

## Jim Murphy

..... signed up with the Queensland Police after leaving school in 1964 and spent time at the Brisbane Police Academy as a Police Cadet. Others to follow Jim's path included Wayne Bennett and Mal Meninga. Bennett went on to Coach and make the Academy team a force in the local competition.



Queensland Police Academy Rugby League Team 1979 (Queensland Police Museum)  
Probationary Mal Meninga (2<sup>nd</sup> from left), Commissioner Terry Lewis (Suit), Senior Constable Wayne Bennett (Coach)

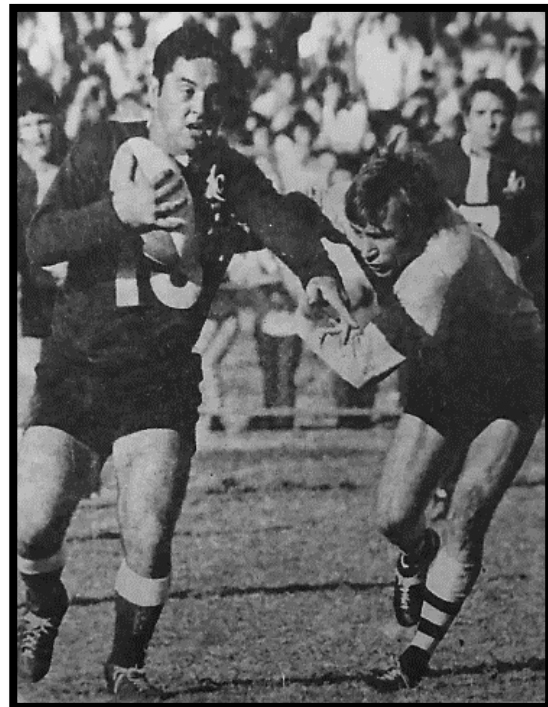
However the Police Force was not for Jim and he soon joined the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) and was based at the Amberley bomber base near Ipswich. He initially played rugby league with the RAAF in 1966 but the team folded and the following year he played for Ipswich West End and also represented Ipswich in the Bulimba Cup competition. The Bulimba Cup competition was a stepping stone to achieving State selection.

Jim joined the Brisbane Souths Club in 1968 while still with the RAAF. He remained with the RAAF until 1972 and recounts the time when he was based at Toowoomba on the F111 project and had to hitch hike to Brisbane five days per week for training and playing commitments. He would easily clock up one thousand kilometres a week to play rugby league.

Jim came to the attention of Selectors in 1970 and was selected in Queensland Firsts for two matches against NSW and was also selected to play for Brisbane against the touring Great Britain team.

The Brisbane team was a strong outfit with Lloyd Weir and Greg Veivers in the front row and Des Morris with Jim Murphy in the second row. However they were equally matched by the Great Britain team which had in its ranks players such as Malcolm Reilly, Roger Millward and Alan Hardisty. Great Britain proved too strong for the Brisbane team but the experience gained was a great platform for Jim to further his representative career.

LIONS TOUR 1970					
BRISBANE FIRSTS		7 - 28		LIONS	
TEAMS					
Peter LOBEGEIGER	1	FB	1	Derek EDWARDS	
Eric LILLEY	2	W	11	Alan HARDISTY (c)	
Glen HARRISON	3	C	9	Chris HESKETH	
Bob PEUT	4	C	7	Syd HYNES	
Asaeli BATABASAGA	5	W	4	Alan SMITH	
John WHITE	6	FE	14	Roger MILLWARD	
John BROWN (c)	7	HB	13	Barry SEABOURNE	
Lloyd WEIER	8	FR	17	Johnny WARD	
Phil MASSY	9	HK	20	Tony FISHER	
Greg VEIVERS	10	FR	15	Dave CHISNALL	
Des MORRIS	11	2R	24	Bob IRVING	
Jim MURPHY	12	2R	21	Jimmy THOMPSON	
Jim ADAMS	13	L	25	Malcolm REILLY	
Barry DOWLING	14	B	23	Phil LOWE	
Frank CLANCY	15	B			
Henry HOLLOWAY		HC		John WHITELEY	



Brisbane v Great Britain 10 June 1970 at Brisbane

Jim Murphy playing for Queensland v NSW

In 1971, Jim again represented Queensland against NSW in the three match series. Queensland was well beaten in game two of the series but was very competitive in the final game, going down to NSW 15-17. Jim's form saw him being selected for the Australian tour of New Zealand where he played for Australia against a New Zealand XIII and Auckland.



Jim (No.13) packing down against Bob O'Reilly (No.13), Queensland v NSW 29 May 1971



### Australian Rugby League Team Tour of New Zealand 1971

**Back:** P Sait, R O'Reilly, G Starling, W Bennett, L Williamson, J Murphy, R Grant

**Middle:** K Campbell, R Branighan, B Fitzsimmons, T Raudonikis, R Fulton, J Sattler, R Costello, A Branson

**Front:** H Bath (Coach), R McCarthy (VC), R Dunn (Manager), G Langlands (C), R Stafford (Manager), B Beath, A Richards (Trainer)

By 1972 Jim was attracting interest from Sydney clubs. Don Parish, the Wests Coach had approached Jim to move to Sydney but Jim thought that he wasn't quite ready to make the move at that time. He remained in Queensland and it was soon evident that he had made the right call.

Jim had become a regular in the Queensland team. He was a member of the Queensland team that toured New Zealand and then played Monaro in NSW. Jim has been credited with playing twenty two games for Queensland against all opposition. He played both interstate games against NSW in 1972 and it also earned him a place in the Australian team for game two against New Zealand at Lang Park. He was selected on the bench but came into the match early in the second half, replacing Bob McCarthy who went off injured.

AUSTRALIA VS NEW ZEALAND 1972					
AUSTRALIA		31 - 7		NEW ZEALAND	
TEAMS					
Graeme LANGLANDS (c)	1	FB	1	Warren COLLICOAT	
Wayne STEWART	2	W	2	Phil ORCHARD	
Geoff STARLING	3	C	3	Roy CHRISTIAN (c)	
Bob FULTON	4	C	4	John O'SULLIVAN	
George AMBRUM	5	W	5	Maurice BRERETON	
Tim PICKUP	6	FE	6	Dennis WILLIAMS	
Tom RAUDONIKIS	7	HB	17	Shane DOWSETT	
Arthur BEETSON	13	FR	15	Robert PAUL	
Elwyn WALTERS	12	HK	9	James FISHER	
Bob O'REILLY	11	FR	10	Doug GAILEY	
Bob MCCARTHY	10	2R	11	Murray EADE	
John ELFORD	9	2R	12	John GREENGRASS	
Gary SULLIVAN	8	L	13	Anthony KRILETICH	
Ted GOODWIN	14	B	14	Dick BOLTON	
Jim MURPHY	15	B			
Harry BATH		HC		Lory BLANCHARD	

Australia v New Zealand 15 July 1972 at Lang Park

It was popular at the time for Australian rugby league players to head over to England to play in the Australian off season, and Jim was one of the players who received permission. He was linked with the Warrington Club but Wests were still keen to have him at Lidcombe and Jim thought that he had a point to prove by playing and becoming successful in Sydney rugby league. He remained in Australia and joined Wests in 1973, signing a five year contract.



RLN October 1972

Jim started 1973 playing for Wests in the pre-season Wills Cup. He played in all four Cup games and then played in First Grade in round one of the premiership competition against North Sydney. However, tragedy struck in the second half when Jim was carried from the field with a broken jaw.



**Western Suburbs First Grade Pre Season Cup Team 1973**

**Back:** Robbie Parker, Stephen Knight, John Heyward, Russell Mullins, Jim Cody, Tony Ford, Jim Murphy  
**Middle:** John Sheridan, Reg Hatton, Tom Raudonikis (C), Ted Walton, Shane day, Alan Ashmore  
**Front:** Don Parish (Coach)

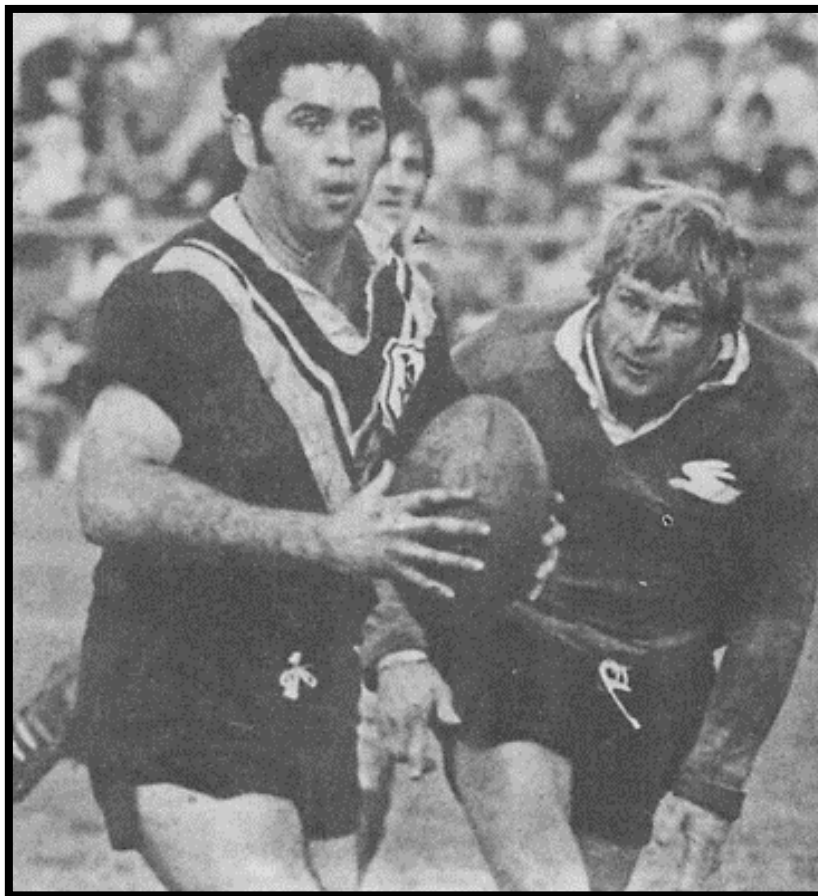
WESTERN SUBURBS		1973 Round 1 Sunday 25th March Lidcombe Oval		WESTERN SUBURBS	
North Sydney 23		def.	Western Suburbs 6		
Barry GLASGOW		<i>Fullback</i>	Tony FORD		
George VARELA		<i>Wing</i>	Robbie PARKER		
Mal McLACHLAN		<i>Centre</i>	Stephen KNIGHT		
Terry DOUGLAS		<i>Centre</i>	John HEYWARD		
George AMBRUM		<i>Wing</i>	Russell MULLINS		
Keith OUTTEN		<i>Five-eighth</i>	Neville SINCLAIR		
Gary PRETTI		<i>Half</i>	Tom RAUDONIKIS (c)		
Bruce WALKER		<i>Lock</i>	Ted WALTON		
Dave COOPER		<i>Second Row</i>	Barry BRYANT		
Eddie HEATLEY		<i>Second Row</i>	John BAKER		
Steve WINTER		<i>Front Row</i>	Jim MURPHY		
Brian ANDERSON		<i>Hooker</i>	Shane DAY		
Ross WARNER (c)		<i>Front Row</i>	Brian ISBESTER		
		<i>Replacement</i>	Terry ROSE		
		<i>Replacement</i>	Nick MOROKO		

Jim Murphy's First Grade Debut – He was carried from the field in the second half with a broken jaw.

A report in the Sun on 26 March 1973 gave an account of Jim's injury;

*"Jim Murphy's badly broken jaw will keep the big Western Suburbs prop-forward out of action for at least three months. "It is a bad break ... it's split right in the middle of his chin," said Wests' coach Don Parish this morning. Murphy's injury occurred midway through the second half when he attempted to tackle Steve Winter, a former Wests' player, head on."*

Jim came back and played one Reserve Grade game before resuming in First Grade against Cronulla in round fifteen. He was immediately back in the form which established him as a first class player. Wests were more competitive in the final rounds of the competition which augured well for the following season.



## **BIG JIM SHINING BRIGHT**

For a player who has missed almost the whole season, Jim Murphy has played strongly in recent weeks.

Playing only his fourth match of the premiership last week, Murphy was again outstanding for the Magpies.

He broke a jaw in the Wills Cup pre-season and returned in reserve grade four weeks back.

He was outstanding against Easts in Wests 10-0 win and while some of his team-mates did not come up to

scratch, he was in fine form against Souths last week.

He came to Sydney from Queensland with a big reputation and he has indicated in the last few weeks, he intends to live up to it.

He toured New Zealand in 1971, but failed to make an impact on selectors for the World Cup last year.

He has signed for five years with the "Maggies" and if he plays as well as he has been, they say, he can stay longer.

Murphy is pictured left with Souths' Rod Urquhart in pursuit. Picture by John Knight, courtesy Rugby League week.

Jim with Ball - Wests v Souths Round 19, 28 July 1973 - RLN 5 August 1973

In February 1974 the victorious Kangaroos returned to Australia and took part in a Kangaroos v Rest of the World charity match at Brookvale Oval to raise funds for the Children's Hospital. Jack Gibson coached the Rest of the World team and Jim Murphy played for the "Rest" as a prop forward.

<b>THE REST v KANGAROOS</b>	
14 February 1974 at Brookvale Oval	
<b>Fullback</b>	<b>Fullback</b>
1 Eric Simms (Souths)	1 Graham Eadie (Manly)
<b>Three-quarters</b>	<b>Three-quarters</b>
2 Bill Mullins (Easts)	2 Ray Branaghan (Manly)
3 Roy Ferguson (St George)	3 Bob Fulton (Manly)
4 Gary Pethybridge (St George)	4 Geoff Starling (Balmain)
5 Stephen Knight (West's)	5 David Waite (Cronulla)
<b>Five-Eighth</b>	<b>Five-Eighth</b>
6 Ian Martin (Manly)	6 Tim Pickup (Norths)
<b>Half-back</b>	<b>Half-back</b>
7 John Mayes (Easts)	7 Tom Raudonikis (West's) (C)
<b>Forwards</b>	<b>Forwards</b>
8 Mal Reilly (Manly) (C)	8 Paul Sait (Souths)
9 Rod Reddy (St George)	9 Gary Stevens (Souths)
10 Bill Ashurst (Penrith)	10 Ken Maddison (Cronulla)
11 Cliff Watson (Wollongong)	11 Arthur Beetson (Easts)
12 Mick Stephenson (Penrith)	12 Elwyn Walters (Easts)
13 Jim Murphy (West's)	13 Bob O'Reilly (Parramatta)
<b>Reserves</b>	<b>Reserves</b>
14 Billy Smith (St George)	14 John Lang (Easts Brisbane)
15 Chris Wellman (Cronulla)	15 John O'Neill (Manly)
16 Ken Hutchinson (Newcastle)	16 Mick Cronin (Gerrigong)
17 George Piggins (Souths)	17 Lionel Williamson (Newtown)
<b>Coach</b> Jack Gibson	<b>Coach</b> Graeme Langlands

Jim again started the 1974 season by playing each of the four pre-season Cup games. He starred in the round one 62-5 thrashing of Balmain even though he came off at half time with a sprained ankle. The Sun on 1 April 1974 gave an account of Jim's contribution to the match;

*"Tommy Raudonikis did the prompting as the West's forwards ran like backs and cracked Balmain's paper-thin defence almost as they liked. Prop forward Jim Murphy, who retired at half-time with a sprained ankle, turned in a display which wouldn't have been disowned by the mighty Arthur Beetson. Not once did Murphy fail to send a team-mate through a gap when cornered and whenever the Balmain defence hung off waiting for him to pass, he galloped through the opening."*

West's started the season well but in the round six match against Newtown further tragedy struck the team and Jim Murphy. The Daily Telegraph on 6 May 1974 reported;

*"Jim Murphy's jaw broken again .. Stephen Knight in great pain with a shoulder injury ... John Elford favouring his damaged right hand and Robbie Parker with his knee packed in ice. That was the dismal news for West's after their 26-13 trouncing at the hands of Newtown at Lidcombe Oval yesterday. It was a truly black day for West's, who started sensationally to lead the Jets 7-0 after 10 minutes. But then the trouble started. Murphy was downed in a high tackle as he off-loaded a pass and immediately called for assistance. He was taken from the field and told West's officials he feared his jaw was broken. He then went to hospital for x-rays. A similar injury last year kept the rugged Murphy out of all but 10 games. It's a bitter blow for the Magpies."*

West's recovered and played in the 1974 finals series but Jim Murphy's season was over.

Jim had a good season in 1975 and remained relatively injury free, missing only the one premiership game. He played in the three pre-season cup matches and made the finals playoff round. In both cases Wests were defeated by Parramatta.

In 1976, Jim played in the pre-season Cup matches but did not play in the first three rounds of the competition. He came onto the bench in round four and played from the bench until round ten. He then was in the starting line up in First Grade for the remainder of the year.

Jim played two pre-season Cup games in 1977 but broke his arm in a match against Canterbury. It was a serious injury which require a plate to be inserted. The break was complicated by Jim developing a staph infection which created complications and at one stage it was feared that Jim could lose his arm. Jim continued training in 1977 but his season was over and so was his time at Wests.



Jim Murphy Pratten Park Magpies Reunion 2023

During his five seasons at Wests, Jim played fifty five First Grade, eleven Reserve Grade, sixteen Pre Season Cup games and one AMCO Cup game for a total of eighty three matches. He scored seventeen tries and kicked one goal for a tally of fifty three points.

Surname	Forename	Year	1 <sup>st</sup> Grade	2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	Pre-Season Cup	AMCO Cup	Tries	Goals	Field Goals	Total Points
Murphy	Jim	1973	9					1			3
Murphy	Jim	1973		1							
Murphy	Jim	1973				4					
Murphy	Jim	1974	6					2			6
Murphy	Jim	1974				4		2			6
Murphy	Jim	1975	22					4			12
Murphy	Jim	1975		1							
Murphy	Jim	1975				3					
Murphy	Jim	1976	18					6			18
Murphy	Jim	1976		9				2	1		8
Murphy	Jim	1976				3					
Murphy	Jim	1976					1				
Murphy	Jim	1977				2					
<b>Total</b>			<b>55</b>	<b>11</b>		<b>16</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>53</b>

Jim Murphy's Playing Record at Wests

In 1978, Jim moved to the NSW north coast town of Kempsey. His intention was to be there for two years and then move on. Jim remained in Kempsey and is still there today. Jim captain-coached the Kempsey Kowboys from 1978 to 1980. He played an AMCO Cup match for North Coast in 1978 and also played against the touring New Zealand team in the same year.

Jim finally retired from playing at the age of thirty two but his involvement in rugby league at both the junior and senior level has continued over the decades.

Jim has coached representative teams on the NSW north coast and served on various Group Committees over the years. His commitment to junior rugby league has been the one constant with various stints with the Smithtown Tigers and the Macleay Magpies. He has coached the juniors from under 7's up to under 18's and has been able to recycle himself by starting with the under 7's once again.



Jim Murphy coaching a Smithtown junior team

Jim worked for Bunnings on the NSW north coast for twenty five years before taking up a position with the Department of Justice and Attorney General at the Mid North Coast Correctional Centre. His work there aligns well with his other community involvement which includes being a supporter and mentor of junior rugby league and children's diabetes.

In 2023, Jim Murphy founded a program called "Kick Start" in conjunction with Wests Tigers. Jim, who these days is an Industries Officer at the Mid North Coast Correctional Centre combined his love of rugby league with the dedication and passion that he has for his job.

Wests Tigers captain and five other players helped deliver the five week program to fourteen maximum security inmates.

The inmates who were selected for the Kick Start program took part in intensive therapeutic virtual sessions with players, where they learned and spoke candidly about mental health, addiction, victim impact and building positive relationships.

Koroisau and his team mates spoke about how they pushed through difficult moments in their own lives, offering advice they'd give to young people tempted by crime.





Wests Tigers players Starford To'a, Api Koroisau and Stefano Utoikamanu chat to inmates via zoom

Jim said that “some of the inmates were quite emotional talking about things they’d never spoken about before, and the further we got into the program, I’ve never seen fellas become so happy and close.” During this interview, Jim advised that Wests Tigers are continuing their support of the program and a new round will commence soon.

There is probably no one better than Jim Murphy to drive a program such as Kick Start. It reflects his values of family, community and loyalty which can be traced to his early days playing rugby league and in particular from his time at Wests.

Injuries aside, Jim has fond memories of being part of the Wests family during his playing days. It is a theme which has been independently stated in interviews with other players from that period. While any number of players had offers to play elsewhere, very few from this period took that opportunity.

Jim has expressed the view that Wests were more than a rugby league team at that time. They were a group of mates that looked out for each other, both on and off the field. The sense of loyalty made it hard to break the bonds. Age and weary bodies would eventually take its toll but the friendships were enduring.

The camaraderie and respect in the game also extended to opposition players as well. In an interview with Luke Horton in 2008, Jim recounts the time that he first came up against John Sattler in a State game. Jim says, “he gave me a hell of a belting and by the end of the game, I had 23 stitches.”

After the game, Sattler sought him out and asked, “Did you learn anything today?” Jim said, “Yeah, I learned to stay away from big blokes like you!”

Jim met Sattler again, as a team mate in the Australian side, and this time the South Sydney great was quick to impress the finer points of the game on his young protégé. Jim said that Sattler taught him a lot in a short time as they toured together but at the end he could only teach me so much. When Jim asked him why, Sattler replied because I’ve got to play you again next year.

Jim has reflected on his time since he finished his playing career. He notes that the game is more professional now, more like a business, even here in the bush. He can remember when he first came to Kempsey, all the families of the players would get together and make a day of it. That doesn't happen anymore.

Jim is a proud member of the Pratten Park Magpies and enjoys catching up with old mates when he can. Jim was recognised by Wests as a member of the Team of the 1970's in a pack which included John Donnelly, Ray Brown, John Elford, Geoff Foster and Les Boyd. It doesn't get much better than that!