1996 Round 20 Monday 19th August Campbelltown Stadium

Western Suburbs 23 def. North Sydney 22

Andrew LEEDS	***Fullback***	Matt SEERS
Darren WILLIS	***Wing***	Brett DALLAS
Aseri LAING	***Centre***	Ben IKIN
Brandon PEARSON	***Centre***	Chris CARUANA
Kevin McGUINNESS	***Wing***	David HALL
Andrew WILLIS	***Five-eighth***	Michael BUETTNER
Willie NEWTON	***Half***	Jason TAYLOR (c)
Paul LANGMACK (c)	***Lock***	Billy MOORE
Damian KENNEDY	***Second Row***	David FAIRLEIGH
Bill DUNN	***Second Row***	Greg FLORIMO
Justin DOOLEY	***Front Row***	Brenton POMERY
Steve GEORGALLIS	***Hooker***	Mark SODEN
Harvey HOWARD	***Front Row***	Gary LARSON
Darren CAPOVILLA	***Replacement***	Josh STUART
Paul BELL	***Replacement***	Danny WILLIAMS
Nathan LAKEMAN	***Replacement***	Nigel ROY
Ken McGUINNESS	***Replacement***	Craig WILSON

Tries	Andrew WILLIS	Nigel ROY
	Aseri LAING	Greg FLORIMO
	Brandon PEARSON	Chris CARUANA
Go*als*	Andrew LEEDS (5)	Jason TAYLOR (5)
	Andrew WILLIS (1) Field Goal	

Match Description

North Sydney: Full-back: M Seers; three-quarters: B Dallas, B Ikin, C Caruana, D Hall; five-eighth: M Buettner; half: J Taylor (c); forwards: B Moore, D Fairleigh, G Florimo, B Pomery, M Soden, G Larson

Western Suburbs: Full-back: A Leeds; three-quarters: D Willis, A Laing, B Pearson, Kevin McGuinness; five-eighth: A Willis; half: W Newton; forwards P Langmack (c), D Kennedy, B Dunn, J Dooley, S Georgallis, H Howard **Referee: P McBlane (Daily Telegraph 20th August 1996)**

The first field goal of five-eighth Andrew Willis' career last night kicked Western Suburbs back into the top eight in another unforgettable Monday Night Football epic at Campbelltown Sports Ground. With just 42 seconds left and the scores tied 22-22, Willis sent an ungainly dropkick into the chilly air from 44 metres out, one which even he gave little chance of clearing the crossbar. With 40.5 seconds remaining, the ball dropped over – just - and the Wests' players back on halfway began embracing each other. … Just two minutes earlier, Willis had conceded a penalty near his own posts which allowed North's captain Jason Taylor to tie the game. "I've never kicked a field goal before, and I don't care if I never kick one again," Willis said. "A few blokes were shouting at me to use the bomb, a few was shouting 'field goal'. I didn't know what to do. It was a bit wobbly at first - but it got there." Willis and his teammates were mobbed by fans as the siren sounded - something none of them could remember having happened before at a home game. "I've got a good little footy team," boasted coach Tom Raudonikis. Norths, now in grave danger of losing fourth spot in the semi-final double-chance to Cronulla, cleared out of their dressing room before most reporters could reach them. The Bears looked in control when they raced to an 8-2 lead early, and looked in control again when they scored eight points in eight minutes after being behind 10-8 at half time. The fact that they did this without forward Josh Stuart, who was sent to the sin-bin for fighting just before halftime, only contributed to the impression they would soon run away with the match. But the sides continued to trade tries, and Wests hit the front when centre Brandon Pearson's 67th minute try was converted by fullback Andrew Leeds. Then came Taylor's goal - he uncharacteristically missed two last night - and the memorable finish. Discussing 18-year-old half back rookie Willie Newton, Raudonikis said "He can kick them from halfway, and when he slipped over just before the field goal, I thought we were gone. One point was not going to be enough. I thought our season was over. People have been saying we'll be a good side next year,. I say: "Hang on, this year is not over yet! Where there's life, there's hope." Raudonikis seemed particularly enchanted by the pitch invasion - perhaps it reminded him of the Magpies' glory days. "I know it's not good for rugby league, all those people running on, but it hadn't happened here in years. I think it was OK - just this once." **(Sydney Morning Herald 20th August 1996)**

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Notes: *This was an exciting back-to-the-wall win, where Andrew Willis slotted a 45m field goal 30 seconds from the finish. A draw was not a good enough result and the crowd erupted. Willie Newton had an impressive debut at half but it was the evergreen Paul Langmack who was the Wests' star, throwing the final pass in all three of their tries. For Raudonikis, it was Andrews Leeds' desperate try-saving tackle near the end that gave them the result.*

View a condensed version of the game here: Western Suburbs Magpies vs. North Sydney Bears | Round 20, 1996 | Condensed Match