



1980 Round 19 Sunday 10th August Leichhardt Oval



Balmain 21

Allan McMAHON (c)
Wayne MIRANDA
Olsen FILIPAINA
Wayne WIGHAM
Larry COROWA
Lloyd MARTIN
Percy KNIGHT
Ron PILON
Gary WEBSTER
Gary SPEARS
Steve LAVERS
Neil WHITTAKER
Rod MORRIS

def.

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

Western Suburbs 18

Wayne SMITH
John RIBOT
Jim LEIS
Ron GITEAU
Warren BOLAND (c)
Terry LAMB
Alan NEIL
Ken HEY
John McLEOD
Bob COOPER
John DONNELLY
Jack JEFFRIES
Tom ARBER



Tries

Lloyd MARTIN (2)
Neil WHITTAKER

John RIBOT (2)
Terry LAMB
Warren BOLAND

Goals

Wayne MIRANDA (6)

Ron GITEAU (3)

Match Description

Western Suburbs: Full-back: W Smith; three-quarters: J Ribot, J Leis, R Giteau, W Boland (c); five-eighth: T Lamb; half: A Neil; forwards: K Hey, J McLeod, R Cooper, J Donnelly, J Jeffries, T Arber

Balmain: Full-back: A McMahon (c); three-quarters: W Miranda, O Filipaina, W Wigham, L Corowa; five-eighth: L Martin; half: P Knight; forwards: R Pilon, G Webster, G Spears, S Lavers, N Whittaker, R Morris **Referee: D Braybrook (Rugby League Week 14th August 1980)**

“Wests need to cut out the dirt – it cost them the game today and it’ll keep getting them in trouble,” Balmain captain Allan McMahon said after his side’s rousing victory at Leichhardt. With a 21-18 win, Balmain made their contribution to the total confusion of premiership betting and there was no argument from Wests that they were clearly outplayed. Wests couldn’t have been more wrong if they went to Leichhardt expecting Balmain to sacrifice a premiership match in an all-out effort in the Tooth Cup. And McMahon made his observation of Wests after one of the better games of football this season in which Balmain should have scored three or four more tries. “Wests are a top side, but they still take too many cheap shots,” declared McMahon. The ground shuddered to some of the forward exchanges with Wests’ pack heavily cautioned and penalised in their efforts to take control of the middle. But that’s the time-worn and simple formula of Wests’ success this year and they won’t be changing it for the finals. Where other packs have buckled under the Magpies’ aggression, Balmain matched it and then took control out wide where there were some dazzling individual performances. Five-eighth Lloyd Martin was superb and apart from one dreadful mistake so was half-back Percy Knight and McMahon. A 20-metre diagonal burst by Martin six minutes from the end won the game for Balmain. The nuggety Kiwi pivot had earlier scampered 40 metres to score after a Knight pass in the 34th minute that would have done credit to Tommy Bishop or Brian McTigue in their hey-day. But only two minutes later, a Knight pass was intercepted by Wests’ winger Warren Boland whose try and the subsequent conversion by Ron Giteau gave Wests a 13-12 half-time lead. Some of Wests’ attacking play was as spectacular as that of Balmain. But too often, normally safe defence faltered, allowing huge gains by the Tigers’ backs. Two tries by Wests’ John Ribot were as good as scored by any winger this year but for coach Roy Masters and captain Warren Boland they weren’t enough. With Wests now vulnerable, Masters could have been excused for heading off to “get drunk.” Boland said: “Balmain created more opportunities and deserved to win – our defence today was nothing like it has been.” But in fairness, Wests were backing up after a mid-week match. **(The Sun 11th August 1980)**

Notes: John McLeod was back after a broken cheekbone, replacing the suspended Paul Merlo. Wests ran out of puff in the final stages of a very fast, open game where they were obviously feeling the effects of a mid-week Tooth Cup match. In all three mid-week games in the season they had been beaten on the next weekend. John Ribot had a brilliant game on the wing, but it was the battle of the halves, where the Balmain duo were slightly on top, that Balmain were able to win.