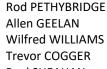
## 1986 Round 22 Sunday 3rd August Leichhardt Oval



## def.

## Balmain 6



Paul SHEAHAN Michael NEIL **Brett CLARK** Ian SCHUBERT (c)

John ELIAS John BILBIJA Lee CROOKS Alan FALLAH Garry WEBSTER Gerry BYRON Leo EPIFANIA Craig CLARKE Greg FALKNER

**Fullback** Garry JACK **Russel GARTNER** Wing Centre **Ross CONLON** Centre **Garry SCHOFIELD** Wing Scott GALE Five-eighth Tony MYLER Half Ron RYAN Lock **Gary BRIDGE** Second Row Second Row Front Row Hooker Front Row Replacement

Replacement Replacement Replacement

**Bruce McGUIRE** Paul SIRONEN Steve ROACH Ben ELIAS (c) Paul McCABE Michael MARKETO Jamie DAVIDSON Michael CAMPBELL

Tries Rod PETHYBRIDGE (2)

Allen GEELAN (2) Brett CLARK (2) **Paul SHEAHAN** 

Ian SCHUBERT (4) Goals

Garry SCHOFIELD

Ross CONLON (1)

## **Match Description**

Western Suburbs: Full-back: R Pethybridge; three-quarters: A Geelan, T Cogger, W Williams, P Sheahan; five-eighth: M Neil; half: B Clark; forwards: I Schubert (c), J Elias, J Bilbija, L Crooks, A Fallah, G Webster

Balmain: Full-back: G Jack; three-quarters: R Gartner, R Conlon, G Schofield; S Gale five-eighth: T Myler; half: R Ryan; forwards: G Bridge, B McGuire, P Sironen, S Roach, B Elias (c), P McCabe Referee: G O'Donnell (The Daily Mirror 4th August 1986)

Balmain coach Frank Stanton forecast changes to his embattled side after yesterday's unexpected 36-6 loss to Western Suburbs at Leichhardt Oval. The loss dented Balmain's final five ambitions and Stanton was at a loss to explain his side's alarming drop in form. He stopped short of admitting that the loss of captain and Australian lock Wayne Pearce was the root of the problem. "If I knew what the problem was, I'd be able to fix it, but at the moment we're just a week-in-week-out proposition," Stanton said. Stanton admitted that Balmain's task of reaching the final five was that much more difficult after the defeat, one which was the culmination of a dismal week for the Tigers. .... Balmain's stand-in captain and hooker, Benny Elias, was similarly lost for an explanation for his side's reversal in form after the previous week's courageous win against Cronulla. "Wayne Pearce wasn't there last week, but that should have been a motivator for us," Elias said. .... While Balmain were expected to use Pearce's absence as motivation, Wests' coach Steve Ghosn had a better tool to inspire his players. "The one thing I asked of them during the week was to play the game of their careers to get off the bottom of the table," Ghosn said. Balmain, for a team desperately trying to cling to a final-five spot, lacked any sense of enthusiasm or commitment in a frustrating afternoon. That frustration was typified by their Test prop Steve Roach, who was sent to the sin-bin for 10 minutes in the second half by referee Giles O'Donnell for spitting on hooker Alan Fallah. Wests' fortunes were considerably better, with winger Allen Geelan, fullback Rod Pethybridge and halfback Brett Clark scoring two tries each. Winger Paul Sheahan supplied the other. Ghosn described the win as a marvellous team effort, although Clark, Pethybridge and English prop Lee Crooks were all outstanding. Pethybridge's strong running devastated the tackle-shy Tigers, while Clark's elusive running and kicking left them confounded. Crooks displayed an uncanny ability to set up supports with well-timed short passes on the edge of the rucks. Unfortunately for Wests, Crooks will play only another two games for the club before returning to England..... Crooks and Clark were instrumental in five of Wests' seven tries. It would be too much to say that Balmain are lost without Pearce, a point which coach Frank Stanton made after the match, but they were forced to switch Bridge from halfback to lock and promote Ron Ryan to half to cover for his loss. (Sydney Morning Herald 4th August 1986)

Notes: In a major upset, Wests outplayed Balmain all over the park for the entire match. Brett Clark, back at half, was outstanding, often setting the backs in motion. Rod Pethybridge was an incisive runner and Trevor Cogger made many long breaks. Lee Crooks was also a tower of strength.

