

## Doug Wilson

.... was selected to play fullback with the Western Suburbs (Rugby Union) First Grade team in April 1934.

A newspaper report at the time noted that he was to play against Eastern Suburbs at Concord Oval and that he was a product of the Reliance (Rugby Union) team, which was runner up in the Burke Cup competition in the previous season. He had given a promising display as fullback with the Reserves in the opening round which led to his selection in the top grade.

Doug Wilson was also reported as R. Wilson and it is unclear why this occurred. Doug had an older brother who had a nick name of "Roger" and there may have been some confusion in newspaper reports between the names of the brothers. There is no evidence found that Roger played either rugby union or rugby league.

Doug Wilson found himself competing with the talented Keith Storey for a position in the Western Suburbs Rugby Union First Grade team. Storey became a rugby union Wallaby in 1936. With Keith Storey cementing his position in the Western Suburbs rugby union team, an opportunity presented itself in rugby league when Frank McMillan retired.

This is likely the reason that he came across to Wests Rugby League Club in 1936. The Labor Daily newspaper on 1 April 1936 wrote about Wests situation in finding a fullback to replace Frank McMillan who retired at the end of 1935. It noted;

"The position of fullback for Western Suburbs First Grade team looked to be a certainty for either J. Sharman or J. Cobcroft, but with the entry of R. Wilson the position has changed considerably, and the newcomer has an excellent chance of securing the custodians job.

Wilson is a recruit from the Western Suburbs Union team and is credited with holding the honor of being the highest individual scorer for any season with that Club. In eight matches he notched 137 points. Wilson is of a sturdy and solid physique, is a safe handler and exceptional kick, and when possessed of a full knowledge of the little differences that exist between the two codes, is expected to go a long way in the game."

Doug played two seasons with Wests and was selected for his one and only First Grade appearance in Round 14 of 1936 in a match against St George. He was however a member of Wests premiership winning Reserve Grade team that year and was the second highest point scorer with 46 points, just behind Ron Knight who scored 49 points that season.

Doug was once again a prominent player in Wests 1937 Reserve Grade team. The competition that year consisted of one round of eight matches, and then following that, a City Cup competition of one round of eight matches plus finals.

Wests won the 1937 Reserve Grade City Cup. Captain, Jim Parsons, and Doug Wilson played all eighteen Reserve Grade games that year with Doug being the highest point scorer with 68 points from the 34 goals that he kicked.

Doug Wilson was only with Wests in 1936 and 1937. He played one First Grade, nineteen Reserve Grade and two Third Grade games, as well as ten City Cup matches. He kicked fifty eight goals in all games with Wests.

Doug Wilson's nephew, David Wilson has given some insight to his uncle's life. He notes that Doug became a milkman delivering milk around the Enfield and Campsie area and along George's River Rd. When David was eighteen he filled in for his uncle Doug on the milk run and had the memorable experience of lifting heavy milk crates into Doug's Holden ute.

David says that Doug was short in stature and went bald in his twenties and was affectionately called "Baldy." He was a very popular person who had a great dry sense of humour. He always told David great stories from his playing days with his beloved "Maggies." David's whole family followed Wests from the 1950's.

Doug Wilson lived most of his life in the suburb of Burwood, and neighbouring Homebush. Doug was a local builder but in the mid 1970's he retired to Bateau Bay on the NSW Central Coast. He lived at Bateau Bay for the remainder of his life and died there in April 1995. His memorial is at the Palmdale Lawn Cemetery and Memorial Park, Palmdale, NSW, Rose Garden 7, Site 46

