

John Heyward

..... made an immediate impression a Wests. He was selected for the final pre-season Wills Cup match in 1972 and a fortnight later was in the First Grade team to play the opening round of the competition against Balmain

WESTERN SUBURBS		1972 Round 1 Sunday 26th March Sports Ground		WESTERN SUBURBS	
Balmain 15	def.			Western Suburbs 11	
Michael ROSS	<i>Fullback</i>			Tony FORD	
Paul CROSS	<i>Wing</i>			Don ROGERS	
Geoff STARLING	<i>Centre</i>			Stephen KNIGHT	
Terry RYAN	<i>Centre</i>			John ELFORD	
Mal McMARTIN	<i>Wing</i>			Russell MULLINS	
Tim MURPHY	<i>Five-eighth</i>			John HEYWARD	
Alan TILBROOK	<i>Half</i>			Tom RAUDONIKIS (c)	
John SPENCER (c)	<i>Lock</i>			Rod SMITH	
Terry CROSS	<i>Second Row</i>			John BAKER	
Greg FRYER	<i>Second Row</i>			Barry BRYANT	
Barry McTAGGART	<i>Front Row</i>			Russell JOHNSTONE	
Dick JEFFERY	<i>Hooker</i>			Ken STONESTREET	
Garry LEO	<i>Front Row</i>			John WALKER	
Bob BOLIN	<i>Replacement</i>			John SHERIDAN	

John Heyward's First Grade Debut, Round 1 1972

John played twenty of the twenty two competition games in First Grade that season. In May 1972 he was selected for City Seconds which played against Country Seconds at the SCG. He came off the bench at half time to replace Tim Pickup and contributed to City's 34-5 win..

SYDNEY II		COUNTRY II	
(Blue and Gold) Coach: HARRY BATH		(Maroon and Gold) Coach: GRAHAM KENNEDY	
14—Ted GOODWIN (St. G.)	Fullbacks: (W. Tamworth)	Phil HARRIS—14	
15—Keith EDWARDS (Souths)	Three-quarters: (Ill. W.S.)	David WAITE—15	
16—Phil SMITH (Souths)	(W. Tamworth)	Jon GREEN—16	
17—John BALLESTY (Easts)	(Gerringatong)	Mick CRONIN—17	
18—Roy CORCORAN (Cron.)	(Maitland)	Mick McTERNAN—18	
19—Tim PICKUP (Norths)	Five-eighths: (Guyra)	Ron STARR—19	
20—Dennis WARD (Manly)	Halves: (Temora)	Phil FRITSCH—20	
21—Neil PRINGLE (Newt.)	Forwards: (Ill. W.S.)	Rod URQUHART (C)—21	
22—John ELFORD (Wests)	(Queanbeyan U.)	Brian BOURKE—22	
23—Gary SULLIVAN (Newt.)	(Newc. W.S.)	Frank FISH—23	
24—Dennis MANTEIT (C.B.)	(C'belltown Coll.)	John WALSH—24	
25—Peter MOSCATT (Easts)	(Casino)	Terry WELSH—25	
26—John SATTLER (C) (Souths)	(Cowra)	Greg FEARNLEY—26	
27—John HEYWARD (Wests)	Replacements: (Manilla)	Warren FISHER—27	
28—Owen O'DONNELL (Norths)	(Kyogle)	John SMITH—28	
29—John ARMSTRONG (E) (Lis. W.)	(Wagga M.)	Wayne HETHERINGTON—29	
30—Barry BEATH (St. G.)		Bill RAKE—30	

John Debuted in City Seconds, May 1972

To cap off John's successful debut year he was selected as Wests Rookie of the Year.



John Heyward Rookie of the Year 1972

John Heyward started the 1973 season in fine form. He played two pre-season cup games before taking his place in the First Grade team for round one of the competition. He played through to the round eleven match against St George and was selected to play in the round twelve match but succumbed to injury and withdrew from the team.

He returned to First Grade in round nineteen, coming off the bench to replace Steve Satterly and retained his position in Firsts for the remainder of the season

John played all four pre-season Cup matches in 1974 and then the first three competition games before injuring his shoulder. He played another First Grade game in round five before effectively being out of action for most of the season.

It was an unusual year for John Heyward in 1975. He started in his preferred five-eighth position early in the season but appeared to fall out of favour, with Tim Murphy, who came across from Balmain, making that position his for most of the season.

After spending time in Reserve Grade, John came off the bench to replace John Donnelly in a round ten match against St George. The pack was reshuffled and John packed in at lock. John played seven games at centre before finally returning to five-eighth for the last couple of games.

1976 was not a memorable year for John Heyward. He played only two First Grade games, the last of these being in the round twenty one match against North Sydney when he packed down in the second row with Jim Murphy. It was evident that John had not been able to hold down a position in the backline of the First Grade team for some time and probably needed a change.

He did this by making a move in 1977 to Corrimal in the Illawarra competition. Corrimal were a successful club in the Illawarra rugby league competition during the 1970's but John Heyward only played the one season before moving on to Brisbane Norths in 1978.

Norths were one of Brisbane's premier clubs and in 1978 were coached by the legendary Bob Bax. However, it was not a great season for Norths, finishing with the wooden spoon that year. John once again moved on at the end of the season and this time returned to Wests in 1979.

John played two pre-season cup games and was then selected in the round one competition game at five-eighth alongside Tom Raudonikis. It was a promising start for John Heyward but within minutes of the kick-off he suffered an injury which forced him out of the game. Wests Archive web site has recorded an account of this game and noted that the Sydney Morning Herald reported that;

"Wests had to re-arrange their team in the fifth minute when five-eighth John Heyward went off with a twisted knee. Graeme O'Grady moved to five-eighth, Les Boyd to lock and Cooper, who played a full game in reserve-grade, joined Brown in the second row."

John made a comeback in Wests First Grade team when he was selected to play in an AMCO Cup match on Anzac Day 1979. Wests defeated Balmain 22-11 and John held his position for the round six competition game a few days later. It was an unusual match with referee, Greg Hartley taking a spill and then receiving an accidental blow to the jaw as he was separating an altercation between George Peponis and Geoff Robinson of Canterbury and Wests John Heyward.

John was one of a number of players who suffered injuries from that match and it proved to be his last First Grade game for Wests. He finished the season in Reserve Grade.



Western Suburbs First Grade Team 1979

Back: Jack Jeffries, Trevor Reardon, Bruce Gibbs, Gerard Crowe, Pat Hundy,

Middle: Bob Cooper, Wayne Smith, Don Moseley, John Dorahy, Graeme O'Grady, Mark Beavan, John Heyward

Front: Roy Masters (Coach), John Donnelly, Buddy Cain, Tom Raudonikis (C), Ray Brown, Warren Boland, Bill Cloughessy

During John's six seasons with Wests he played fifty seven First Grade, thirty nine Reserve Grade, six Under 23's, thirteen Pre Season and four AMCO Cup games. He scored twenty two tries and kicked three goals in all grades for a total of seventy two points.

Surname	Forename	Year	1 st Grade	2 nd Grade	U/23's	Pre-Season Cup	AMCO Cup	Tries	Goals	Field Goals	Total Points
Heyward	John	1972	20					2			6
Heyward	John	1972				1		1	3		9
Heyward	John	1973	15					5			15
Heyward	John	1973		3							
Heyward	John	1973				2		1			3
Heyward	John	1974	4					2			6
Heyward	John	1974		5				1			3
Heyward	John	1974				4		1			3
Heyward	John	1974					1	1			3
Heyward	John	1975	14					2			6
Heyward	John	1975		8				3			9
Heyward	John	1975				3		1			3
Heyward	John	1975					1				
Heyward	John	1976	2								
Heyward	John	1976		6							
Heyward	John	1976			6						
Heyward	John	1976				1					
Heyward	John	1976					1				
Heyward	John	1979	2								
Heyward	John	1979		17				1			3
Heyward	John	1979				2					
Heyward	John	1979					1	1			3
Total			57	39	6	13	4	22	3		72

John Heyward's Playing Record at Wests

John was still only twenty five years old in 1979 and still had a lot more rugby league in him. He moved to the NSW South Coast and captain-coached the Moruya team in 1980 and then moved across to the neighbouring Narooma team where he played with former Wests players Jim Croucher and Pat Hundy.



John Heyward at Narooma



John Heyward playing with Narooma (jersey with multi barred saddle), early 1980's

By 1984 John had moved to the lower north coast of NSW and played with the Sawtell club for a final season in rugby league. He remained on the NSW North Coast and settled in the town of Lawrence, near McLean, where he died in November 2022. His memorial is at the Lawrence Cemetery, Anglican section, BB 1.