



1956 Round 6 Saturday 28th April Leichhardt Oval



Balmain 14

Keith BARNES
 Terry McGOVERN
 Geoff HAWKEY
 Kevin MOSMAN
 Arthur LORIMER
 Bill HARRIS
 Brian STAUNTON (c)
 Gus GRAY
 Ron POTTER
 Jake MOSES
 Maurie GRIFITHS
 Johnny O'BRIEN
 Bob HEANEY

def.

Western Suburbs 11

Noel TREVENA
 Noel HURLEY
 Don MEEHAN
 Ian JOHNSTON
 John THOMPSON
 Darcy HENRY
 Keith HOLMAN
 Kel O'SHEA (c)
 Bill CARSON
 Nev CHARLTON
 Mark PATCH
 Bede GOFF
 Ron WATSON



Tries Maurie GRIFFITHS
 Jake MOSES

Don MEEHAN
 John THOMPSON
 Bede GOFF

Goals Keith BARNES (4)

Keith HOLMAN (1)

Match Description

Balmain: Full-back: K Barnes; three-quarters: T McGovern, G Hawkey, K Mosman, A Lorimer; five-eighth: B Harris; half: B Staunton (c); forwards: G Gray, R Potter, J Moses, B Heaney, J O'Brien, J Moon

Western Suburbs: Full-back: N Trevena; three-quarters: N Hurley, D Meehan, I Johnston, J Thompson; five-eighth: D Henry; half: K Holman; forwards: K O'Shea (c), W Carson, N Charlton, M Patch, B Goff, R Watson **Referee: D Lawler (as per program Rugby League News 28th April 1956 + changes verified in newspaper accounts)**

Balmain Rugby League team maintained its unbeaten record with a narrow win against a depleted Western Suburbs at Leichhardt Oval yesterday. Balmain won 14-11 after having trailed 8-11 at half-time. The game, which was interesting throughout, was watched by a ground record crowd of 13,503 people. This beat the previous ground record of 10,355 established in 1946. Wests, which played for most of the second half with 12 men, may have been unlucky to lose. With a big majority of the ball from the scrums it dominated play for most of the game and scored three tries to two. Wests were handicapped when centre Ian Johnston injured a thigh muscle five minutes after play began. He moved to the wing but was merely a passenger. Wests quickly settled down and were continually on the attack. It gained a 11-2 lead after 25 minutes' play with three good tries from clever passing movements. This lead could have been greater if five-eighth Darcy Henry had not dropped a pass five yards from the Balmain line. After a brilliant movement covering 60 yards, Henry dropped a "sitter" right in the Balmain goalposts. Balmain generally gave a disappointing display during the first half. Its forwards were very loose and its backline appeared disjointed. Its players stood off in defence and allowed Wests to penetrate repeatedly. Only the goal kicking of fullback Keith Barnes kept Balmain to an 8-11 deficit at half-time. Wests lost centre Noel Hurley five minutes after half-time. He was carried from the field with a severe ankle injury. (Sunday Telegraph 29th April 1956)

..... Queenslander, Noel Hurley was shifted from the wing to the centre only to be hurt a few minutes after half-time. He was taken to hospital with concussion. Lock forward Kel O'Shea moved out to take Hurley's place, putting strain on the West's forwards. But despite this Wests played better football. In the first half Wests played its best football of the season and led 11-8. With three tries Wests looked certain to win convincingly. But Balmain's full-back Keith Barnes's four goals from five attempts pegged Wests back. Reinstated winger Jack Thompson scored the first try for Wests after Charlton, Watson and O'Shea had handled. A few minutes later Thompson was tackled a few yards from the line and slipped the ball to Goff, who crossed. Almost immediately after half-time, Hurley was hurt. While he was on the sideline, Balmain second-row forward, Jack Moses, scored after a great 25-yard run. With one man off and another limping on the wing, a lot of defence work was thrown on Wests. In defence, none were better than Charlton, Holman and Patch. Charlton was easily the outstanding player on the field. Apart from his attacking ability, Charlton did a great job in cover defence.

(Sun-Herald 29th April 1956)

Ron Watson cracked a double last weekend. The big hard-working Wests prop found himself a house on Friday and then went out and played the best game of his career against Balmain next day. (Rugby League News 5th May 1956)

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Notes: There were a number of forced changes with Noel Hurley and John Thompson coming in for the injured Smalles and Hills. Hurley was also injured during the match and, with reshuffling going on, the Wests' forwards stood tall, with O'Shea and Charlton leading the charges. Holman and Patch also defended stoutly in a promising effort but it was still another loss in what was supposed to be a promising season.