



1979 Round 19 Sunday 29th July Lidcombe Oval



Western Suburbs 21

def.

Newtown 4



Tony ARMSTRONG
 Buddy CAIN
 Wayne SMITH
 Ron BRODRICK
 Warren BOLAND
 Peter WALSH
 Alan NEIL
 Tom RAUDONIKIS (c)
 Les BOYD
 Ray BROWN
 Terry LEABEATER
 Jack JEFFRIES
 Bruce GIBBS

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

Kevin POBJIE
 Chris DOYLE
 Mick RYAN
 Brian HETHERINGTON
 Bruce PICKETT
 Trevor RYAN
 Ken WILSON (c)
 Les WESTWOOD
 Craig ELLIS
 Geoff BUGDEN
 Steve BOWDEN
 Barry JENSEN
 Bill NOONAN
 Mark O'BRIEN
 John RIBOT

Tries

Alan NEIL (2)
 Terry LEABEATER
 Jack JEFFRIES
 Les BOYD

Goals

Peter WALSH (3)

Ken WILSON (2)

Match Description

Western Suburbs: Full-back: T Armstrong; three-quarters: E Cain, W Smith, R Brodrick, W Boland; five-eighth: P Walsh; half: A Neil; forwards: T Raudonikis (c), L Boyd, R Brown, T Leabeater, J Jeffries, B Gibbs

Newtown: Full-back: K Pobjie; three-quarters: C Doyle, B Hetherington, M Ryan, B Pickett; five-eighth: T Ryan; half: K Wilson (c); forwards: L Westwood, C Ellis, G Bugden, S Bowden, B Jensen, W Noonan **Referee: J Gocher (Rugby League Week 2nd August 1979)**

Alan Neil, a ginger-haired half-back who zips off the mark like a whippet, has finally shifted Wests' most permanent fixture. As Wests tread the semi-final tightrope, it will be Neil at half-back and Tom Raudonikis either at five-eighth or lock-forward. Neil, 21, an understudy to "Tom Terrific" for several seasons, was the man for a crisis at Lidcombe yesterday as the Magpies trounced Newtown 21-4. Called into the side at half-back only hours before the match when Wests lost Don Moseley, Graeme O'Grady and Brian Cook with injuries, Neil brought the house down while Raudonikis locked the scrums. Cutting Newtown to pieces around the rucks, Neil scored two tries and would have instigated a couple more if his team-mates had the pace to keep up. "I'm just proud to be playing first grade with Wests – Tom is still the best half-back in Australia," declared Neil after the Magpies had broken a five-match losing streak. Neil's only fault was feeding the scrums. With Newtown dominating the early scrums 6-1, Wests were forced to switch Raudonikis to half when it was the Magpies' feed. And that play will be maintained by coach Roy Masters while Neil gains experience. But Neil provided rare excitement in a mediocre match. Although leading 8-2 at half-time, Wests couldn't feel safe the way they were playing. And it was Newtown's turn to have a strong wind at their backs in the second session. But Newtown simply didn't have the ammunition to come on. Les Boyd galloped over early in the second half after lead-up work by Tony Armstrong and rep. forward Ray Brown. And in quick succession Neil darted over from close range and stop-gap forward Terry Leabeater crashed over. **(The Sun 30th July 1979)**

Western Suburbs ended their six-match losing streak and bounced back into premiership calculations with a 21-4 win over Newtown at Lidcombe Oval yesterday. Fielding a make-shift team because of late injuries, the Magpies had few hassles in beating a Newtown side that is playing woefully. Centre Don Moseley, lock Graeme O'Grady and prop Brian Cook withdrew from the team and forced coach Roy Masters to make late changes. The most significant was half-back Tom Raudonikis going to lock and the promotion of youngster Alan Neil to play half-back. Neil had a great game and was unquestionably Wests' best player. He scored two brilliant tries and made several smart breaks to set up many raids for his team. "With the team we had on the field I am very pleased," Masters said after the match. "I'm particularly pleased we didn't let Newtown over for a try." The Magpies put first points on the board through a Jack Jeffries try midway through the first half, and from then on Wests were never in danger,..... **(Daily Telegraph 30th July 1979)**

Notes: Late withdrawals of Moseley, O'Grady and Cook caused a reshuffle, with Tony Armstrong debuting at full-back, Alan Neil into half and Raudonikis to lock. It didn't make any difference, as Wests were always in control, letting loose in the last 30 minutes to win easily. The attack was sparked by a stellar Alan Neil performance who stamped himself as Raudonikis' heir apparent. He was clearly Wests' best player, although Terry Leabeater, again called in late, emphasised his potential.