



1977 Round 8 Sunday 8th May Lidcombe Oval



Western Suburbs 22

def.

Eastern Suburbs 14

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
Graeme O'GRADY
Les BOYD

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

Russell FAIRFAX
Ian SCHUBERT
Mark HARRIS
Bob FULTON
Bill MULLINS
Kevin STEVENS
Johnny MAYES
Des O'REILLY
Barry REILLY
Michael MOSMAN
Arthur BEETSON (c)
Mal CONNOR
Gary METCALFE
Trevor BARNES
Kevin HASTINGS

Tries

Wayne SMITH (2)
John DORAHY
Les BOYD

Johnny MAYES
Bob FULTON

Goals

Peter ROWLES (5)

Kevin STEVENS (4)

Match Description

Eastern Suburbs: Full-back: R Fairfax; three-quarters: I Schubert, M Harris, R Fulton, W Mullins; five-eighth: K Stevens; half: J Mayes; forwards: D O'Reilly, B Reilly, M Mosman, A Beetson (c), M Connor, G Metcalfe

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 **Referee: D McDonald (Rugby League Week 14th May 1977)**

Western Suburbs yesterday dispelled the aura of invincibility which had built up around Easts with a rattling second-half finish at Lidcombe Oval. Wests proved that the Easts' men are only human after all, running in four second-half tries to win 22-14. In one hit, Wests knocked Easts from second to fifth – and boosted themselves up a position where they are in touch with the leading bunch. After the game Easts were trying to remember the last time they had beaten Wests at Lidcombe. The ground just up the road from Rookwood has been a real graveyard for the Roosters in recent times. Easts went into yesterday's game with a mighty month behind them – four straight wins and 99-21 points record. But they limped back home down Parramatta Road, fifth on the ladder and with Harris, Beetson, Reilly and Fairfax all carrying injuries. Spurred on by Tom Raudonikis (in attack) and Stephen Blyth (in defence) the Magpies yesterday had their finest day of the year. They muffed a handful of chances, but still did clearly enough to earn the points against a tired-looking Easts. In two weeks, Keith Holman's boys have beaten Canterbury and Easts – and that's good news for the weeks ahead. A revised training program, organized after the Wests' players had been through strict scientific testing of their fitness, was one of the big secrets behind yesterday's win. The Magpies, fit and keen, ran on a lot stronger than Easts in the second half. They trailed 6-4 at half-time – and it could have been a wider gap. Lady Luck really smiled on Wests in a 32nd minute incident which turned the fortunes of the game. Mark Harris, charging for the tryline off a crackerjack Fulton pass, pulled a groin muscle when he was still 20 metres out. Harris kept going, reached the line in Russell Mullins' tackle – and spilled the ball. At the time it seemed that Easts were just swinging into gear. But with Harris (and the try) gone, the match changed its complexion. Wests came storming back after the break, making ground consistently out wide. The newly-formed centre partnership of Ron Giteau and Wayne Smith worked extra well – and the long-striding Smith, making the most of Harris' absence, scored two tries. It was a slashing try by Smith five minutes into the second half which got Wests going. Little Tom Raudonikis, with the scent of victory in his nostrils, drove his men relentlessly from that point, leading the way up mid-field. Easts momentarily grabbed the lead back when great work by Beetson and Reilly put Fulton over (for 11-9). The match went West when John Dorahy snared a suicide pass by Russell Fairfax to touch down under the posts. The big games of Raudonikis (at lock), Stephen Blyth, John Donnelly and centres Giteau and Smith were the talking points after the game. Easts afterwards showed the wear and tear of a tough week. ... (**Daily Telegraph 9th May 1977**)

Notes: This was a very impressive performance by Wests, because Easts were in very strong form. Wests charged home in a dominant second half display, where they scored four tries and Donnelly, Lucas, Wayne Smith and Giteau stood out. However, it was Steve Blyth (49 tackles) and Tom Raudonikis who were the stars for Wests. Les Boyd, back after a 3-week suspension in Reserve Grade, came on as a substitute for Foster and scored a powerhouse try.