

1950

On Monday 24 April 1950 the Newcastle Morning Herald reported that "New Interest was created in the Newcastle Rugby League competition on Saturday by the success of West, who had been considered as "no hopers" in the competition" For the record West drew 28 all with the 1949 Premiers Central, and would have won if they had converted



WESTERN SUBURBS UNDER 18 GRADE — MAJOR AND MINOR PREMIERS, 1950.
Back Row: L. Clinton (Coach), W. Neve, W. McGrath, A. Glover, R. Monagle, F. Clarke, P. Kirby (Secretary). Centre: R. Millington (President), N. Roundley, P. Henderson, D. Lindsey, P. Carroll (Capt.), N. Craig, P. O'Donnell, Doug Carroll (Treasurer). Front: F. Hough, P. Pryor, J. Solway, D. McDougall, D. Coske. (Inset: Neil Gibson.)

a last minute try underneath the posts. Alas, just as "one rosella doesn't make a winter", "one draw doesn't make a season". West finished the year with a dismal record - played 15, won 1, drew 1, lost 13, position last. Reserve Grade won 4 games and Third Grade just 1. In all grades West had 6 wins from 44 games - a shade worse than the previous year. However, there was a ray of hope in that West Under 18's were Minor and Major Premiers. Another hope was the "Jesmond Jolly Boys". The Jolly Boys played in the local Sunday competition. They sang old bawdy songs, they cracked many a keg....and they supplied West with some future First Graders. Billy Davies, Alan Pepperall, Bob Field, the Fishlock brothers and Ron "Charger" Walls all became West first graders. Oh well, never mind, it's great to double your results in just one year...that may tell you how many games West won in 1951!

Round	Opponent	Result
1 – 8 April	Cessnock	Lost 33 - 5
2 – 15 April	Kurri	Lost 20 - 8
3 – 22 April	Central	28 all draw
4 – 25 April	Bye	
5 – 29 April	Waratah	Won 16 - 12
6 – 13 May	Lakes	Lost 48 - 10
7 – 20 May	Maitland	Lost 19 - 8
8 – 3 June	North	Lost 26 - 12
9 – 10 June	South	Lost 14 - 8
10 – 17 June	Cessnock	Lost 13 - 3
11 – 1 July	Kurri	Lost 23 - 11
12 – 8 July	Central	Lost 28 - 5
13 – 15 July	Bye	
14 – 22 July	Waratah	Deferred
15 – 29 July	Lakes	Lost 6 - 3
16 -5 August	Maitland	Lost 23 – 8
17 – 12 August	North	Lost 22 - 10
18 – 19 August	South	Lost 17 -11
7 October – Grand Final		Cessnock 19 def Central 12

1951

After a poor 1950 season there was hope that 1951 would be better – and indeed it was. First Grade doubled their number of wins, which sounds terrific. However in “accurate” figures they went from one win to two. West won 2 games in each of the 3 grades, to finish last in First Grade and Third Grade and second last in Reserve Grade. However all was not lost. President “Mo” Wilson again proved himself to be a popular coach and big blonde Col Curry arrived from the Cardiff club. Col played the first 2 games of the year in Reserve Grade before being promoted to First Grade. At the conclusion of the season Col Curry was awarded the Bert Agland trophy for the Best and Fairest player in the Newcastle competition.

However, it was left to New Lambton Public School to fly the premiership flag for the Western Suburbs when they won the “6 stone” A Division of the schools competition. This followed on their success in 1949 in C Division and 1950 in B Division.



The players in this 1949 schoolboy photo are from New Lambton Public School - Back Row L to R - Kevin Hodgson (186 games for West), Ken Hough, Alex Heaton (37 games for West), Warren Sands, Rod Cameron, Neil Hincks (Lakes United games record holder). Front Row L to R Ross Penfold, Bill Jackson, Leigh Maughan (Media - Administrator), Ernie Snelson (88 games for West), Barry Telfer,

Peter Preston (55 games for West , John McLaughlin (West Director and 92 games for West). No wonder a team that contained such quality players won the C Grade competition!!

Round	Opponent	Result
1 – 7 April	Kurri	Lost 17 - 13
2 – 14 April	North	Lost 57 - 5
3 – 21 April	Bye	(West 29 Singleton 5)
4 – 25 April	South	Lost 31 - 7
5 – 28 April	Cessnock	Won 15 - 2
6 – 5 May	Lakes	Lost 47 - 4
7 – 12 May	Central	Lost 50 - 16
8 – 19 May	Waratah	Lost 22 - 9
9 – 26 May	Maitland	Lost
10 – 2 June	North	Lost 26 - 3
11 – 9 June	Kurri	Lost 20 - 13
12 – 16 June	South	Lost 11 - 9
13 – 23 June	Bye	
14 – 30 June	Cessnock	Lost 34 - 7
15 – 8 July	Lakes	Lost 33 - 10
16 – 14 July	Maitland	Lost 51 - 17
17 – 28 July	Waratah	Won 14 – 11
18 – 4 August	Central	Lost 26 – 12
Grand Final - 1 September		Cessnock 15 def North 13

1952

In 1952 West hit “rock bottom”. For the 3rd successive year West ended up with the wooden spoon, winning just one game – and the Reserve Grade side were “twice as good” winning 2



Back (left to right): Nev Rounsley, Des Byrnes, Merv Mascord, Les Cook, John Mangano, Don McDougall, Nev Craig. Front row: John Allen, Mick Rabbitt, Wil McGrath, Kevin Vipen, Neil Bulbert, Pat O'Donnell.

games. Two of our ‘big guns’, Col Curry and Neil Gibson tried their luck with Parramatta and Jim Keirs dropped out of the game. The club also suffered more than their share of injuries, with Don Bentlin, Merv Moore, Si Brown, Ron Walls, Alan Maddison, Frank Mayo and Ned O’Brien being injured for most of the season. West were perhaps a little unlucky losing 6 games by 4 points or less, but a 72 point beating by North in Round 14

certainly dented West’s confidence. There was some joy with the Juniors with West Under 20’s defeating Teachers College 34 – 4 in the final. Nevertheless, it was a sad year for the Rosellas, but there was (thank goodness) some better news in the 1953 season.

Round	Opponent	Result
1 – 12 April	Waratah	Lost 17 – 3
2 – 19 April	Lakes	Lost 23 - 9
3 – 25 April	Maitland	Lost 14 – 10
4 – 3 May	Bye	
5 – 10 May	North	Lost 20 -12
6 – 17 May	Kurri	Lost 16 – 12
7 – 24 May	South	Lost 11 - 8
8 – ?	Cessnock	?
9 – 31 May	Central	Lost 10 – 8
7 June	Newcastle 9 New Zealand 7	
10 – 14 June	Waratah	Won 7 – 0
11 – 21 June	Lakes	Lost 28 – 16
12 – 29 June	Maitland	Lost 16 – 12
13 – 7 July	Bye	
14 – 14 July	North	Lost 77 – 5
15 – 21 July	Kurri	Lost 26 – 25
16 – 28 July	South	Cancelled due to rain
17 – 9 August	Cessnock	Lost 43 – 2
18 – 16 August	Central	Lost 20 - 5

1953

On the Official front 1953 was perhaps the most significant season for West – an appointment that changed the whole course of West’s history. What was this appointment? “Mr West”, Glen Maloney, was appointed Secretary, a position that he held for 23 years. Only a handful of the 1952 players donned the “red and green”, and the team struggled “big time” under coach Ern Bunting, and coach Noel Dagwell who came from Central and coached the



team from mid year. Neil Gibson and Col Curry returned from Parramatta, but were stood down by the NSW Rugby League so they were unable to play for West. However, Neil did play a few games for Wallsend in the Sunday competition, and during one game against Beresfield at Beresfield Neil made a break a set sail for the try line. However, he collided with a Beresfield supporter, *galloping on a horse*, and the horse and Neil collided. Neil may have been tackled by a horse, but Wallsend were awarded a penalty try. West First Grade won 2

games and finished with the wooden spoon for the fourth season in a row – not a record that any club would wish to achieve. However, there was a ray of hope for the 1954 season when West were both Minor and Major Premiers in Reserve Grade – a side that was coached by “Mo” Harding. In the Reserve Grade decider West 9 defeated Cessnock 8. For West Wal McGrath scored a try and Jack Probert kicked 3 goals. The winning Reserve Grade side was W McGrath,



O Connors, J Probert, J Arbuckle, H Parkinson, M Mascord, F Fitzsimmons, W Pallett, N Craig, G Frost, W Harding, K Steel, R Henderson. Third Grade under coach Ron Vipen finished 4th and were beaten 9 – 2 by Toronto in the semi final. Although he couldn’t play for West, Neil Gibson coached the Under 20’s and they fell just short of making the semi finals. However, after the Reserve Grade success in 1953 West looked forward to a more successful 1954 season. *(Did Newcastle ever play an American team? Yep..on 13 June 1953 the American All Stars 19 defeated Newcastle 10)*

Round	Opponent	Result
1 – 11 April	North	Lost 22 – 6
2 – 17 April	Central	Won 12 - 11
3 – ANZAC Day	Kurri	Lost 10 - 7
2 May	Newcastle 27 Coalfields 27	
4 – 9 May	Cessnock	Lost 17 - 2
5 – 16 May	Waratah	Lost 25 - 12
6 – 23 May	Maitland	Lost 18 - 8
7 – 30 May	Lakes	Won 15 - 9
8 – 1 June	Bye	
9 – 6 June	North	Lost 25 - 9
13 June	American All Stars 19 def Newcastle 10	
10 – 20 June	Central	Lost 11 - 7
11 – 27 June	Kurri	Lost 11 - 7
12 – 4 July	South	Lost 28 - 10
13 – 11 July	Cessnock	Lost 41 - 10
14 – 18 July	Waratah	Lost 34 - 7
15 – 25 July	Maitland	Lost 19 - 2
16 – 1 August	Lakes	12 all draw
17 – 8 August	Bye	
18 – 15 August	South	Lost 37 -22
12 September	Final	North 16 def Cessnock 11

1954

The 1954 season saw the passing of Dr Alfred Harker, whose name will always live on at West's home ground "Harker Oval". The coaching staff for the 1954 season was First



Grade – Ken Mogg, Reserve Grade – Wal Harding and Third Grade – Ron Vipen. First Grade won 9, lost 6 and drew 2, to qualify for the semi finals, only to be beaten by Maitland 26 – 9. Reserve Grade slipped from their 1953 performance and won only 5 games whilst 3rd grade were semifinalists, beaten by Wallsend 13 – 2. During the year West's best players were John Kelly (from Tamworth), the Fishlock brothers (Bob and Doug), Frank Hector, Si Brown, Don Bentlin, John Manganno and Jack Fitzpatrick. In schoolboy football West had 5 players in the NSW team – John Wilson,

R Spruce, Jim Reid, "Bobo" Olsen and Grahame Harde whilst the Under 16 team contained such names as Ernie Snelson, Kevin Hodgson, Barry Martin, Ian Sills, Gordon Doyle, "Wagga" Johnson and Rob Davies. All in all, after 4 seasons as holders of the wooden spoon, it was good to see West make the semi finals. *(One interesting sidelight was one Rex Elvin, playing for Maitland is recorded in the Newcastle Morning Herald as scoring a try in their win over South. Rex Elvin, who was the 1961 winning West coach, came to West from Central, but he must have also played with Maitland)*

Round	Opponent	Result
1 – 11 April	Waratah	Won 14 – 11
2 – 20 April	Maitland	Lost 21 - 9
3 – ANZAC Day	Lakes	Won 23 - 20
4 – 3 May	Bye	
5 – 6 May	Cessnock	Lost 18 - 8
13 May	Coalfields 35 def Newcastle 13	
22 May	Newcastle 11 defeated England 10	
6 – 29 May	Central	Won 14 - 9
7 – 5 June	Kurri	11 all draw
8 – 12 June	South	Won 57 - 5
9 – 19 June	North	Won 47 - 20
10 – 26 June	Waratah	6 all draw
11 – 3 July	Maitland	Lost 42 - 10
12 – 10 July	Lakes	Lost 9 - 5
13 – 17 July	Bye	
14 – 24 July	Cessnock	Lost 28 - 12
15 – 31 July	Central	Won 24 - 17
16 – 7 August	Kurri	Won 54 - 2
17 – 14 August	South	Won 41 - 8
18 – 21 August	North	Won 31 - 11
22 August	Newcastle / Coalfields 28 def England 22	
Semi Final – 11 September	Maitland	Lost 26 - 0
Final – 18 September	Cessnock (Minor Prs) 15 def Maitland 13	