



1982 Round 4 Sunday 21st March Lidcombe Oval



Western Suburbs 13

def.

Illawarra 8

Greg COX
 Steve BROUGHTON
 Ross CONLON
 Wayne SMITH
 Warren BOLAND (c)
 Terry LAMB
 Alan NEIL
 Jim LEIS
 Paul MERLO
 George MOROKO
 John DONNELLY
 Arthur MOUNTIER
 Tom ARBER

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

John SPARKS
 Chris MONTGOMERY
 John DORAHY (c)
 Brian HETHERINGTON
 Shane McKELLAR
 Lee POMFRET
 Steve TOPPER
 Martyn CAVILL
 Rod HENNIKER
 Wayne SPRINGALL
 Greg COOK
 Barry JENSEN
 Peter RYAN

Tries Terry LAMB
 Ross CONLON

John SPARKS (2)

Goals Ross CONLON (3)
 Terry LAMB (1) Field Goal

John DORAHY (1)

Match Description

Western Suburbs: Full-back: G Cox; three-quarters: S Broughton, W Smith, R Conlon, W Boland (c); five-eighth: T Lamb; half: A Neil; forwards: J Leis, G Moroko, P Merlo, J Donnelly, A Mountier, T Arber

Illawarra: Full-back: J Sparks; three-quarters: C Montgomery, J Dorahy (c), B Hetherington, S McKellar; five-eighth: L Pomfret; half: S Topper; forwards: M Cavill, R Henniker, W Springall, G Cook, B Jensen, P Ryan **Referee: B Goldsworthy (The Sun 22nd March 1982)**

The rug was almost pulled from underneath a scratchy Western Suburbs before their 13-8 Rugby League win at Lidcombe Oval yesterday. Lapsing into error after a promising start – and looking much worse as the match progressed – Wests had to hold on in a scrappy second half as Illawarra pressed for their second consecutive premiership victory. The Steelers trailed 12-8 with 15 minutes remaining but a field goal two minutes from full-time by Terry Lamb was the clincher. It was the Steelers' enthusiasm which was partly to blame for their downfall. A run of seven penalties in a row against them in the second half spoiled their chances when the Magpies appeared to be crumbling. But discounting the mistakes, Illawarra signalled they will win more games this season and provide tough opposition at the Wollongong Showground. Wests looked set for a possible runaway win after throwing everything at Illawarra in the opening minutes. Spectacular early breaks by the winger, captain Warren Boland, and the half-back Alan Neil, set the stage for an onslaught which resulted in a Ross Conlon try nine minutes into the match. Conlon finished a 75m move which began near his own goal line when the winger, Steve Broughton, was able to get a late pass away to Neil. The half looked infield and found the five-eighth, Terry Lamb, who ran 30m before finding Conlon inside with a beautifully judged pass. But it was only six minutes before the Illawarra full-back, John Sparks, showed his flair and enthusiasm with the first of two tries. Sprinting to the line off a John Dorahy pass from 30m out, Sparks made the Wests' defence look sluggish, as he did nearly every time he touched the ball. Wests went in with a half-time lead of 7-5 after Conlon had kicked a penalty midway through the half and came up with another of their few dashes of brilliance with a try eight minutes into the second session. The lock, Jim Leis, who is involving himself more and gaining confidence with every game, showed his style when he ran through defenders before setting up a try for Lamb near the posts. Wests seemed to try to close up the game with their 12-5 lead but Illawarra answered 15 minutes from full-time when Sparks went over near the corner after strong work by the prop, Greg Cook. The Illawarra captain, John Dorahy, who had kicked 17 goals straight before the conversion attempt, was out of the running for a record goal-kicking sequence when his kick hit the left upright and bounced back into the field of play. The Wests' players were smiling after the game but they knew they had gone very close to throwing away two points. Conlon kicked three of his seven goals attempts, including three easy shots, and Wests' coach, Terry Fearnley, said he blamed the misses for Wests' failure to open out in the second half. "We had to play safe in the wet conditions but Illawarra played good football and their enthusiasm made it very hard," Fearnley said. "We were always expected to win and that also might have gone against us, but their win over Souths last week helped to keep my boys honest. "We could easily have lost it." (Sydney Morning Herald 22nd March 1982)

Notes: This match was again played in very wet conditions and Wests were able to grind out an unimpressive win against an enthusiastic Illawarra. Ross Conlon's early try finished off a brilliant 80m movement and it looked like Wests might run away with the game. John Donnelly made 31 tackles but was still obviously very unfit. Jim Leis and Arthur Mountier were Wests' best but Coach Fearnley felt he couldn't make replacements with tired forwards after the Reserve Grade pack played one man short, after Bob Cooper was sent off for kneeling.