



1982 Round 5 Sunday 28th March Endeavour Field



Western Suburbs 10

def.

Cronulla-Sutherland 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
Mick PINKERTON

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

Mick MULLANE
John JARVIE
Steve ROGERS (c)
Chris GARDNER
Rick BOURKE
Gary WRIGHT
Perry HADDOCK
Greg NIXON
Kurt SORENSEN
David HATCH
Dane SORENSEN
Rowland BECKETT
Peter McNAMARA

Tries

Terry LAMB
Mick PINKERTON

David HATCH (2)

Goals

Ross CONLON (1)
Greg COX (1)

Steve ROGERS (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

Cronulla-Sutherland: Full-back: M Mullane; three-quarters: J Jarvie, S Rogers (c), C Gardner, R Bourke; five-eighth: G Wright; half: P Haddock; forwards: G Nixon, K Sorensen, D Hatch, D Sorensen, R Beckett, P McNamara **Referee: K Roberts (The Sun 29th March 1982)**

Western Suburbs' unfashionable pack of forwards yesterday turned on a magnificent tackling display to lift the club to equal premiership leaders. Despite a 16-7 penalty count against them, the Magpies edged out Cronulla 10-8 at Endeavour Field and joined Parramatta and Manly at the head of the competition table. With the Sharks having a near-monopoly of possession, the Wests' pack was forced to defend, defend and defend. The six forwards, only two of whom have gained representative honours – and that was quite a while ago – averaged nearly 30 tackles each. Heading the tackling barrage were second-rowers Paul Merlo and George Moroko. While hardly recognised as rugby league big guns, Merlo and Moroko did what other clubs have found difficult in recent years. Between them they virtually kept the Sharks Kiwi international brothers, Dane and Kurt Sorensen, under control, possibly saving Cronulla from a showdown with the New Zealand rugby league. The NZRL might not be as keen to have the Sorensens for the Test series against Australia in July on their form yesterday. Merlo not only ripped into the Sorensens on the field, but fired a few off-field shots. "I can't say I was too impressed by the Sorensens," the 26-year-old second-rower said as balanced a block of ice on an injured forearm. "I thought we handled them without much trouble." If Merlo was not impressed by the Kiwis, media representatives were equally unhappy with Sharks' coach Greg Pierce. Pierce beat a hasty exit from the ground without making any comment on the club's second straight loss. Wests had a super problem getting on-side with referee Kevin Roberts. After 35 minutes they trailed 0-10 in the penalty count. Despite the penalty flow, Wests controlled the game throughout, leading 5-0 after 19 minutes and 10-3 at half-time. Cronulla captain Steve Rogers, who had a very quiet match, missed with two penalty goal shots in the opening minutes. Centre Wayne Smith beat a couple of Cronulla defenders with a big side-step, and off-loaded to five-eighth Terry Lamb, who cleared out for Wests' first try. While Cronulla and Wests came up with two tries each, the Sharks never really looked likely to win. Apart from Merlo and Moroko, Wests' best were Lamb, half-back Alan Neil, full-back Greg Cox and hooker Arthur Mountier. **(Daily Telegraph 29th March 1982)**

..... Wests yesterday were elated at the sheer determination displayed by their forwards' performance. Coach Terry Fearnley described it as the most determined effort the club has produced this year. The Magpies' major blow was an injury to the shoulder of star centre Ross Conlon which saw him replaced in the 22nd minute by Mick Pinkerton. **(The Sun 29th March 1982)**

Notes: Facing a huge penalty count (16-6, 10-0 at one stage), the Wests forwards dug deep and put in a heroic tackling effort, with George Moroko being prominent and Paul Merlo leading the tackle count with 36 bone-crushers. Tom Arber also had a very improved game. Ross Conlon was injured in the 22nd minute and was replaced by Mick Pinkerton, who scored a good try.