



1977 Round 7 Saturday 30th April Belmore Sports Ground



Western Suburbs 8

def.

Canterbury 5

John DORAHY
Peter ROWLES
Wayne SMITH
Ron GITEAU
Russell MULLINS
Ken HEY
Geoff SMITH
Tom RAUDONIKIS (c)
Geoff FOSTER
Steve BLYTH
John DONNELLY
Shane DAY
Doug LUCAS
John PURCELL

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

Garry DOWLING
Chris ANDERSON
Ray KEAR
Greg MULLANE
Peter O'NEILL
Tim PICKUP
Steve MORTIMER
Mark HUGHES
Graeme HUGHES
Bob McCARTHY (c)
Phil CHARLTON
George PEPONIS
Bill NOONAN
Dave ALLISON
Peter CASSILLES

Tries

Tom RAUDONIKIS
Geoff FOSTER

Steve MORTIMER

Goals

Peter ROWLES (1)

Ray KEAR (1)

Match Description

Western Suburbs: Full-back: J Dorahy; three-quarters: P Rowles, R Giteau, W Smith, R Mullins; five-eighth: K Hey; half: G Smith; forwards: T Raudonikis (c), G Foster, S Blyth, J Donnelly, S Day, D Lucas

Canterbury-Bankstown: Full-back: G Dowling; three-quarters: C Anderson, R Kear, G Mullane, P O'Neill; five-eighth: T Pickup; half: S Mortimer; forwards: M Hughes, G Hughes, R McCarthy (c), P Charlton, W Noonan, G Peponis **Referee: D McDonald (Rugby League Week 7th May 1977)**

Canterbury-Bankstown reeled away from Belmore Sports Ground yesterday with another two major casualties and face a slide towards the bottom half of the premiership. Beaten 8-5 by Western Suburbs in a torrid physical clash, the Canterbury club is cast deep in gloom. State hooker George Peponis has rejoined the club's heavy casualty list and Mark Hughes, the lock find of the season, is under a cloud with a badly injured right hand. Doctors who examined Hughes after the Wests clash believe his hand isn't broken, but has a thumb dislocation which could have damaged ligaments and require surgery. Hughes and Peponis, who aggravated his neck muscle ligaments injury, are both booked for examination by specialist Dr Dick Tooth tomorrow. ... Hughes faces a minimum of two weeks on the sideline – but it could be eight if surgery is needed. The club already has Greg Brentnall, Steve Hage, Gary Stevens and Stan Cutler missing from the top team with at least three reserves also out for extended periods. Until yesterday, Canterbury, - one of the competition big guns – had battled their way to equal second spot on the ladder despite the crushing injuries. But they face tomorrow the prospect of dropping to equal fifth and in coming weeks meet Balmain, Parramatta and Easts. Easts, Cronulla, Balmain or St George all have the chance today of sneaking away from Canterbury. "We've got plenty of problems," a worried coach Mal Clift said after yesterday's game. But Wests, staying in touch with the leading clubs through yesterday's two points, have four injured players due to return next week. Wests had to overhaul a Canterbury lead of 5-3 at half-time and survive some anxious moments to win. Only the closeness of the scores saved the match from mediocrity as both teams fumbled their way through 80 minutes of disappointment. Wests pulled off the victory when skipper and seasoned international Tom Raudonikis displayed his guile and cunning 15 minutes before full-time. Canterbury's brilliant little half Steve Mortimer was out of play after being dealt with by a rival forward. A scrum went down 40 metres from Canterbury's line; Wests won the ball and Raudonikis – who stood out – blitzed through on the blindside to score. "Ran like a 25-year-old, didn't I?" Raudonikis joked afterwards and he's obviously determined his rep half-back spot isn't going to be surrendered without struggle. Canterbury were far from happy at the treatment dished out to Mortimer in back play after they made a special request to linesmen to keep a close watch on this aspect of the game. Mortimer was tentative in the first half and obviously wanted to stay out of trouble, but after suffering an eye injury he cut loose and almost pulled off a late victory. The Canterbury star made a break and found Gary Dowling in support, but the full-back was felled by a tackle from winger Peter Rowles. McCarthy was across to touch down in the second half, but was ruled off-side by the referee and afterwards didn't complain describing the incident as a "photo finish." **(Sunday Mirror 1st May 1977)**

Notes: In a very rugged clash, Canterbury half, Steve Mortimer, was flattened by an unknown player, and it proved a turning point. Raudonikis, playing out of position at lock, made a blindside break for a great try. Shane Day had been forced off after a head-high tackle and was replaced by John Purcell who won his scrums 6-3. Donnelly and Dorahy were both the outstanding players for Wests. Ken Hey and Geoff Smith had been combining so well it was decided that Raudonikis would play lock to solve a problem due to Les Boyd's loss of form.