



# 1997 Round 20 Friday 15th August Campbelltown Stadium



## Western Suburbs 19

def.

## North Sydney 10

Andrew LEEDS  
Darren WILLIS  
Kevin McGUINNESS  
Ken McGUINNESS  
Brett HODGSON  
Andrew WILLIS  
Steve GEORGALLIS  
Paul LANGMACK (c)  
Damian KENNEDY  
Bill DUNN  
John SKANDALIS  
Ciriaco MESCIA  
Harvey HOWARD  
Darren CAPOVILLA  
Des HASLER  
Shayne McMENEMY  
Gary DOWSE

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

Matt SEERS  
Brett DALLAS  
Michael BUETTNER  
Chris CARUANA  
Nigel ROY  
Greg FLORIMO  
Jason TAYLOR (c)  
Danny WILLIAMS  
David FAIRLEIGH  
Gary LARSON  
Steve TRINDALL  
Mark SODEN  
Josh STUART  
David HALL  
Brenton POMEROY  
Ben IKIN  
Mark REBER

### Tries

Ciriaco MESCIA  
Kevin McGUINNESS  
Brett HODGSON

Ben IKIN  
Michael BUETTNER

### Goals

Andrew LEEDS (4) One field goal

Jason TAYLOR (1)

### Match Description

**North Sydney:** Full-back: M Seers; three-quarters: B Dallas, M Buettner, C Caruana, N Roy; five-eighth: G Florimo; half: J Taylor (c); forwards: D Williams, D Fairleigh, G Larson, S Trindall, M Soden, J Stuart

**Western Suburbs:** Full-back: A Leeds; three-quarters: D Willis, Ken McGuinness, Kevin McGuinness; B Hodgson five-eighth: A Willis; half: S Georgallis; forwards P Langmack (c), D Kennedy, B Dunn, S Millard, C Mescia, J Skandalis **Referee: P McBlane (Big League 15th August 1997)**

A season after Western Suburbs made off like burglars - beating Norths with the last minute 40 metre field goal - the Magpies were at it again last night, stealing the two points from under the Bears' noses. This time the telling moment came in the second minute of the second half, when Norths' captain Jason Taylor fed a scrum not far from his line only to see it go Wests' way. Before the six tackles were finished, Brett Hodgson had dived over in the corner to bring Wests back to 6-4 but, more tellingly, the momentum had clearly shifted in the Magpies' favour. That was because the Bears had already suffered for a time with twelve men after Josh Stuart was sent off in the 15th minute for a high tackle that put replacement Shane McMenemy out of the match. The Bears battled gamely for the remainder of that half. They had led 6-0 and didn't score another point but knuckled down and found the legs to thwart the Magpies. Even better, they constantly met the repeat sets of six Wests had against them as referee Paul McBlane chose to beat the league's midweek memo to within an inch of its life. The memo told all clubs there would be a crackdown on play the balls, with any lazy players or flop artists immediately penalised. McBlane saw to that, at least for the first 40 minutes. And while he did seem to relax the whistle blowing in the second half, it only confused the players. Not that any of this should detract from Wests' victory. Handed a spanking by premiers Manly last week, coach Tom Raudonikis spent the week concentrating on tightening his players' defence. And while the defensive line was far from impregnable, the effort showed in the Magpies' mindset: they scrambled when they had to, they bustled and were extremely aggressive early on. Combined with Stuart's dismissal, it meant it was always going to be a difficult night for the Bears. Still, Norths' coach Peter Louis was pleased with his players efforts, saying he could see positive signs in the lead into the semi-finals. The Bears now have to win their final two matches to guarantee a place in the top three. Wests' task is clear, too. "Keep winning," Raudonikis said. "We just have to win next week." The Magpies must be favourites for a semi-final berth, though. Before last night they were locked in a three-way battle for two positions with Illawarra and the Gold Coast. They play the Steelers next week and, even if they lose, should still qualify, given that the Chargers and Steelers meet in the final round. **(Sydney Morning Herald 16th August 1997)**

**Notes:** Played in atrocious conditions, this was a vicious match, with Josh Stuart sent off for a swinging arm which knocked out Shayne McMenemy. Wests' defence was considerably tightened after the Manly debacle, and this was the major factor in the win. Cherry Mescia's comeback was also important with his extra organisation around the rucks. Paul Langmack received a blow to the throat which affected his speech.