



1986 Round 9 Saturday 3rd May Lidcombe Oval



Western Suburbs 17

def.

Balmain 14

Rod PETHYBRIDGE
 Allen GEELAN
 Wilfred WILLIAMS
 Greg DUVAL
 Paul SHEAHAN
 Trevor COGGER
 Brett CLARK
 Ian SCHUBERT (c)
 Gary McFARLANE
 John BILBIJA
 Craig ELLIS
 Alan FALLAH
 Ian FREEMAN
 Brett DAVIS
 Lee CROOKS

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

Garry JACK
 Russel GARTNER
 Ross CONLON
 Garry SCHOFIELD
 John DAVIDSON
 Paul BEAVEN
 Scott GALE
 Wayne PEARCE (c)
 Kevin HARDWICK
 Paul SIRONEN
 Steve ROACH
 Ben ELIAS
 David BROOKS
 Paul McCABE
 Michael PERRY

Tries Rod PETHYBRIDGE
 Allen GEELAN
 Greg DUVAL

John DAVIDSON (2)
 Garry SCHOFIELD

Goals Ian SCHUBERT (2)
 Brett CLARK (1) Field Goal

Ross CONLON (1)

Match Description

Western Suburbs: Full-back: R Pethybridge; three-quarters: A Geelan, W Williams, G Duval, P Sheahan; five-eighth: T Cogger; half: B Clark; forwards: I Schubert (c), G McFarlane, J Bilbija, C Ellis, A Fallah, I Freeman

Balmain: Full-back: G Jack; three-quarters: R Gartner, R Conlon, G Schofield, J Davidson; five-eighth: P Beaven; half: S Gale; forwards: W Pearce (c), K Hardwick, P Sironen, S Roach, B Elias, D Brooks **Referee: K Roberts (The Daily Mirror 5th May 1986)**

Western Suburbs were back to the glory days at Lidcombe Oval yesterday when they scored an incredible 17-14 win over Balmain after being completely outplayed in the first half. Facing a hiding, after Balmain scored two spectacular tries to lead 10-0 at half-time and 14-4 after nine minutes of the second half, Wests completely outplayed Balmain to score their best win of the season. The match finished on a sensational note when hundreds of children invaded the field after Wests' halfback Brett Clark landed a field goal to increase the team's lead to 17-14. An over-enthusiastic train driver blew the whistle and the crowd thought it was full time. Referee Kevin Roberts quickly shooed the children off the ground, the play continued and when the siren sounded, it was the signal for the crowd to give the weary Wests' players a standing ovation. They deserved it. Outplayed and out-skilled in the first half, Wests hit back with a try and then came back again with a spectacular two-try burst in four minutes. Architect of the second half revival was the stocky former Eastern Suburbs winger, Wilfred Williams. Williams started this season on the wing but was switched to centre. Yesterday, he twice ripped the Balmain defence to shreds, setting up what turned out to be match-winning tries. On both occasions Williams' remarkable pace carried him past the defence and he was able to set up tries, first for centre Greg Duval and then four minutes later for winger Allen Geelan. It was an incredible turnaround and while there has to be criticism of the way Balmain again squandered their chance, every credit must be given to the Western Suburbs battlers. "...At the break Wests' coach Steve Ghosn reasoned that if the ball was moved out, they had a chance to cause some problems. And that is exactly the way things worked out, with Balmain spilling the ball 10 of the 14 times they had possession in the second half. After Balmain's Gary Bridge was ruled out after he had an abscessed tooth extracted on Friday, Paul Beaven switched to five-eighth and English Test player Garry Schofield came into the team. ... Ghosn told his players at half-time they needed an early try. They scored it, but what Ghosn did not count on was the way Balmain came back. In the tight second half, team captain Ian Freeman took the ball up hard but he did not break the line. Ghosn decided to send Lee Crooks into the game, although the best English Test forward only arrived via Anchorage at 6am. Ghosn wondered if he did the right thing when Crooks twice spilled the ball in attack. But Wests recovered and with some strong play from Ian Schubert who seems to have a new lease of his football life, the attacking brilliance of Williams, the strong 80-minute effort from Alan Fallah, and a strong game by fullback Rod Pethybridge – a former Balmain player – Wests stood up and earned their two precious competition points. **(Sun-Herald 4th May 1986)**

Notes: Wilfred Williams, playing in the centre as he did at Easts, carved up Balmain in the second half with two brilliant bursts which led to tries. Down 10-0 at half-time, Ian Schubert and Rod Pethybridge inspired the comeback, aided by an 80-minute effort by Alan Fallah. Lee Crooks was thrown into the game late, although only arriving at 6am, via Anchorage.