



1986 Round 5 Sunday 6th April Lidcombe Oval



Western Suburbs 16

def.

Canberra 6

Rod PETHYBRIDGE
 Wilfred WILLIAMS
 Brett GALE
 Ian NADEN
 Paul SHEAHAN
 Michael NEIL
 Brett CLARK
 Ian SCHUBERT
 Gary McFARLANE
 John BILBIJA
 Bruce CLARK (c)
 Alan FALLAH
 Ian FREEMAN
 Geoff DILLON
 Charlie KHALIFEH
 Craig ELLIS

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

Gary BELCHER
 Terry FAHEY
 Mal MENINGA
 Darren MEREDITH
 John FERGUSON
 Ivan HENJAK
 Chris O'SULLIVAN (c)
 Ashley GILBERT
 Brett ATKINS
 Paul ELLIOTT
 Sam BACKO
 Steve WALTERS
 Gary COYNE
 Mitch BRENNAN
 Terry REGAN
 Craig BELLAMY
 Les MORRISSEY

Tries Michael NEIL
 Ian SCHUBERT
 Rod PETHYBRIDGE

Terry FAHEY

Goals Ian SCHUBERT (2)

Mal MENINGA (1)

Match Description

Western Suburbs: Full-back: R Pethybridge; three-quarters: W Williams, B Gale, I Naden, P Sheahan; five-eighth: M Neil; half: B Clark; forwards: I Schubert, G McFarlane, J Bilbija, B Clark (c), A Fallah, I Freeman

Canberra: Full-back: G Belcher; three-quarters: T Fahey, M Meninga, D Meredith, J Ferguson; five-eighth: I Henjak; half: C O'Sullivan (c); forwards: A Gilbert, B Atkins, P Elliott, S Backo, S Walters, G Coyne **Referee: M Stone (The Daily Mirror 7th April 1986)**

Moments of grandeur aren't familiar at Lidcombe, even now as the League paupers Western Suburbs celebrate their first premiership win of the season, a 16-6 triumph over fumbling Canberra. Magpies' coach Steve Ghosn's K.I.S.S. approach to football – "Keep It Simple Stupid" – is all about team play and theoretically doesn't encourage virtuosity. But on yesterday's performance every individual in Wests' team is entitled to take a bow as they brought down the curtain on a hoodoo which has prevented them beating Canberra since the Raiders' premiership inauguration in 1982. "When you can't compete in a one-on-one situation, you've got to rely on enthusiasm," Ghosn said, acknowledging the superior price tags on the heads of his opponents. After three premiership defeats and a draw, Wests broke through on Wednesday to trounce the fancied Penrith in the National Panasonic Cup and maintained the momentum yesterday, scoring three tries to one in a highly entertaining first half. Bruce "Bruiser" Clark, carrying as many welts as he dished out, charged and bumped and generally tried the patience of a supposedly well-drilled Raiders' front-six. With the other pillar of the bustling Magpie pack, the equally robust and fitter Ian Freeman (22 tackles), Clark refused to take a backward step and paved the way for yesterday's win. Ghosn agreed: "I said to Bruiser, 'If you go forward, we all go forward.'" Forwards may win games, but for the most part it is the backs who create the tries and yesterday Wests' Outback Connection of Cowra winger Willie Williams and Dubbo centre Ian Naden sparked many attacking moves. Williams, 25, produced the acceleration of an Olympian at very close range to slice between Canberra captain Chris O'Sullivan and prop Sam Backo to initiate the opening try after just 10 minutes. "They thought they had me – and so did I," Williams said of his great escape, then noted: "Hesitation can cause heaps of problems." Unfortunately, Canberra players did hesitate too often yesterday – especially in the backline where so many opportunities were squandered in the second half. Raiders coach Don Furner lamented: "We dropped the ball 10 times on the first tackle alone. I'd hate to count how many other times it went to ground. We had our chances but we destroyed them." Wests led 14-6 at the break and with Ian Schubert relentlessly driving a pack of late substitutes, Wests survived a test of character in the final 20 minutes. Next weekend Wests take on the Eels at Parramatta stadium. "It's a game of opportunity," Ghosn reminded, and Wests certainly are a team of opportunities. Who knows, perhaps Ghosn's jocular proclamation: "it'll be Parramatta's first loss there," may turn out to be more than just a delusion of Magpie grandeur! **(Daily Telegraph 7th April 1986)**

Notes: Wests continued their good form, coming off a mid-week thrashing of Penrith, where Bruce Clark had been the dominant forward. He was again the best player on the field, relishing his new role as captain. John Bilbija, Ian Naden and Gary McFarlane all came into first Grade after great games as replacements. Ian Freeman, back after a season in Cooma in 1985, was a powerhouse in defence. It was a great game for the Country boys as Naden (from Dubbo) overshadowed Mal Meninga and Wilfred Williams (from Cowra) showed dazzling speed to set up the Schubert try.