

Jack Rosa

..... played rugby league as a junior with the Riverstone Rugby League Club in the early 1920's. He won a gold medal for most improved player while playing with Riverstone in 1922. The Riverstone Historical Society recorded that the player who received the most improved player medal in 1922 was "Dennis Rosa." No player of that name existed. This was a reference to "D." or "Don" Rosa as Jack Rosa was known.

Rugby league was generating increased interest in Sydney's far west just after the First World War. The Windsor Gazette in May 1922, noted that; "Additional teams playing in the 1922 competition included Parramatta East, Clyde, Richmond and Baulkham Hills, with Riverstone fielding a vastly improved team. The magnificent victory by Riverstone over last year's premiers Parramatta North, a team that during the whole of last season and up to last Saturday had remained unbeaten."



Riverstone Rugby League A Reserve Grade 1922

Back L to R: R Bentel (Train), Nathaniel Rosa, S Mangold, S Alcorn, D Kelly (Train), J L Gilbert, R Ward, D Doolan (Pres)

Sitting: A Arnott, P Drayton, W Turner (C), H Drake, J Chalker, W Cornwell (St John's Ambulance)

Front: S Unwin, "George" Patrick Rosa, "Don" John Rosa

By the mid 1920's Jack had moved on and was playing with the nearby Blacktown Rugby League Club from where he was graded with Wests in 1928. He played four Third Grade games with Wests in 1928 and in 1929 he played a total of fifteen games in Reserve and Third Grades.

Jack had his break out year in 1930 when Wests won its first premiership. He made his First Grade debut in round eight of 1930 and remained a fixture in the First Grade team for the remainder of the season. He played through the finals series and ultimately the successful Grand Final challenge against St George.

An article in the Windsor Gazette on 3 October 1930, noted Jack Rosa's "fame" in playing First Grade with Wests. The newspaper referred to him as "Don" which is what he was known as in the town of Riverstone.

Mr. D. Rosa, son of Mr. F. Rosa, of Riverstone, rose to fame in the Rugby League match between Western Suburbs and St. George on Saturday. Don received encouraging notices in the city Press.

The Daily Pictorial on 22 September 1930 wrote the following about Jack Rosa; "There is a tendency to regard him as just a solid type, honest, but not scintillating. In estimating his ability and prospects, one must keep this in mind. Rosa is doing what is expected of him. (Jim) Craig, Wests captain and coach, works his scrum in his own peculiar way. Rosa at five-eighth works with his captain with intelligent understanding. A greater individualist would not suit Craig, and Rosa might quite conceivably display more dash with a nippier half. Certain it is that he is a studious player, who employs brains and muscles in their right places. He was called up from the District team and has been making steady progress ever since."

Jack played one more season in First Grade but remained with Wests until 1933. He played fifteen First Grade, thirty four Reserve Grade, and twelve Third Grade games. His one representative appearance was in 1931 when he was selected to play for City Seconds against Country Seconds.

There is no record of Jack Rosa playing rugby league beyond 1933. He Received an Honor Cap at Wests Annual General Meeting in March 1933 for playing 50 or more competition matches with Wests.

While playing with Wests Jack Rosa moved to the suburb of Granville where he lived most of his life. Jack Rosa died in the Sydney suburb of Merrylands in July 1967. His memorial is at Rookwood Cemetery, Rookwood, NSW, Section Lawn, Row 3.

