



1972 Round 14 Sunday 18th June Sydney Sports Ground



Eastern Suburbs 28

def.

Western Suburbs 8

Peter LEWIS
 Peter FLANDERS
 Harry CAMERON
 Mark HARRIS
 Bill MULLINS
 John BALLESTY
 John MAYES
 Ron COOTE (c)
 John QUAYLE
 John ARMSTRONG
 Jim MORGAN
 Kel BROWN
 Arthur BEETSON

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

Tony FORD
 Don ROGERS
 John HEYWARD
 Wayne MERRY
 Russell MULLINS
 Tom RAUDONIKIS (c)
 Brian WINNEY
 John BAKER
 John ELFORD
 Barry BRYANT
 John O'BRYAN
 Ken STONESTREET
 John WALKER



Tries
 Ron COOTE (2)
 Mark HARRIS
 John MAYES
 Jim PORTER
 John QUAYLE

Goals
 John BALLESTY (4)
 Mark HARRIS (1)

Tony FORD (4)

Match Description

Eastern Suburbs: Full-back: A McKean; three-quarters: P Flanders, H Cameron, M Harris, W Mullins; five-eighth: J Ballesty; half: J Mayes; forwards: R Coote (c), J Quayle, J Armstrong, A Beetson, K Brown, J Morgan

Western Suburbs: Full-back: A Ford; three-quarters: D Rogers, J Heyward, W Merry, R Mullins; five-eighth: T Raudonikis (c); half: B Winney; forwards: J Baker, B Bryant, J Elford, J O'Bryan, K Stonestreet, J Walker **Referee: B Barnes (The Sun 16th June 1972)**

The Rugby League semi-final battle was resolved eight weeks early when Eastern Suburbs eliminated Western Suburbs at the Sports Ground yesterday. Easts, trailing 5-6 at half-time, produced a powerhouse second-half display to crush Wests 28-8. Although eight rounds are still to be played, the semi-finalists will be South Sydney, St George, Manly-Warringah and Eastern Suburbs. Wests, and to a lesser extent, Newtown had some hope of making a fight of it for places in the semis but their defeats yesterday ended their chances. Wests, although still fifth on the competition table, trail six points and it is virtually impossible for them to bridge the gap. The league, battling against a crowd decline of 94,000 and with a bigger drop surely to come now, desperately wanted an upset result from the Sports Ground yesterday. Wests seemed likely to provide it in the first half when their great defence curbed brilliant attacking play by Easts, and they led 6-5 at half-time. But two quick tries by Easts put them well on the way to gaining command. Then, when Easts second-rower John Quayle took an intercept to gallop over, Wests' resistance collapsed. Few who watched Easts rip the Wests' team apart in the second half would disagree with Wests' coach Don Parish's belief that the Roosters are the team to beat this year. "They are a tremendous side, and I would not be surprised to see Easts and Souths playing in the Grand Final," Parish said. The match was a strange mixture – a close, dynamic struggle in the first half, then an Easts' runaway in the second half. Wests' defence in the first half against the driving bursts of the big Easts' forwards was first class. But the hard work took its toll and the big Easts' forwards, with Arthur Beetson doing some incredible things around the rucks, took charge in the second half. What an amazing footballer Beetson is! He figures in most of the attacking play from the rucks and nearly always managed to slip his pass away to a support. How he got the ball away in the rush that ended with five-eighth John Bailey putting half John Mayes over for the first try mystified spectators. The rest of the Easts' pack, fired on by Beetson's top class display, produced their own brand of football fire that overpowered Wests. Big Jim Morgan had his troubles with referee Barry Barnes but he had a strong game. Second-rower John Armstrong showed that he is the most improved forward in Sydney this season and Ron Coote had his best game of the year. With the forwards playing so well, Coote was able to drop back into the role that has made him one of the best lock forwards in the world. He was in position to back up to score two neat tries. He crossed for another but could not get the ball down. His defence, as usual, was immaculate. ...Easts' five-eighth John Ballesty had much the better of his duel with Tom Raudonikis and must now be on the short list of candidates for the State team. **(Sydney Morning Herald 19th June 1972)**

Notes: Wests were well in this match, leading 6-5 at half-time but Easts, led by a rampaging Arthur Beetson, ran away 23-2 in the second half. Raudonikis was Wests' best but was still outplayed by John Ballesty. Two of Easts' tries came from intercepts but Easts were still far too good and firmed to premiership favourites after this match.