

Neville Rounsley – One of the “oldest” former West players around



The aim was to find some of the “oldest” West players around....and the name Neville Rounsley was mentioned....so this is Neville’s story.

Neville was born in 1932 and was brought up in a house at 4 Mackie Avenue, New Lambton.....smack bang in the middle of West territory.

As a kid, after school and at weekends, Neville would take off on his trusty bike to find a game of park footy....only returning home “before dark”.

His father had returned from the First World War traumatised by his experiences, and although Neville was a good student, who attended Newcastle Boys High School, he left school at the age of 14 to help supplement the family income.

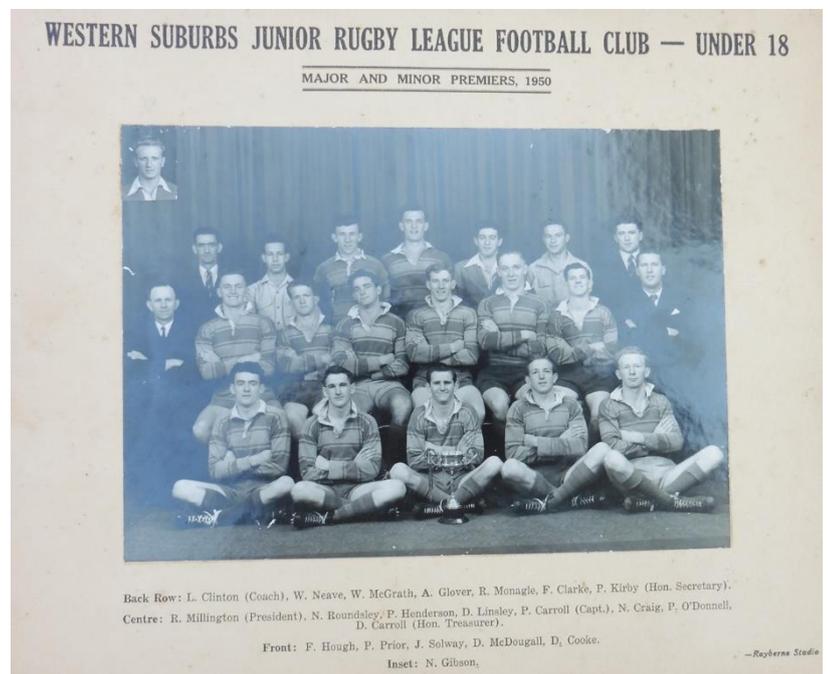
He obtained a position as “shop boy” at Avery scales, which led to him being apprenticed as a scale mechanic at the age of 16 ... a job that he excelled at...but a job that was to be the downfall of a promising football career.

As a 14 yo Neville began his first of two seasons with West Under 16’s. He recalls riding his push bike to all games...even to Belmont to play Lakes...as the family finances did not allow enough money for the bus fare. (He recalls

riding his bike down the hill into Belmont North, and being passed by a bus with most of his team mates aboard....and they gave Neville a “right royal salute”.)

After his two years in Under 16’s Neville played Rugby Union for Adamstown (yep Adamstown) in the Alderton Cup competition...the Adamstown team being a spin-off from the

Adamstown Church of England. He was selected in the Newcastle Under 19 Rugby Union side that went to the country carnival at Orange “a great trip”



But then mates Don McDougall, John Mangano and others talked him into coming back to West Under 18’s and in 1950 this team were Minor and Major Premiers...with Neville winning the “Best Forward” award at Presentation Night, and Peter Carroll the “Best Back” award (In those days good footballers were “snuffled” up by the Sydney clubs...and Peter Carroll went to St George for the 1951 season.) Neville recalls beating North in the Grand Final...a team that contained a future Australian player, Brian Carlson.

Neville was also a member of the West Under 20 team that defeated Teachers College by 34 to 4 in the Grand Final...and again he won the “Best Forward” award. (pictured)



Neville made his First Grade debut in 1953...and he recalls the other front rower for West... the “big man” - Col Curry. He also recalls that West appointed a Sydney player, Ernie Bunting as First Grade coach but things didn’t work out....so Ernie went back to Sydney and Noel Dagwell took over as First Grade coach.

At the end of the 1953 season there was an end of year trip to Singleton, where West won the knockout competition ... *had to win 4 games to win the knockout...won them all ...had a great time..*

However, by this time, “Avery Scales” had clicked in. Avery Scales had contracts to service most of the scales from north of Sydney, and west to Broken Hill, and Neville was very much sought after because scales (read...weighbridges etc) had to be accurate as they needed to be certified by a Weights and Measures Official every 2 years.

The only time that the local coal mines could have their scales adjusted was on weekends....and also Neville was away in country areas, servicing scales and weighbridges at coal mines, abattoirs etc for long periods of time...so to play footy he had to miss work.

So his boss at Avery Scales said “Make up your mind...It’s either US or THEM”. As Neville said *it was no choice really, as I needed the job.*

So really Neville’s promising football career was over before it started. He played the odd lower grade game in 1955, 1958 and 1959, as a fill in, but that’s where his career ended ... 4 First Grade games, 8 Reserve Grade games and 12 Third Grade games over 7 years....hardly a record....however, had work not intervened most every weekend, Neville Rounsley would have been a very handy First Grade front rower for West for many years.

Later on Neville was himself “snuffled” up by BHP to tend all their weighbridges, then by Lake Macquarie Council to tend theirs....and finally he held the position of “Health and Safety Officer” at the council.

Neville is now 85 yo, and enjoys good health, and he, and Doug Linsley, are always amongst the “oldest” players at the Annual West Players Reunion Night...a night that he rarely has missed..and a night that he really enjoys.

So the aim has been accomplished...to find one of West’s oldest former accessible players...so we salute an “oldtimer”, and a wonderful bloke...NEVILLE ROUNSLEY.



1953 - Winners - WSRLFC - Singleton Knockout

Back : Neville Rounsley, Des Byrnes, Merv Mascord, Les Cook, John Mangano, Don McDougall, Nev Craig

Front : John Allen, Mick Rabbit, Wai McGrath, Kevin Vipen, Neil Bulbett, Pat O'Donnell