1973 Round 5 Saturday 21st April Pratten Park

Canterbury 42 def. Western Suburbs 14

Gary DOWLING	***Fullback***	Tony FORD
Don ROGERS	***Wing***	Robbie PARKER
Bernie LOWTHER	***Centre***	Stephen KNIGHT
Terry MURPHY	***Centre***	Terry MULLINS
Chris ANDERSON	***Wing***	Allan ASHMORE
Tony HERRING	***Five-eighth***	John HEYWARD
Phil YOUNG	***Half***	Tom RAUDONIKIS (c)
John PEEK	***Lock***	Neville SINCLAIR
John McDONELL (c)	***Second Row***	John BAKER
Norm THOMAS	***Second Row***	Barry BRYANT
Henry TATANA	***Front Row***	John O'BRYAN
Bill NOONAN	***Hooker***	Shane DAY
Dennis MANTEIT	***Front Row***	Brian ISBESTER
	Replacement	Terry ROSE

Tries	Chris ANDERSON (3) Gary DOWLING (2) John PEEK (2) Dennis MANTEIT John McDONELL Don ROGERS	Stephen KNIGHT Tom RAUDONIKIS
Go*als*	Henry TATANA (6)	Tony FORD (4)

Match Description

Western Suburbs: Full-back: A Ford; three-quarters: R Parker, S Knight, T Mullins, A Ashmore; five-eighth: J Heyward; half: T Raudonikis (c); forwards: N Sinclair, J Baker, B Bryant, J O'Bryan, S Day, B Isbester

Canterbury-Bankstown: Full-back: Gary Dowling; three-quarters: D Rogers, B Lowther, T Murphy, C Anderson; five-eighth: T Herring; half; P Young; forwards: J Peek, J McDonell (c), N Thomas, H Tatana, W Noonan, D Manteit **Referee: B Barnes (The Sun 19th April 1973)**

Canterbury-Bankstown shot to the top of the Rugby League premiership when it handed out a 42-14 hiding to Western Suburbs at Pratten Park yesterday. Canterbury coach Malcolm Clift says his side played its hardest first-round game. The game was a sharp and sustained display which netted ten tries. Whether Canterbury holds its top-of-the-ladder position depends on the outcomes of games Manly and Cronulla play today and St George play tomorrow. From its five games so far, Canterbury have won three against Eastern Suburbs, South Sydney and Wests, drew with Manly and lost to Newtown. "I think it will come to a head in a fortnight when we play St George, which will be a clear-cut competition leader," said a jubilant Clift. Canterbury has not started a season off so well for years and yesterday's form needs only to be maintained for it to be a premiership threat. The Berries raced to a 23-4 half-time lead. Wests then hit back to trail 26-14 after 70 minutes and Canterbury piled on the pressure in the closing stages, scoring 16 points from four tries and two conversion goals in the last seven minutes. A 5-1 first half share of scrum possession gained by Canterbury hooker, Bill Noonan, and Wests' forwards failure to move up in defence contributed to the big score by half-time. The big Canterbury forwards, led by Dennis Manteit, Henry Tatana and stand-in skipper, John McDonell, were ruthless and gave a terrible battering to Wests' lighter pack. And the Canterbury backs, inspired by former New Zealand star centre, Bernie Lowther, were as sharp as a razor. Lowther, rated the best attacking centre to play in Sydney since Reg Gasnier's days, launched almost all Canterbury's attacking raids. Second-rower McDonell, who led Canterbury in the absence of regular captain, Geoff Connell, had a hand in three of his side's first four tries. He scored one himself and sent a one-handed pass for Manteit to score the last try almost on full-time. Winger, Chris Anderson, scored three tries, two set up for him by Lowther, and the other from backing up fullback, Gary Dowling. Two of Anderson's tries were gems. The first came after Lowther kicked downfield, regathered and kicked again for Anderson to outrace the Wests' backs and touch down. Dowling gathered the ball from a kick-off after lock, John Peek's, second try, ran through Wests' poor defence and sent Anderson racing 40 yards to complete his hat-trick of tries. Wests' coach, Don Parish, blamed his forwards' poor showing for the thrashing. "Our forwards would not move up and knock Canterbury down and they didn't command the slightest respect from blokes like Manteit and Tatana," he said. Clift said he could not have been happier than with the way his Canterbury team played to his instructions. "I've got their confidence, and they've got mine and I think that's more than half the battle," he said. **(Sunday Mirror 22nd April 1973)**

……

Notes: *Wests' homecoming to Pratten Park was a disaster as they were given a ten tries to two hiding by the Berries. The re-shuffled pack didn't fire at all and the loss of the first half scrums five to one didn't help either. Tommy Raudonikis was clearly Wests' best and he did more tackling than any of the forwards. Barry Bryant finished with an injured knee and was in doubt for the Anzac Day match.*