



1998 Round 5 Thursday 9th April Campbelltown Stadium



Sydney City 22

Andrew WALKER
 Matt SING
 Ivan CLEARY
 Richie BARNETT
 Jack ELSEGOOD
 Brad FITTLER (c)
 Adrian LAM
 Nigel GAFFEY
 Luke RICKETSON
 Scott GOURLEY
 David BARNHILL
 Simon BONETTI
 James PICKERING
 Bryan FLETCHER
 Julian BAILEY
 Nathan WOOD
 Justin DOOLEY

def.

Western Suburbs 4

Brett HODGSON
 Darren WILLIS
 Ken McGUINNESS
 Kevin McGUINNESS
 Adam DONOVAN
 Steve GEORGALLIS (c)
 Leo DYNEVOR
 Scott COXON
 Aseri LAING
 Damian KENNEDY
 Adrian RAINEY
 Ciriaco MESCIA
 Brenton POMERY
 Darren RAMEKA
 Don SMITH
 Jason KEOUGH
 Shayne McMENEMY



Tries Nathan WOOD
 Justin DOOLEY
 Brad FITTLER
 Nigel GAFFEY

Aseri LAING

Goals Ivan CLEARY (3)

Match Description

Western Suburbs: Full-back: B Hodgson; three-quarters: D Willis, Ken McGuinness, Kevin McGuinness, A Donovan; five-eighth: S Georgallis (c) half: L Dynevor; forwards: S Coxon, A Laing, D Kennedy, B Pomeroy, C Mescia, A Rainey

Sydney City Full-back: A Walker; three-quarters: M Sing, I Cleary, R Barnett, J Elsegood; five-eighth: B Fittler (c); half: A Lam; forwards: N Gaffey, L Ricketson, S Gourley, D Barnhill, S Bonetti, J Pickering **Referee: M Hewitt (Big League 9th April 1998)**

One rugby league's Most Awkward Moments occurred after Sydney City's win over Western Suburbs at Campbelltown Sports Ground last night. Roosters captain Brad Fittler scored the match-sealing try and once was then told of criticism levelled at him by former Test great Peter Sterling. Writing a column in the *Newcastle Herald*, Sterling described Fittler as "overrated", but tempered those remarks by saying Fittler was starting to live up to his reputation. "That sounds like a fair bit of criticism to me," the laidback Fittler said. "He is entitled to his opinion." But as Roosters' coach Phil Gould was defending Fittler, the Test captain had to perform another duty - as a live guest on Channel 9's the Footy Show, Co-hosted by Sterling. If there was tension in the air waves between Campbelltown and Nine's Epping studios, it didn't show. The matter never came up. Sterling wrote: "In the past he (Fittler) has never influenced the outcome of matches week in, week out as Allan Langer and Laurie Daley have. For a long time, I've regarded the Sydney City captain, Brad Fittler, as overrated. However, in the second half of last season Fittler did start to live up to the wraps he has drawn for so long." Fittler was not Sydney City's best player last night, but his 69th minute try ensured the Roosters two competition points. When he scored, Wests were mounting a comeback to narrow the margin to 12-4. Fittler took the ball up about 10 metres out and palmed off one defender before beating another to touchdown. "It was one of those things," he said. "It was wet and slippery; someone went high on me and they slipped off." In a match which never reached any great heights and finished in monsoonal conditions, the Roosters led 12-0 at halftime. Their early tries were scored by ex-Magpie Justin Dooley - the players' player of the game- and lock Nigel Gaffey. Wests hit back through winger Aseri Laing in the 59th minute before late tries to Fittler and replacement Nathan Wood. The Magpies lost captain Paul Langmack before kick-off and his back injuries are causing concern at Campbelltown. "It's causing him so much pain he needs to take tablets to sleep," said coach Tom Raudonikis. "It could be long term; we just don't know yet." Wests had more problems, with hooker Cherry Mescia suffering a shoulder injury last night and with only one win from five games. But Raudonikis said: "In the next few weeks we are playing teams who we have already played this year. And I'm confident we can beat all of them." Both Gould and Raudonikis agreed the Roosters can play better. Gould said: "We can play better with the ball than that but our defence was very good." **(Sydney Morning Herald 10th April 1998)**

Notes: Injury-riddled Wests fought very bravely in monsoon conditions but the loss of Paul Langmack (back) before the game again was a major blow. Brenton Pomeroy (ex-North Sydney) and Jason Keough (ex-Paris St Germain) debuted but it was ex-Magpie Justin Dooley who caused the most damage to the Magpies. They were in serious trouble after five rounds.