



1949 Round 5 Saturday 7th May Cricket Ground



Balmain 10

Jack DAVIS
 Robert LULHAM
 Fred BROWN
 Harold GWYER
 Leo NOSWORTHY
 Tom LAWLER
 Jack McCULLOUGH
 John CAMPBELL
 Fred De BELIN (c)
 Sid RYAN
 Jim THOMSON
 Ken FOGARTY
 Jack SPENCER

def.

Western Suburbs 8

Bill KEATO
 George BAIN
 Jack LACKEY
 Jack WOODS
 Col HUDSON
 Eric BENNETT (c)
 Keith HOLMAN
 Peter McLEAN
 Don MILTON
 Kevin HANSEN
 Bill RAWLINSON
 Alan HORNERY
 Bill HORDER



Tries Leo NOSWORTHY
 Jack SPENCER

Goals Jack DAVIS (2) Bill KEATO (4)

Match Description

Western Suburbs: Full-back: W Keato; three-quarters: C Hudson, J Woods, J Lackey, G Bain; five-eighth: E Bennett (capt); half: K Holman; forwards; P McLean, D Milton, K Hansen, W Rawlinson, A Horner, W Horder

Balmain: Full-back: J Davis; three-quarters: R Lulham, L Nosworthy, F Brown, H Gwyer; five-eighth: T Lawler; half: J McCullough; forwards: J Campbell, F De Belin (capt), S Ryan, J Spencer, K Fogarty, J Thompson **Referee: J O'Brien (Rugby League News 14th May 1949)**

Western Suburbs' three-quarter Jack Woods is certain he scored a try which would have given his team victory in the League match at the Cricket Ground yesterday. Balmain beat Wests 10-8 in a game that was always interesting without rising to great heights. Late in the second half Woods, on the end of a chain of passes, ran strongly and trickily before diving for the corner. He claims the, grounded the ball before Lulham's tackle knocked him against the corner post. The touch judge signalled "no try" without hesitation. Balmain captain de Belin, who was close to the incident, and Lulham, both said that Woods grounded the ball outside the dead ball line. Actually, Western Suburbs, although it had almost a 2-1 advantage, in the scrums, rarely looked like scoring. Intermittent showers made the ball slippery, and the high wind made handling difficult. But West backs, even allowing for the conditions, made too many mistakes and there was a lack of thrust inside. Balmain played with a strong southerly in the first half and it looked as if its 8-2 lead at half-time might not be enough. However, West made too many mistakes in the second half and this, coupled with extremely good Balmain defence, made it a tryless half and enabled Balmain to win. When Keato's sound goal-kicking — he scored all West points with goals — put the side in a position to win with only about six minutes to go, Balmain forwards, led by de Belin, took charge and, keeping the play tight, kept Wests defending. De Belin was undoubtedly the bright star of the match. He was in everything. Throughout the match he opened up play cleverly, and it usually took a couple of Wests men to pull him down when he made his dashes. When it looked as if the game might slip away from Balmain it was De Belin who took charge of the forward rushes that extinguished Wests' hopes. He is a superb footballer, right at the top of his form. De Belin got plenty of support from the other forwards, particularly Ryan and Thomson. Kangaroo winger Lulham had a big part in both the Balmain tries. He might have scored the first himself when he received from McCullough, when a movement was reversed. He beat several defenders cleverly and sent Spencer across. Lulham made the second try when he beautifully gathered a rolling ball and sent to McCullough, to Brown, to Nosworthy, the last-named scoring. ... There are few better defenders in Sydney than centre three-quarter Nosworthy, who took some superb tackles. He is no genius in attack but his defensive skill frequently stopped Wests' movements. ... Wests' supporters cannot blame the forwards for the defeat. They won 25 scrums to 14 and generally held their own with the Balmain six. However, there were too many handling errors, and too often the ball went along the line with the players flat-footed and making no ground. The Wests attack probably will be sharpened considerably for the match against Manly next Saturday by the return of Stanmore to the five-eighth position, and Maxwell to the centre. Both said yesterday they would be fit for the game. The attendance was 19,331, a satisfactory total in view of the bleak conditions. **(The Sun 8th May 1949)**

Notes: This was a very hotly contested match, although the quality of play was quite poor due to a southerly gale blowing. Bill Rawlinson made his debut, in for the injured Jim Seery. Alan Horner was again dominant in the scrums but a series of handling errors by the backs negated the possession. Jack Woods was certain he had scored the match-winning try in the last few minutes but he was ruled into touch. Bill Keato also had an attempted goal from half-way which hit the cross-bar so they had their chances. Fred De Belin played such an outstanding game it was thought that he may have dented Kevin Hansen's rep chances, although it appears Hansen played concussed.