



1978 Round 11 Sunday 4th June Lidcombe Oval



Western Suburbs 20

def.

Cronulla-Sutherland 2



John DORAHY
Don MOSELEY
Wayne SMITH
Ron GITEAU
Buddy CAIN
Peter ROWLES
Tom RAUDONIKIS (c)
Graeme O'GRADY
Steve BLYTH
Trevor REARDON
John DONNELLY
Shane DAY
Bruce GIBBS

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

Mick MULLANE
Rick BOURKE
Steve ROGERS
Dave CHAMBERLIN
Steve EDMONDS
Barry ANDREWS
Steve HANSARD
John GLOSSOP
Greg PIERCE (c)
Brendan NEVILLE
Gary STARES
John McMARTIN
Paul KHAN

Tries Tom RAUDONIKIS
Graeme O'GRADY

Goals Peter ROWLES (7) Barry ANDREWS (1)

Match Description

Cronulla-Sutherland: Full-back: M Mullane; three-quarters: R Bourke, S Rogers, D Chamberlin, S Edmonds; five-eighth: B Andrews; half: S Hansard; forwards: J Glossop, G Pierce (c), B Neville, G Stares, J McMartin, P Khan

Western Suburbs: Full-back: J Dorahy; three-quarters: D Moseley, R Giteau, W Smith, E Cain; five-eighth: P Rowles; half: T Raudonikis (c); forwards: G O'Grady, T Reardon, S Blyth, J Donnelly, S Day, B Gibbs **Referee: J Danzey (Rugby League Week 10th June 1978)**

Western Suburbs, 100/1 bolters in the competition three months ago, are the Rugby League leaders at the premiership half-way mark – for the first time since 1963. Boosted by a phone message from their suspended forward star Les Boyd, the Magpies yesterday went out and demolished Cronulla 20-2 at Lidcombe. The victory leap-frogged Wests over Cronulla to 17 points – and the premiership lead..... Wests yesterday out-gunned the Sharks on a formula of forward power, an umbrella-formation defence and the straight-line goal-kicking of Peter Rowles. They left the shaky Sharks in trouble with a stern-faced Norm Provan telling pressmen afterwards: "There's not a whole lot of bloody light at the end of the tunnel." Rowles kicking (7 from 8), his defence (28 tackles) and his successful tactic of shepherding Barry Andrews back inside like a sheepdog herding sheep, were big factors in the win. The Wests' defenders carried out coach Roy Masters' instructions admirably – despite facing a huge deficit in possession. They lost the ball 10-3 to Cronulla's John McMartin in the scrums, and had the penalties 16-11 against them. But it didn't matter. Cronulla, down on forward strength without Steve Kneen and Dane Sorensen, and fumbling far too much, were gradually powered out of the match. Gary Russell revealed afterwards that a late "good luck" phone call from Les Boyd in Cootamundra just before the match had spurred Wests' players to bigger effort. Watching Wests yesterday it was hard to believe they were quoted at 100/1 in some quarters when the season kicked off. Wests players tried to back themselves at that price with a stake of \$1,000 but were knocked back. However, they subsequently backed themselves to reach the final five at a good quote. Yesterday they scored two tries to nil – both in the second half when they lost the scrums 6-nil – and Rowles comfortably did the rest with his accurate kicking. Most of the play was contained in their hard-hitting forward pack, with Tom Raudonikis generally turning the ball back inside – and big Bruce Gibbs hitting the line like an express train. Cronulla couldn't cope. It was the Sharks' third loss in four games and the slump is assuming alarming proportions after successive losses of 27-8 (Manly) and 20-2. A match with too many mistakes and a string of penalties (18) still gave the Lidcombe Oval crowd plenty of thrills. They saw rousing performances from the highly talented Graeme O'Grady, from Raudonikis, Rowles, Gibbs and Steve Blyth, who made 31 tackles. Cronulla were best served by full-back Mick Mullane, half Steve Hansard, and a newcomer, prop Gary Stares. **(Daily Telegraph 5th June 1978)**

Notes: Les Boyd's 3-match suspension had been upheld but it seemed to only spur on Wests as he gave an encouraging call from Cootamundra. John Donnelly was also back from suspension and he and Bruce Gibbs bull-dozed the Cronulla forwards. Their fast moving defence shut down the Cronulla attack, allowing Graeme O'Grady to dominate. Peter Rowles also had a blinder, kicking seven goals and making 28 tackles. Wests were now leaders at the half-way mark, the first time since 1963.