened Western Suburbs, and won by 31 points to 15 at the S.C.G. yesterday. South Sydney and Newtown still share the competition lead, each with three wins and their drawn game. Wests, without key players half-back Keith Holman (injured) and hooker Hec Farrell (suspended), did well to hold South to a one-point lead, 8-7, in the first half. Souths, however, clapped on 23 points (five tries) in the first 23 minutes of the second half. Souths did not add to the score; Wests rallied and added two tries. But South Sydney certainly is not unbeatable and it might have been a good thing for Souths if Newtown had won the drawn game the previous Saturday. There were sad blemishes in South's display yesterday, particularly by the back division. The backs had another feast from the scrums and maybe they are being too well fed with the ball. Some of the players appeared casual at times—they seemed to lack incentive in the first half. The wingers, Les Brennan (three) and Ian Moir (one), scored four of the team's seven tries; yet several over-laps were wasted through poor work by inside men. There was much loose passing and bad handling. Western Suburbs sorely missed experienced performers Holman and Farrell. Wests, after battling along well, had shoddy moments, and a lack of understanding among the backs cost tries. South, after winning the first-half scrums 17-5, won 10 of the first 11 scrums in the second half. Many of the crowd of 20,733 began leaving the ground late in the second half as Wests' position became hopeless, and they missed that team's late rally. Clive Churchill showed his touch of class as he tried hard to liven up the play. He did some things in the first half that would have been risky against alert opposition - long throws to the outside backs in defence. But he came out of it safely and in the second half played very well, several times beating the screen of forwards. Five-eighth Jack Dougherty was South's brightest attacking agent among the inside backs, but centre Kevin Woolfe began to thrust in the second half when he realised that Wests' hammered defence had weakened. Dougherty did some clever switching of the point of attack. He started Wests' collapse in the second spell, when he came round the "blind" side of a scrum, short-kicked over the defence, was first to the ball, and scored. Veteran Jack Rayner, "iron man" of the 1948-9 Kangaroos, set a grand example of solid, untiring play. He did a lot of the covering work, and his tackling was thorough. He was in position for the final pass after a break-through by Woolfe. Rayner holds his form remarkably well. Full-back George Bain was outstanding for Wests. His general play was first class and he tried hard to get his team going in attack. Twice he looked on despairingly as moves started by him ended with a knock-on and the goal-line open. Youthful five-eighth Graham showed some promise. The wingers had few chances, but Barry Owen, on the left flank, finished off two combined rushes with tries. Jack Thompson, on the other wing, came inside after a scrum in the second half and sent hard-working lock forward Nev Charlton in for a try. Wests' forwards did a lot of "smothering" work in close defence. **(The Sun-Herald 18th April 1954)**

Notes: Keith Holman was a late withdrawal for this game with a badly bruised elbow. His replacement, Bob Tucker, from Reserves, struggled with the First Grade level. Wests played strongly in the first half and were down 8-7 at half-time but wilted badly in the second half. Even so, George Bain had an outstanding game and Barry Owen continued his good form, scoring two tries. John Thompson also played well on the other wing.