



1996 Round 3 Thursday 4th April Campbelltown Stadium



Western Suburbs 22

def.

Auckland 8

Andrew LEEDS
Darren WILLIS
Brandon PEARSON
Kevin McGUINNESS
Ken McGUINNESS
Andrew WILLIS
Craig COLEMAN (c)
Steve GEORGALLIS
Chad HARRIS
Bill DUNN
Brent STUART
Ciriaco MESCIA
Darren CAPOVILLA
Justin DOOLEY
Paul SMITH
Darren BURNS
Damian KENNEDY

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

Gene NGAMU
Sean HOPPE
Richie BLACKMORE
Tea ROPATI
Phil BLAKE
Stacey JONES
Greg ALEXANDER (c)
Mark HORO
Stephen KEARNEY
Denis BETTS
Andy PLATT
Syd ERU
Gavin HILL
Joe VAGANA
Tony TATUPU
Nigel VAGANA
Tony TUIMAVAVE

Tries Kevin McGUINNESS (2)
Justin DOOLEY

Joe VAGANA

Goals Andrew LEEDS (5)

Greg ALEXANDER (1)
Gavin HILL (1)

Match Description

Western Suburbs: Full-back: A Leeds; three-quarters: D Willis, Kevin McGuinness, B Pearson, Ken McGuinness; five-eighth: A Willis; half: S C Coleman (c); forwards: Georgallis, C Harris, B Dunn, D Capovilla, C Mescia, B Stuart

Auckland: Full-back: G Ngamu, three-quarters: S Hoppe, R Blackmore, T Ropati, P Blake; five-eighth: S Jones; half: G Alexander (c); forwards: M Horo, S Kearney, D Betts, A Platt, S Eru, G Hill **Referee: E Ward (Big League 4th April 1996)**

In the most stirring match of the young season, 10,088 Magpie fans last night roared themselves hoarse as they saw it outgun the Warriors team which towered over them in stature and experience. Centre Kevin McGuinness, merely 18, provided a two-try, five-star performance as the Magpies recaptured their momentum after a disappointing outing against Brisbane last week. McGuinness scored his first try in the 28th minute, slipping through gaps in a defensive line like into the Land of the Giants. Newly returned Hunter Mariners forward Justin Dooley was next across and the notorious Campbelltown crowd found its voice as half time approached. But Auckland second-rower Denis Betts capped a bad week for his club when he was sent off. Betts was charged with head-butting Wests' hooker Cherry Mescia 16 minutes from the end of the Magpies' gripping 22-8 win at Campbelltown Sports Ground. The defeat followed two weeks of turmoil at Auckland, with coach John Monie and chairman Gerald Ryan conducting a public argument over the direction of the club and the proposed recruitment of Manly fullback Matthew Ridge. Monie insisted last night the drama had no influence over the result. "The spirit in the club has been good all week and there are no excuses," he said. Monie later claimed the dismissal of the England World Cup forward cost his side any chance of victory and his left the star-studded Auckland side with just two competition points after three rounds. ... Wests' fullback Andrew Leeds' outstanding performance continued last night when he cut down Warriors winger Phil Blake shortly before the break to preserve a 10-0 lead. The first half's simmering tension reached boiling point soon after the break with Joe Vagana scoring the Warriors' first try and Dooley being sent to the sin bin for repeatedly aggressive play. "It was 12-6 when Denis got sent off and at that stage I thought we had a chance to win it," said Monie. "There was plenty of feeling in Wests' tackles, it was a stinging game." As the Warriors giants began to tire, little men like Mescia and McGuinness came into play late in the match, with McGuinness crossing after a spectacular movement involving his brother Ken and Leeds with five minutes to go. Raudonikis played down suggestions he encouraged his side to take on the Warriors physically but admitted: "Last week Brisbane stood over us, we couldn't let that happen again." He said the Warriors had shown his side contempt by failing to shoot for goal when they had six consecutive penalties awarded in their favourite at close range. While he insisted the preparation to last night's match had been normal, Mescia revealed: "Tommy said, "Things have to be fixed and if you can't do it I'll find some bastard who can." .. (Sydney Morning Herald 5th July 1996)

Notes: Spurred on by a mid-week Raudonikis blast, Wests rose to the occasion before a fired-up crowd to go on to a convincing win over a bigger Auckland side. Andrew Leeds was the star in a mistake-free performance and Kevin McGuinness showed he had come of age as a First-Grader, completely outplaying his centre rivals. Violence broke out in the second half after a simmering first half, and the Wests' defence became very rugged. Justin Dooley, back from the Hunter Mariners, scored a good try, while Darren Capovilla (ex-Parramatta) made his debut.