

Bruce Beer

..... was educated at Ashfield Technical High School where he excelled at rugby league. Bruce was the captain of the Ashfield rugby league team and from there was selected to represent NSW High Schools against Queensland High Schools in 1960.

A news article in the Sun newspaper in May 1961 reported on the sporting prowess of the Ashfield school and in particular made mention of the achievements of Bruce Beer who was a rising star at the time.



The Sun League Special 6 May 1961



Ashfield Technical High School Rugby League Champion First Grade Team 1960

Back: Allan Buckeridge, Bill Millington, Colin Johnson, Bruce Gilbert, Fred Kirchen, Laurie Buongiorno

Centre: Caro Martin, Ray Hattenfels, Bruce Beer (C), John Bourke, Robert Myles

Front: Leon Toohey, Robert Sim, Kevin Peacock, John Hinwood (VC), Les Shepherd

He joined the Enfield Federals junior rugby league club and his talents were soon realised as he came up through the grades. Bruce captained many of the junior teams in which he played and in 1961 he was selected as the captain of the Western Suburbs Jersey Flegg team.

The 1961 Jersey Flegg team made the finals. Other players from that team to go on and play First Grade with Wests included John Kearns, Gary Walsh, Dennis Pittard and John Armstrong.

Semi-Final Flegg Memorial Competition
Leichhardt Oval—1.30 p.m.
NEWTOWN v. WESTERN SUBURBS
WESTERN SUBURBS: Full-back, K. Blundell (1); three-quarters, V. Stone (2), W. Thurston (3), J. Kearns (4), G. J. Walsh (5); halves, D. Pittard (6), B. Beer (7); forwards, M. A. Alchin (8), R. Bond (9), J. Armstrong (10), T. Patterson (11), D. Speers (12), R. Yott (13). Reserves: T. M. McDonald (14), A. Taylor (15), P. Rowley (16), S. T. Walsh (17).

Western Suburbs Jersey Flegg Team 1961



Western Suburbs Jersey Flegg Finalists 1961

Back: H Burns (Sel), P Panagiris (Asst Sec), R Shepherd (Sel), V Kelly (Sel),

Standing: W Leet (Treas), D Pittard, D Taylor, M Alchin, R Yott, J Armstrong, R Bond, G Walsh, W Thurston, S J Addison (Sec),

Seated: S Walsh, D Speer (VC), J Tagg (Pres), B Beer (C), R McFarlane (Coach, J Kearns, N Stone,

Front: G Bond (Ball Boy), K Blundell, M Reardon (Ball Boy)

Absent: E Byrnes (Sel), P Rowley, T McDonald, T Patterson, P Kilkeary (Amb)

Bruce was only fifteen when he made his first representative appearance and therefore had a way to go before he was ready for senior football. He played with the Enfield Federals junior club up until the end of 1964.

Federals had quite a deal of success during those years, winning premierships on a number of occasions under the captaincy and leadership of Bruce.



Enfield Federals D Grade (U/17's) Undefeated Premiers 1962

Back: J Consadine (Manager), H Pickup (Selector), R Beer (Selector), A Smith (Coach)

Standing: R Campbell, D Stapley, G Keato, J Armstrong, R Pike, P Breeze, T Consadine, Jim Beggell (Secretary)

Seated: M Alchin, S Walsh, Bruce Beer (C), J Harris, R Smith,

Front: D Pittard, G Pittard (Ball Boy), R Ryan, Jock the Dog (Mascot)



Enfield Federals C Grade Premiers 1963

Back: J Consadine (Manager), Jim Windshuttle, M Dawson, A Ford, J Goodwin, J Dover (Coach)

Standing: M Offerdahl, R Campbell, Peter Breese, T Consadine, R Pike, Rob Smith

Seated: A Stapley, Bruce Beer (C), R Smith, Dennis Pittard, B Blakeley

Front: Garry Pittard (Ball Boy)



Enfield Federals B Grade 1964

Back: Graeme Bennett, R Ford, Norm Chapman, Jack Sommerfield (Coach), M Thoms, A Stapley, G Batten, F Lockley (Trainer)

Kneeling: Ray Bond, W Hinkley, C Postogna, T Reeves (C), Dennis Pittard, Bruce Beer

Front: David Sommerfield (Ball Boy), Michael Sommerfield (Ball Boy)

In 1964 Bruce was called up by Wests and he played one Third Grade game. However he must have impressed the Selectors in that single game as he was back with Wests in 1965 and played ten Reserve Grade and Ten Third Grade games that year.

The 1966 season was almost a mirror of the previous season. Bruce was learning his craft in the lower grades but would soon make his mark in the top grade.

The preferred half back in Wests First Grade team at the start of 1967 was Pat Thomas. He played the first eight rounds before Queenslander; Ross Goodman took over. Ross played most of the remainder of the season, but Bruce received his chance to play First Grade in the final three rounds of the premiership competition. He linked up with his junior team mate, Dennis Pittard in the halves.

40 minutes each way. Time off for injuries.
FIRST GRADE: Saturday, August 5, 1967 — 3.00 p.m.
 COPYRIGHT PRATTEN PARK

WESTS (Black and White) Coach: NOEL KELLY		NEWTOWN (Royal Blue) Coach: DICK POOLE	
1—Don PARISH	Fullbacks:	Alan MADDALENA— 1	
2—Bob McGUINNESS	Threequarters:	Bob LANIGAN— 2	
3—Peter DIMOND		Bob KEYES (C)— 3	
4—Roy FERGUSON		Brian MOORE— 4	
5—Dave BARSLEY	Five eighths:	David COTTER— 5	
6—Denis PITTARD	Halves:	Bob CARNEGIE— 6	
7—Bruce BEER	Forwards:	Peter NOBBS— 7	
8—Jim CODY		John OAKLEY— 8	
9—John HAYES		Graham WILSON— 9	
10—John BARRY		Les BOYLE—10	
11—Doug WALKADEN		Bruce OLIVE—11	
12—Ken STONESTREET		Clarrie JEFFREYS—12	
13—Noel KELLY (C)		Paul QUINN—13	
14—Barry BRYANT (One to be omitted)			

Bruce Beer's debut in First Grade – Wests v Newtown Round 20, 1967

The following year, 1968, was arguably the pinnacle of Bruce Beer's rugby league career. Bruce was vying for the half back position with John Maxwell for the coveted half back position. John played the first two rounds of the competition, but Bruce returned in round three and played every game for the remainder of the season.

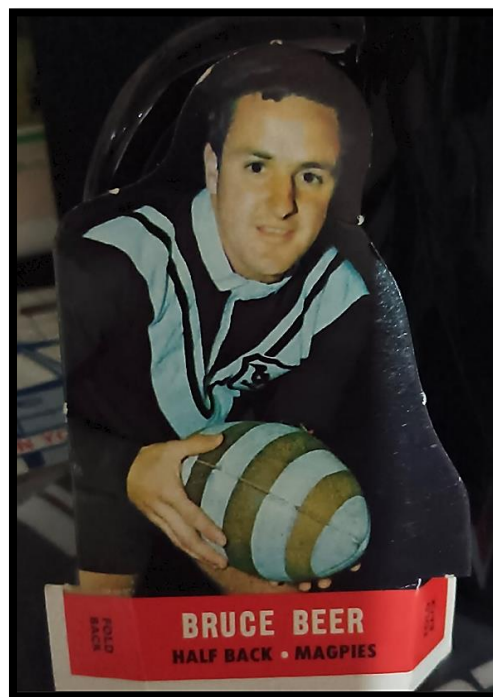
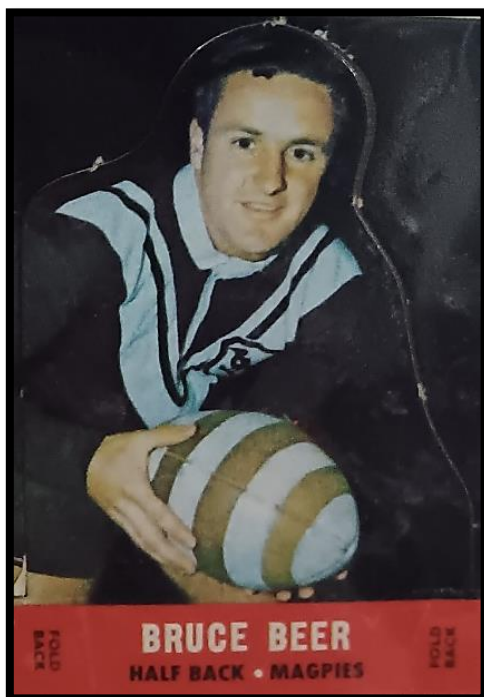
Bruce started the 1969 season where he left off the previous season. He played in the First Grade team that went through to the Final of the Pre Season Cup competition, only to be beaten by Souths 7-19. He then played First Grade in the first twelve rounds of the competition.

TEAMS													
Eric SIMMS	1	FB	1	Tony FORD									
Michael CLEARY	2	W	2	Mick ALCHIN									
Arthur BRANIGHAN	3	C	3	Barry GLASGOW									
Bob HONAN	4	C	4	Gary GUNTON									
Brian JAMES	5	W	5	Peter FLANDERS									
Denis PITTARD	6	FE	6	Tim MURPHY									
Bob GRANT	7	HB	7	Bruce BEER									
Paul SAIT	8	L	8	John BAKER									
Bob MOSES	9	2R	15	Jim CODY									
Bob McCARTHY	10	2R	10	John WALSH									
John O'NEILL	11	FR	11	Noel KELLY (c)									
Elwyn WALTERS	12	HK	12	Ken STONESTREET									
John SATTler (c)	13	FR	13	Steve WINTER									
		B	14	Roy FERGUSON									

Team List 1969 Pre Season Cup Final Souths 19 v Wests 7

The exposure that Bruce received made him a popular figure and he was included in the Scanlens rugby league card series for 1969. This card series was a little unusual as it included a perforation around the player that enabled the player's profile to be popped out and the figure could then stand upright. These cards are now sort after by collectors and are worth many times more than what they would have cost in 1969.

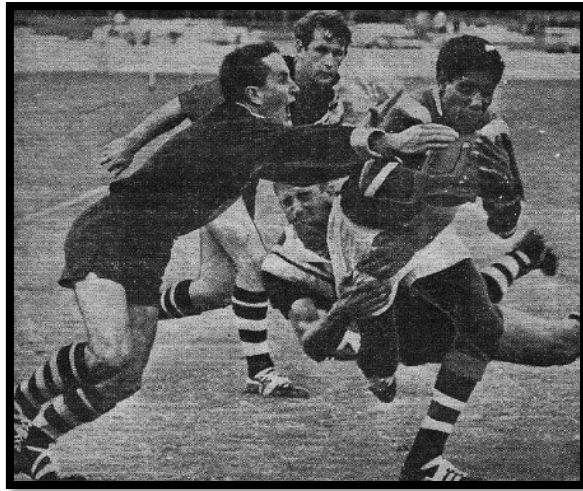
Steve Shield, an avid Wests supporter and collector of memorabilia has provided photos of the Bruce Beer rugby league cards.



Bruce Beer Rugby League Card 1969

Left side card is intact with perforation visible. Right side card has player popped out and standing upright.

Source: Steve Shields Collection



Bruce Beer about to collar Bruce Stewart of Easts

Bruce played one more season with Wests but played no further First Grade games. A young fellow by the name of Raudonikis arrived at Wests towards the end of 1969 and made the half back position his own in 1970. Tom Raudonikis played all but one game in First Grade that year.

During his seven seasons with Wests, Bruce Beer played thirty five First Grade, forty six Reserve Grade, thirty six Third Grade and seven Pre Season Cup games. He scored thirteen tries and kicked forty seven goals as well as seven field goals in all grades for a tally of one hundred and forty seven points.

Bruce	1964			1												1		2
Bruce	1965		10													1	8	19
Bruce	1965			10												10		20
Bruce	1966		9															
Bruce	1966			9												3	5	19
Bruce	1967	3																
Bruce	1967		12													1		3
Bruce	1967			4													5	10
Bruce	1968	20														3	1	6
Bruce	1968		2															
Bruce	1968					2										1		3
Bruce	1969	12														1		5
Bruce	1969		7															
Bruce	1969					5										1		3
Bruce	1970		6													1	1	5
Bruce	1970			12												1	16	35
		35	46	36	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	47	7
																		147

Bruce Beer's playing record at Wests

In 1971, Bruce joined the Sydney Second Division Club, Wentworthville. He played in the undefeated Reserve Grade team of 1971 and was up against another former Wests player in Geoff Henry in the Grand Final. Bruce was once again in the Wentworthville Reserve Grade team in 1972 and 1973 that made the final series.

RESERVE GRADE: GRAND FINAL	
RYDE - EASTWOOD	WENTWORTHVILLE
(Scarlet and White) Coach: ALAN GREIG	(Black and White) Coach: NOEL CORNWALL
31—John GIBSON	Fullbacks: Greg NEWTON—14
14—Alan BAILEY	Threequarters: Ken FOORD—15
44—John JEWESS	Robert HEILER—16
50—Ken HOGG	Greg STOKES—33
51—Mick GRANT	Colin BAKER—18
19—Ray BAILEY	Five-eighths: Roger LUDKIN— 6
20—Geoff HENRY	Halves: Bruce BEER—19
33—Jim BRAGG	Forwards: Geoff SIMMONS (C)—21
3—Alan GREIG (C)	Ray MILLERS—40
39—Steve STANTON	Ray COLLINGS—41
13—Mick COGAN	Paul McCABE—31
28—John LEARY	Dennis CHIRCOP—25
26—Angus LENNON	Geoff BEESLEY—24

RLN 26 September 1971

Reserve Grade — 1.30 p.m. — 35 minutes	
WENTWORTHVILLE	
(All Black, with White crest)	
Coach: NOEL CORNWELL	
Fullback: 14—G. NEWTON	
Threequarters: 15—J. WONG K. BALDOCK—16	
4—B. BERGAN	G. STOKES—18
5—K. FOORD	(One to be omitted)
Halves: 19—R. PERKS B. BEER—20	
Forwards: 21—G. SIMMONS (C) G. USHER—28	
22—G. CAFE	J. COLLINS—23
25—J. BILLS	P. DAY—26
Reserves: R. Heiler, T. Price, G. Melville, G. Aisbett.	

RLN July 1972

Bruce lived in the western suburbs of Sydney all of his life and died at Denistone East, NSW in October 2001.