



1998 Round 9 Saturday 9th May Wollongong Showground



Illawarra 42

Brendon REEVES
 Rod WISHART
 Paul McGREGOR (c)
 Craig SIMON
 Jonathan BRITTEN
 Trent BARRETT
 Will ROBINSON
 Brad MACKAY
 Terry LAMEY
 Craig WILSON
 Craig SMITH
 Andrew PURCELL
 David WALSH
 Darren BRADSTREET
 Scott CRAM
 Dean CALLAWAY
 Adam BRISTOW

def.

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

Western Suburbs 20

Brett WARTON
 Darren WILLIS
 Ken McGUINNESS
 Kevin McGUINNESS
 Aseri LAING
 Paul LANGMACK (c)
 Ron JONES
 Scott COXON
 Damian KENNEDY
 Jason KEOUGH
 John SKANDALIS
 Ciriaco MESCIA
 Darren FRITZ
 Lincoln RAUDONIKIS
 Nick EDWARDS
 Chris YATES
 Jared MILLS



Tries

Craig SIMON (2)
 Rod WISHART
 Will ROBINSON
 Terry LAMEY
 Paul McGREGOR
 Andrew PURCELL

Ken McGUINNESS
 Kevin McGUINNESS
 Ron JONES
 Jared MILLS

Goals

Rod WISHART (7)

Brett WARTON (2)

Match Description

Western Suburbs: Full-back: B Warton; three-quarters: D Willis, Ken McGuinness, Kevin McGuinness, A Laing; five-eighth; P Langmack (c); half: R Jones; forwards: S Coxon, J Keough, D Kennedy, J Skandalis, C Mescia, D Fritz

Illawarra: Full-back: B Reeves; three-quarters: R Wishart, P McGregor (c), C Simon, J Britten; five-eighth: T Barrett; half: W Robinson; forwards: B Mackay, T Lamey, C Wilson, C Smith, A Purcell, D Walsh **Referee: P McBlane (Big League 9th May 1998)**

Former Test winger Rod Wishart last night made a late claim for State of Origin selection with an 18-point haul in Illawarra's flogging of hapless Western Suburbs. Playing only his seventh game in two seasons, Wishart celebrated his return from a hand injury with a try and seven goals in the 42-20 triumph at Win Stadium. The New South Wales side for Origin 1 at Sydney Football Stadium on May 22 is selected on Tuesday and it would be a remarkable return to the spotlight should Wishart get the nod. "I can honestly say that I didn't go out there thinking about representative football," Wishart said. "I thought I played just OK. I geed myself up to have a good game but maybe I geed myself up too much." Steelers' coach Andrew Farrar admitted having harsh words with his charges at half time after they went into the break trailing the struggling Magpies 14-10. With 11 minutes remaining in the first session, Illawarra led 10-4 but the sinbin dismissal of hooker Andrew Purcell marked the beginning of a Magpies' revival. Wests' centre Ken McGuinness and half back Ron Jones each scored in the absence of Purcell, who tried to make amends with a touchdown of his own seven minutes into the second half. The eye-catching rookie cleverly kept the ball centimetres from the ground as he struggled across to put his side back in the lead and on the way to a second half blitz. Centre Craig Simon, skipper Paul McGregor, forward Terry Lamey and Wishart each scored afterwards but Steelers' coach Farrar indicated Purcell still hadn't made amends. "How can you make up for that?" Farrar told the post-match press conference. "To be sent to the sin-bin in that situation is just plain dumb." The Magpies have now lost eight games from nine and have one of the worst defensive records in the league. But coach Tom Raudonikis, who takes up his post as NSW boss next week, vowed that his team would "stick together like shit to a blanket." Raudonikis, who said his team had been the victim of some "awful decisions" during the game, said: "I'll do anything to get a win." **(The Sun-Herald 10th May 1998)**

Notes: Down 10-4, Wests scored two quick tries, and were right in the match, but the injury toll and lack of experience, allowed Illawarra to run away late. The debut of Darren Fritz (ex-North Sydney) was a success with Fritz being one of Wests' best. Jared Mills also debuted as a replacement.