

Vic Dwyer

..... was not easy to identify as he is recorded as Vince Dwyer in the Rugby League Project, in the Newtown Past Players List, and in the Canterbury Bankstown Past Players List. From that information, it was likely that the player's name was Vincent Dwyer, however a thorough check of NSW Births Deaths and Marriages and electoral rolls for the period, failed to find any likely candidates.

A search of Trove also failed to find any prominent players in the early 1930's with the surname of Dwyer other than E. Dwyer who played for the Parkes Rugby League team with Gordon Pugh (West's #325). Both Pugh and Edward Dwyer came to Sydney to play rugby league in 1935, Pugh with Wests, and ironically Edward Dwyer with Canterbury Bankstown. The following article from Rugby League News refers to a transfer clearance granted to E. Dwyer to play with Canterbury Bankstown.

The following clearances were approved:—B. Donnelly, from South Sydney to Conarenebri; C. Hunt, from Murrurundi to Ashfield United; E. Dwyer and E. Piggott, from Parkes and Forster respectively to Canterbury-Bankstown.

RLN 11 June 1935

However a check of programs in Rugby League News had Edward Dwyer and V. Dwyer playing for Canterbury in mid June. It was evident that the Parkes player, Edward Dwyer, was not V. Dwyer.

It was evident that V. Dwyer was based in Sydney from at least 1929, and given that he had played for Wests, Newtown and Canterbury, it was highly likely that he also lived in that geographic area. A broader search of electoral rolls was undertaken for any male that corresponded with V. Dwyer and from this search, the name of Victor Bede Dwyer emerged.

A search of Ancestry.com.au found a comprehensive family tree which contained information relating to Victor Dwyer's time playing with Wests and Canterbury. It is unknown where the forename of Vince originated.

Vic Dwyer was living at Campsie, NSW when he was graded with Wests in 1927. He played with Wests until 1929, before going to Newtown in the 1930 season. He returned to Wests for a further season in 1932. In his four seasons with Wests, Vic played two First Grade, nineteen Reserve grade and nine Third Grade games. In all grades he scored thirteen tries. During his time at Newtown, Vic played five First Grade games.

Initially it was not clear why Vic Dwyer moved back and forward between Wests and Newtown, but this became more evident when details of his next move emerged. Vic moved to the town of Temora in the central west of NSW in February 1933. He was a Bank Clerk with the C.B.A. Bank and was described in the Cootamundra Herald on 17 February 1933, as a footballer of note, having represented Newtown First Grade in 1930, when he was a centre three-quarter. His occupation with the Bank is a likely explanation as to why he had short stints at both Wests and Newtown.

On 8 April 1933, the Wagga Wagga Express reported that; " 'Hoot' Ryan is to remain in Temora and play with the red and whites this season. The young Hercules is training already, and the fans are well pleased with his style. Another new man who is causing a good impression is V. Dwyer." V. Dwyer was Victor Dwyer, Wests #277. It is not clear how long Vic Dwyer remained in Temora, but it is known that he did return to Sydney mid-year when he married on 3 July 1933, at St Mels Church, Campsie.

With the Canterbury Bankstown Rugby League Club entering the Sydney competition in 1935, Vic Dwyer like a number of other Wests players who lived within the boundaries of the new Club had no choice but to play for Canterbury or not play at all. Vic was selected in the very first Canterbury Bankstown team in April 1935 and played ten First Grade games that season. He was Canterbury's top try scorer in 1935 with a tally of four tries. Vic's final season was 1936 and he once again turned out for Canterbury but did not play First Grade.

Victor Dwyer enlisted with the AIF at the Sydney Town Hall in July 1940 for service in the Second World War. He was posted to the 2/1 Field Regiment and embarked for the Middle East in September 1941 and served in the Suez, returning to Australia in August 1942.



Vic Dwyer 1940

After a brief break he was soon back in action arriving at Port Moresby, New Guinea in September 1942. His time in New Guinea ended when he contracted Scrub Typhus in May 1943, and a month later, in June 1943, he was evacuated on the hospital ship Duntroon, back to Australia. He was back with his unit by August and was promoted to the rank of Bombadier.

Vic was once again posted overseas in June 1945, arriving first at Morotai and then on to North Borneo. He served in that theatre until October 1945 when he was repatriated back to Australia. Vic was discharged from the Army in November 1945.

Vic Dwyer lived all of his adult life in the Sydney suburb of Campsie, and was living there when he died suddenly at Kurnell in April 1968. He is buried at the Rookwood Catholic Cemetery, Rookwood, NSW, Lawn Area 2 Grave 1701.

