

# RUGBY LEAGUE

## BRISBANE CLUB FOOTBALL (BRISBANE RUGBY LEAGUE PREMIERSHIP AND QUEENSLAND CUP)

The following summary of the history of Brisbane club football is a composite of Michael Higgison's excellent QRL History (up to the 1950's) on the QRL website and my own research

The Brisbane Rugby League (BRL) competition was in its heyday when I started following it as a boy back in 1980 and, while many Queensland players had followed the poker money offered by the Sydney clubs, many Queensland and Australian test players could still be seen each week playing in the Brisbane club competition. For my favourite club Souths, we had great players like Mal Meninga, Gary Belcher, Peter Jackson, Bob Lindner, Norm Carr going up against Wynnum with "The King" Wally Lewis, Gene Miles, Greg Dowling and Colin Scott and then there was Redcliffe with Artie Beetson and Mark Murray and Valleys who had Ross Strudwick and Wally Lewis before his switch to Wynnum. It was a glorious era but then there came a sad decline to the Brisbane premiership when the Brisbane Broncos entered the Sydney-come-national competition in 1988.

Before the Brisbane Broncos entered the Sydney-come-national competition in 1988 the Brisbane Rugby League (BRL) competition shared the top national talent along with the Sydney competition for 80 years. Sadly many scribes, particularly those from Sydney, have treated the Brisbane competition as a footnote in rugby league history and ignored just how strong a competition the BRL competition was, despite many players being poached from the 1960's on with the advent of the poker machine revenue that gave the Sydney clubs a financial advantage over Brisbane clubs.

After the Brisbane Broncos came along interest and attendances for the Brisbane premiership plummeted much to the disappointment of many diehard fans like myself who grew up on the wonderful BRL competition of the 80's. Some clubs have managed to survive and thrive thanks to the introduction of poker machines in Queensland in the 1990's while other clubs like Souths have struggled financially and some grand clubs like Valleys, Brothers and Wests have sadly folded. Gradually there has been a resurgence with the Queensland Cup is which is slowly but surely reviving the interest of league fans seeing the Brisbane clubs battle each other again in the now statewide competition.

### The first decade of the competition (1909-1919)

The Brisbane rugby league competition began with four clubs - Valleys, South Brisbane, North Brisbane and Toombul - just over a century ago in 1909. With the rugby union body securing sole leasing rights to the Exhibition Grounds, the QARL then secured a lease of their own to utilise the Brisbane Cricket Grounds as their playing headquarters.

A modest crowd of about 800 turned up to see the first round of fixtures of the Brisbane club competition on May 8, 1909. The early match saw North Brisbane defeat Toombul by 8-0, with W. Evans scoring the first-ever try and P. Dwyer kicking the first-ever goal. The second match saw South Brisbane defeat eventual premiers Valley 12-2. The Brisbane Concert Band played throughout the afternoon, as was a common occurrence at sporting events during this time. The continuous trickle of rugby union defectors to the professional ranks of rugby league was not limited to representative players either. Many highly-regarded club rugby players soon joined the new Brisbane competition, not solely for the 'professional' aspect, but also for the revitalised open-style and running aspect the new code offered. By season's end, the powerful Valley Football Club dominated the club competition, culminating in their inaugural 23-4 grand final win over South Brisbane.

Top-flight representative rugby league was a must for the new code's survival. Queensland sides that included not only players from the Brisbane competition, but from other centres around the state, again took on visiting teams from across the Tasman. Crowds of between 5,000 and 7,000 flocked to the 'Gabba to see the visiting New Zealand and Maori sides take on Australia and Queensland. Mixed results were tempered with free-flowing attacking football thrilling the big crowds.

The visit by the first Great Britain side to Australian shores in 1910, also added a truly international flavour to an already popular game. But it was during these formative five years, rugby league established itself as the number one football code in Queensland. Brisbane and Ipswich were now firmly entrenched in their own local rugby league competitions, while the long-established rugby union and Australian football codes floundered.

With the emergence of new clubs South United, Kurilpa, Woolloongabba, Railways, West End and Natives during the next four years, it was inevitable that the first strong junior base in any sport was also now forming. The senior club competition also swelled to six inner-city teams, with Valleys becoming the benchmark club in Brisbane winning 7 times up to 1919. The representative scene was now also highly anticipated with an annual interstate series, intercity challenge matches, tours by local and interstate representative teams and international tours, as the game flourished. The onset of the First World War and Australia's entry into it in 1914 saw many sporting associations and other social groups go into recess.

The stance of the conservative rugby union side was that people should not be at home enjoying football while our troops were dying in the trenches, and that these able-bodied young men should be defending. The rugby league fraternity (with their ties to the ALP) argued young men back home should be playing rugby league to stay fit, while also providing a distraction for families to the ever-increasing death lists being printed in the papers.

The folding of rugby union was the catalyst for mass affiliations of rugby union clubs like Past Grammars and University, the formation of the Merthyrs club from Brothers rugby club players, and regional competitions to the League from all around the state. In 1917 though, there was some discussion of amalgamation between the two football codes, but again neither party would relent.

On the Brisbane club scene, the game's headquarters varied between the Gabba and the Exhibition Grounds, with the Valley football club becoming the benchmark side in the competition. The Diehards were briefly called the Valleys Vampires. The royal blues attacking style of play while still managing to field some of the biggest players in the game was unrivalled, not to mention the shrewd management of the club itself. This dominance manifested itself into seven premierships during the first 11 years of competition. However, the first true rivalry of the game arrived six days before the Gallipoli landing in 1915 when a meeting of officials and other interested parties at the Carlton Club Hotel saw the Toowong and North Brisbane clubs merge into a new club called Western Suburbs. From the outset, the dominance and fierce rivalry of the Wests and Valleys clubs was unparalleled in Brisbane sporting circles, Valleys nudging out the Paddington boys 10-9 in a spectacular 1916 grand final, before Wests took the honours 4-2 a year later. Apart from Valleys 7 premierships (1909, 1911, 1914, 1915, 1917, 1918, 1919), the other premiers in the first decade were Ipswich (1910), Natives (1912), West End (1913) and Wests (1916).

In the very early years there were four years that did not have semi-finals (1910, 1912, 1913 & 1916). Up until 1934, with the exception of 1917, there were two straight knockout semi-finals from which the winners would contest the final. In 1917 the minor premiers went straight into the final. The 3rd and 4th placed teams played a qualifying final and then the winner played the 2nd placed team for the right to play the minor premiers in the grand final.

That was not all there was to this early finals system. Between 1909 and 1933 the minor premiers had the right of challenge if they were beaten in either a semi-final or final. If you weren't the minor premiers and you won both your semi and the final you then had to also beat the minor premiers in a grand final challenge match to win the premiership. The minor premiers would be premiers if they won the challenge match. In 25 years of this system there were 15 grand final challenge matches. Of the grand final challenges the minor premiers won 10 times and the winner of the previous final won only 5 times. In addition to that, there was one drawn grand final in 1910. Ipswich and Valley-Toombul played a 10-all draw. Ipswich won the grand final replay 17-2 to win their only QRL premiership before pulling out of the competition shortly thereafter.

### 1920's

Under QRL control, voting rights were a major issue among the various leagues. Brisbane, being the largest, strongest and most professionally run, was often outvoted on important issues. Even with many of the state's stars gravitating to Brisbane, weight of numbers at the voting table continually frustrated officials. Under the threat of breaking away from QRL affiliation, and after even speaking to former officials of the now-defunct rugby union about possible affiliation, the entire structure of the game's administration was revamped. However, heavyweights in the debate – Harry Sunderland and Peter Scott – both realised that the state and Brisbane bodies must be aligned together for the good of the game. Some of the changes that were implemented at the time was the junior competition and various representative matches in Brisbane being placed under the auspices of the newly-formed BRL. On field, a major change was the creation of a three-grade senior competition, with the establishment of a BRL referees appointment committee. Additionally, with no rival rugby union competition in Brisbane, the Exhibition Grounds were leased as the League's headquarters.

In the years leading up to this momentous event, the QRL had enjoyed a massive upsurge in player numbers and popularity of the game. An influx of former Sydney stars, combined with a regular representative match program, provided the opportunity for the public to witness first-class football. Additionally, a number of home-grown stars were fast-becoming household names for the first time. One such player was international prop Norm Potter, who led the Wests club to the League's first undefeated premiership in 1920. Along with fellow international Bill Richards, the club incredibly repeated the feat only two years later, in the inaugural Brisbane Rugby League season. The impact on the game of forming the BRL was instantaneous. With the League now able to reward representative players at its own accord, crowds flocked to see interstate and international stars gracing the playing field. The establishment of the BRL in 1922 saw an end to many of the grievances the Brisbane clubs had long held towards the state body. Under the control of the inaugural committee that included Peter Scott snr and Fred Cumberland, rugby league entered its first golden age in the early-1920s.

A re-structured club competition that included six clubs playing in three grades, had the crowds attending in record numbers. The stronger established clubs of Valleys (est 1909), Western Suburbs (est 1915), Coorparoo (est 1917) and Carltons (est 1919) were admitted first, followed by two other clubs, Past Christian Brothers (est 1917 as Merthyr), University (joined 1920) and Past Grammars who were admitted in 1924. It was a master stroke by the BRL to include these two former rugby union clubs, who both enjoyed massive support from their heritage and success in the still-defunct rugby union competition. The Varsity side then became the first club to win back-to-back titles in 1928 and 1929. Initially utilizing both the Exhibition Grounds and Davies Park, interest in the BRL exploded with all seven clubs winning the premiership in the first seven years of the new Brisbane league. Wests won twice (1920 [undefeated], 1922) as did Carltons (1921, 1925) and University (1928, 1929). Coorparoo won in 1923, Valleys only won in this decade in 1924, Brothers won it 1926 and Grammars (later Norths) in 1927.

The institution of numerous mid-season competitions and trophies also ensured public interest did not wane during the long season. Some of these include the Old Buffers Cup (later renamed the Presidents Cup), the charity fundraiser Pike 'Ambulance' Cup (later replaced by the Peter Scott Memorial Trophy in 1959), and the BRL Special Knockout Competition played as curtain-raisers with spectator-friendly rule changes, during the representative program. A formal structure for annual representative match competition was also established, with the Bulimba Cup competition designed to foster the development of the game between the three rugby league strongholds of Brisbane, Ipswich and Toowoomba (Lismore also competed in 1931 for one season). The strength and profile of the BRL competition was also now drawing the game's biggest names to Brisbane. Players such as international Harold Horder joined Coorparoo in 1925, while Toowoomba's favourite son Tom Gorman joined Brothers in 1926, becoming the club's first paid player, and captaining the side to its first-ever premiership.



### 1930's

A major shift in the game's focus occurred in 1933 when the BRL introduced its "district concept", where players had to reside within set areas to remain eligible to play for a particular club. The motion had been defeated by club delegates a year earlier following years of debate about the idea. A major focus of district football was providing a definitive identity to everyone associated with the individual clubs and their supporters, while also attempting to arrest clubs' competition dominance which had been an issue previously. Thus, a number of clubs were forced to change their names in order to reflect the district they represented, which was basically designed on electoral boundaries. Under the new seven-team competition, Carltons became Southern Suburbs, Coorparoo and the Wynnum district competition combined to form Eastern Suburbs, Past Grammars became Northern Suburbs, while Western Suburbs, Fortitude Valley, University and Past Christian Brothers all remained.

With the new restrictions on players, it is needless to say that Brothers, and lesser University, were disliked by the other five clubs over their unique restrictions. The BRL edict stated that Past Brothers would be allowed to draw upon players from Catholic schools throughout Brisbane without any residential qualifications, while University would have access to all tertiary institutions in Brisbane. It was perceived by clubs that the demographics of the average "catholic family", were much higher than regular rugby league "types", and as such they had an advantage drawing on private school "Old Boys". This discontent towards Brothers lasted until district football was finally phased out in 1968. It was slightly different with the University club, as they struggled for player numbers and on-field results from the outset. Brothers on the other hand, had plenty of depth and enjoyed much success on the field.

Along with the introduction of district football was a new finals system that would remain in place for the remainder of the pre-Broncos BRL premiership era. The right of challenge by the minor premiers was abolished. There would be two semis (3rd v 4th) and (1st v 2nd). A preliminary final between the winner of 3 v 4 and loser of 1 v 2 would determine who would play in the grand final against the winner of the major semi final. An additional elimination (4th v 5th) and qualifying final was played in 1975 and 1976 before reverting back to the four final game format.

New issues began emerging in the Brisbane rugby league landscape in 1934. With the Past Brothers club's "special" regulations already putting them offside with a number of opposition clubs. Souths objected to the League about Brothers utilising Davies Park for training purposes. Compounding the issue was that the club's finances were stretched, and Carltons were also a foundation part of the Brothers club, with allegiances still running deep from the turmoil of Brothers' formation back in 1920. Eventually, the original Souths club withdrew from competition and a new Southern Suburbs club was formed with the assistance of the BRL. With major pressure being applied by the growing Rugby Union for University to switch back to their original code, their player numbers dwindled to such an extent that the club was forced to forfeit the second half of the season, and unfortunately they were lost to the code.

The following year again saw the game's popularity grow, culminating in sensation on grand final day, when extra time was required to separate Eric Hogan's Brothers side from 'Firpo' Neumann's Valleys team. The crowd was in silent shock as the full-time bell rang with the scores locked at 6-all. After another willing 20 minutes of play, Brothers lock Vince Hogan landed a sideline goal in the dying seconds to beat a Valleys side that had scored three tries to their one. It sealed a popular victory for Brothers- their first since 1926. Much focus was on the Brisbane competition during the mid-1930s, with NSW dominating the interstate series and Ipswich the powerhouse in the Bulimba Cup.

In Brisbane club football, the 1930s saw Valleys win an unprecedented seven consecutive club championships between 1935 and 1941, taking overall club dominance away from Wests, while Northern Suburbs kick-started an era where they quickly earned the nickname of "Nundah Wonders", qualifying for the semi-finals every year from 1934 to 1947. The highlight for Norths during this time was the premiership of 1938 when they pulled off the coup of the decade in ousting the unbackable and undefeated Valleys 16-10 in the grand final at the Gabba. Norths had a supremely classy side that included Ron Cooper, Hugh Melrose, Jack Stapleton, Edward 'Babe' Collins and the hard-as-nails Vic Rudd, outplaying 'Firpo' Neumann's Valleys side in the one match that counted. The "Nundah Wonders" also set a new League record that year when they embarrassed Easts 74-0 at Oxenham Park, scoring a record 16 tries in the match.

In the 1930's Carltons won their last premiership in 1930 before becoming Souths, Valleys won 3 premierships (1931, 1933, 1937), Wests won 2 times (1932, 1936), Norths 2 times (1934, 1938) and Brothers also won 2 premierships (1935, 1939).

In conjunction with the BRL, the QRL continued its scheme of contracting some of its star players to remain in the state. One such player was Norths star centre Jack Reardon, who was being courted by a number of Sydney clubs and had interest from England. After some discussion, Reardon agreed to a £400 agreement with both Leagues, where he would remain in Brisbane for the next three years.

### 1940's

The 1941 season really suffered under the effects of World War II with player numbers dwindling and League finances struggling. Compounding a poor year, the names of former Brisbane players were beginning to appear on death lists in the printed press. It did not prevent more players from enlisting though, with the Souths and Easts clubs in particular suffering immense player shortages. In the case of Souths though, their player shortage was relieved somewhat following a smart initiative by club officials. Before war's end, Souths would have a police team representing them in reserve grade, while a team made up of students from nearby Brisbane State High School played the third grade. In fact, 1944 saw Souths third grade 'students' win the premiership.

The QRL also went into recess and the unenclosed New Farm Park ground was the only headquarters available. In fact, the only income drawn from club matches during this time was by way of donation tins passed around at games. Fortunately though, the League was able to arrange with the army for use of the second oval at the Exhibition Grounds for its semi-final matches, with Oxenham Park used for the grand final. Of additional concern to the League was the fact that the military sports program did not cater for rugby league, but did so for the other three codes. Time and again the League attempted to have rugby league included but discussions continually broke down. On a positive note though was the army's permission given to many soldiers to play for BRL clubs, while staging a few challenge matches of their own.

Although the BRL premiership was replaced in 1942 and 1943 by the Victory Cup competition, essentially the premiership remained unchanged. Interestingly, these two seasons were dominated by a strong Brothers side. With a strong Irish Catholic following, fewer players and supporters of the club than from other clubs enlisted to fight in what was being regarded by the Irish community as essentially an "English" war. However, like all BRL clubs, Brothers did have days when player numbers were stretched, like one particular Saturday in May 1942. Before the end of the 1944 season, one of the game's Queensland pioneers, Jack Fihelly passed away. However, that season also reflected the positive outlook of society as the war effort appeared to be making ground towards peace.

With many servicemen returning to Brisbane in 1945 and the end to world hostilities fast-approaching, the game boomed. And with the QRL back in operation, much of their focus was placed on fostering the re-growth of the code in the country. The BRL was again able to utilise the Brisbane Cricket Ground as its headquarters that year, and from the outset the crowds were back. Big crowds attended the opening club fixtures and record attendances were recorded for Brisbane's two home Bulimba Cup matches against Ipswich and Toowoomba. Another very pleasing aspect to the League administration was the strong press coverage of that year. Even ABC radio was regularly broadcasting live from club matches.

But 1945 will go down in BRL history for another reason. The Souths club became the first to complete the 'grand-slam' in winning the first, reserve and third grade premierships. Icing this incredible achievement was the club's victories in the under-17 and under-16 grades. The Southern Suburbs club had endured torrid times during the previous six years, but led by some formidable players of the calibre of the Pegg brothers, Ron and Len, Bill Tyquin, Alan Thompson and the imposing Harry Bath, they cast aside minor premiers Norths 21-11 in the premiership decider. Norths fielded their own stars like the slippery Hugh Melrose, Jack Bates and the rugged Vic Rudd.

The increased popularity of Brisbane football began to waver during the late 1940s. There was a steady decline in club match attendances, yet the QRL representative program still drew well. Press coverage of the game exploded during this time, with up to five radio stations covering matches, as well as newspapers. However, Peter Scott was clearly concerned at the effects he perceived press coverage was having on revenue. This issue would come to a head in 1948 when the radio stations collectively decided to discontinue the annual 'donation' they had been giving the League in return for broadcasting access. After heated debate, the BRL issued the ultimatum of either the fees were to be paid, or radio coverage would cease. As the radio stations stood by their decision, so did Scott, and radio was locked out of the rugby league for the season. However, a year later the League would begrudgingly accept a deal whereby the stations would allow rugby league advertising in lieu of the donation. It was a burning issue with the League, as they perceived this was one of the reasons for decreasing gate receipts.

Easts emerged as the glamour side of the 1947 season, becoming the first team to make a clean-sweep of every trophy on offer. Skipped by Jack Ryrie, the side contained his brother Nev, try-scoring whiz Jack Schatz, Ron McLennan and Tom Drysdale. The side only lost one game during the premiership and walked away with the premiership cup, presidents cup, Pike cup, Hickey cup and Easter cup. To cap off the season, the club also won the club championship. The club made also made the grand final for the third year running in 1948, but they were unable to contain Wests stars Col McAllister, 'Spragg' Hunt, and Viv Irwin. However, it really was a golden period for the club that struggled so hard during the war years, as they qualified for the grand final for six consecutive years leading up to 1951, winning the coveted BRL premiership twice.

Valleys took the honours during the 1940's winning 3 times (1941, 1944, 1946). Souths had their most successful period winning 4 times between 1945 and 1953. Their first 2 premierships were in 1945 and 1949. Brothers also won twice in the 1940's (1942, 1943) with Norths (1940), Easts (1947) and Wests (1948) also winning premierships during the 1940's.

With club match gate-takings still down during 1949, League officials began thinking outside the square. A major coal strike and new government liquor restrictions also did not help the League's position. Sunday football was again discussed at board level, but enquiries indicated the church was still firmly lobbying against it. A motion proposed to the League by 'Spragg' Hunt to fully merge the QRL and BRL caused plenty of spirited debate, but it was defeated by the country leagues in a vote. The Norths club introduced a new system of their own, that being to issue season tickets to games staged at Oxenham Park.

### 1950's

The dawning of the 1950s saw the League facing many of the same problems as previous years. A new trend though, was the country leagues actively signing big name Brisbane players for captain-coach roles for their representative teams. In many cases, the country league refused to release these players for the representative season which was mainly staged in Brisbane. This caused much angst between the QRL and the country leagues, with the League threatening to ban players should they not be available for representative duty. A growing concern for the BRL as well, was the non-affiliated Sunday Shiftworkers League (which did not charge admission) drawing bigger crowds than club matches. Sunday was obviously becoming a favourite for family day at the football, and with big money on offer from the horse-racing bookies present at matches, it was proving a very attractive weekly event for the public.

One of the biggest developments that would affect the game long-term also occurred in 1950 when the Queensland Amateur Athletics Association handed their lease over Lang Park back to the Brisbane City Council. The QRL and BRL immediately approached the Council with an offer to take up a 10-year lease, with a plan to develop the ground into that state's top sporting facility. However, the Council inexplicably balked at the offer. A positive start to the new decade was the selection of three young Brisbane stars to make their test debuts - Harold 'Mick' Crocker and Alan Thompson from Souths and Brian Davies from Brothers. Other stars to emerge, included Duncan Hall, Alec Watson, Alan Hornery, Tom Tyquin, Joe Baker, Keith Brown, Ken McCrohon, the Mulgrew brothers, and Mick Shannon.

The season also unearthed a player who would go on to re-write many BRL records during his career. An 18-year-old fullback called Norm Pope was signed by the Valleys club from the Balmain junior competition at the start of 1950, in the hope he might replace the aging prolific points-scorer Dan O'Connor as a goalkicking fullback. After starring in the Brisbane side that lost to Great Britain, Pope began developing his own 'uncompromising' defensive style as Valleys and Brisbane fullback. History shows that Pope played over 200 games for Valleys and topped the BRL points-scoring in only his second season. However, this would become a feat he would repeat on a record five occasions. He became the first player to score 200 points in premiership matches during the 1957 club season, and scored over 300 points in all games played during the 1953 and 1957 seasons. These records still stand today, as well as a record haul of 41 points in one game from a try and 19 goals from 21 attempts against Wynnum-Manly in 1953. He also set an accuracy record in 1955 when he successfully landed 12 goals from as many attempts against Brothers at the Gabba and holds the all-time points scoring record in Brisbane. Pope became a fixture in representative sides for a number of years, culminating in his only Test appearance against the Kiwis in 1956.

A watershed year for Brisbane football then arrived in 1951. For the first time, the exciting French side would be touring, Queensland won the interstate series for the first time in over a decade, Sunday football would be trialled in Brisbane, a junior division was formed and a new club would affiliate in the premiership competition. New district boundaries were established early in the year by the League, following the acceptance of the Wynnum-Manly club into the premiership. The Wynnum Manly competition which once comprised 10 teams from the bayside and Redlands area never recovered after WWII and the remaining clubs formed a single entity to apply for BRL affiliation.

The arrival of the Brisbane Rugby League's second golden era coincided with the arrival of one of the game's true visionaries. As delegate for the Valleys club in 1952, Ron McAuliffe created history when elevated to the position of chairman in his first year at the League. He went on to become joint secretary of the QRL and BRL, chairman of the QRL, deputy chairman of the ARL, and was chairman of the Lang Park Trust until the time of his death in 1988. Two of his major achievements were the introduction of State Origin football in 1980, and the State League in 1982. Away from rugby league, McAuliffe had served in the A.I.F. in the Middle-East and New Guinea and was elected to the Senate from 1971 to 1981.

During his first year at the League, a number of changes occurred at the BRL. Firstly, South Coast was affiliated as a premiership club in its own right, and the Shiftworkers League was also affiliated to the BRL, giving the BRL full control of all rugby league in Brisbane. The BRL commenced a program for improving facilities at all grounds the League utilised. However, the burning issue for more than a decade was the League's and club's desire to each have their own permanent home. This desire was made even stronger when the Council continued its refusal to issue a lease over Lang Park to the League. On the club scene, the new South Coast team struggled to only three victories all season, while Wests became only the second side to clean-sweep every [A Grade] trophy on offer in 1952.

The 1953 season brought further change to the game's leadership. Cyril Connell became QRL president while Peter Scott presided over the BRL. With a decision to merge the secretary position of both the QRL and BRL, Bill Gold resigned, and McAuliffe took up the reins. League officials Frank Burke and Ernie Keefer were also on a new committee whose job it was to find the League a permanent home ground. The year also saw the first floodlit interstate match in Brisbane, with over 30,000 fans flocking to the Exhibition Grounds.

The 1954 season saw a pivotal event in the game's history in Queensland. Following the League's procurement of a long-term 21 year lease over Lang Park from the Council, development of the facility became a primary focus. The deal created history, being the only example of a rugby league body in the world to have its own playing headquarters. A combined initial investment of £15,000 from both the QRL and BRL for development was immediately established. With plans already drawn up for a potential world-class 60,000 seat stadium, Lang Park was now underway to become the state's flagship sporting venue. A plan for a further £40,000 for improvements was then also put into action.

With the establishment of a Grounds Development Committee in 1955, work commenced on the League's future headquarters. The QRL and BRL, along with other interested parties, took less than 12 months to surpass the initial 21-year plan of £40,000 in development works at Lang Park. In fact, by 1960 more than £100,000 had been injected into the project. Meanwhile, the League, with three years still remaining on its lease at the Cricket Ground, continued its club matches there until the end of the 1957 season. Night representative matches continued at the Exhibition Grounds, while Wests and Brothers played the first-ever night finals match there in September. The result did not matter in the end though, as the season highlight was clearly the boys in royal blue finishing the season as undefeated premiers.

The passionate following of the BRL competition exploded during the mid-1950s, with fierce rivalries both on and off the field. There were sporadic incidents at matches where mounted police were forced to break up brawls involving both players and spectators. Thankfully they weren't a regular occurrence, but this highlighted the passion which district football evoked. The crowds flocked to club matches in record numbers for seasons on end. Over the next three years, the League even awarded testimonials to a number of their star players for service to the game. Those to receive them were Duncan Hall and Alec Watson in 1955, Brian Davies and Norm Pope in 1956, and Joe Baker and Keith Brown in 1957. The League continued its program of assisting the Norths and Souths clubs during the late-1950s in improving facilities at both Oxenham Park and Davies Park. The Valleys club also finally obtained a home, with a lease over part of Crosby Park in 1956.

The 1956 finals series was highlighted by sensation when skipper Duncan Hall led his Wests team in a walk-off, protesting against referee Col Wright. A string of refereeing decisions against Wests culminated in Alec Watson being sent off for apparently “passing a remark” at Wright. When Watson refused to leave the field, Hall came to his defence arguing that Wright had the wrong player. After a heated exchange, Hall was ordered off as well, whereby Hall directed his team to follow. Wright waited four minutes for Wests to return before blowing a premature end to the match. After lengthy deliberations, the League decided that as Brothers led at the time, the result would stand. Incensed club officials then decided Wests would not play under Wright’s control again for perceived unfair decisions. As Wright was appointed the next week’s semi-final, Wests refused to take the field. Eventually, common sense was restored and the match was played on the Wednesday night at the Exhibition Grounds.

Lang Park was first used for regular club fixtures in 1957, however the grand final that year was still staged at the Cricket Ground. It was a fitting send-off for the League’s former headquarters dating back some 25 years, with Valleys triumphing in spectacular fashion on the accuracy of Norm Pope’s boot by the slenderest of margins 18-17. It was a terrific season for Brisbane’s oldest club as they had recently been granted a lease over part of Crosby Park at Albion for the club to build its own headquarters. With works progressing well on the new Lang Park headquarters, record crowds attending matches again and the QRL obtaining a Principal Sporting Club Licence, the future appeared rosy for rugby league in Brisbane. However, of concern to both the QRL and BRL was the embarrassing hammerings that NSW had given the state side during the interstate series. Focus of this concern centred around whether the poker machines in Sydney were the direct cause of the increased professionalism and higher skill levels of the NSW players.

The Brisbane Rugby League moved its operations wholly to Lang Park in 1958. The new-look headquarters of rugby league was really taking shape and finally confirmed rugby league’s unofficial standing as the number one sport in the state. The season also saw for the first time, fixtures operating as all three grades together on game day, pleasing club supporters. Brothers swiped the Brisbane premiership in most emphatic fashion that year when their “Terrible Six” forward pack of Barry O’Connor, Brian O’Connor, Vince Nicholas, Phil Coman, Peter Gallagher and skipper Brian Davies, bashed and barged their way to victory over premiership co-favourites Wests and Valleys in the preliminary and grand finals. The season finished on somewhat of a high note, when the then president of the Australian Rugby League Harold ‘Jersey’ Flegg opened the new premises for the Rugby League Club at Lang Park on October 8, 1958. Discussions surrounding the next phase of the Lang Park re-development concerned the construction of the ground’s first grandstand. Planned to seat 5000, other improvements to facilities included a press and radio building, bar and canteen in the outer area.

The Norths club pulled off the signing coup of the season when Clive Churchill moved to Nundah as captain/coach. His impact on the club who had a number of potential young stars was enormous. He moulded them into a premiership force that finished clear minor premiers and won every trophy on offer except the Presidents Cup. That honour, and a popular victory, went to Wynnum-Manly when they downed Churchill’s side 12-10 in a spectacular match at Lang Park. It was the club’s first-ever senior grade trophy. Another popular result was the Redcliffe club’s first BRL premiership when they downed Souths for the reserve grade premiership. Brisbane only provided one international for the 1959 season, that being Wests brilliant halfback Barry Muir. Muir played in all three Tests against the Kiwis and was rewarded with selection on the Kangaroo tour. It was a remarkable feat given his club finished second last in the premiership. The League also instituted a new second-round trophy during the season. With the death of Mr. John Pike a year earlier, the Pike ‘Ambulance’ Cup was replaced with the impressive shield-like Peter Scott Memorial trophy.

The year 1959 marked not only the 50th anniversary season of the Brisbane club competition (and the State of Queensland’s centenary year) it was also the beginning of the remarkable dynasty of six straight premierships for Norths up until 1964. A long overdue premiership for Norths that highlighted the 1959 season. The Nundah boys had waited 19 long years to taste premiership glory, with only three unsuccessful tilts at the title during the war years to look back on. Strangely, the man who took them there, the “Little Master” Clive Churchill, was not present at that memorable grand final as he was on his way to England as coach of the Kangaroos. His place was taken on the day by skipper Jack Coyne. They came from behind to beat Brothers 24-18.

History would show in years to come that this was indeed a very special premiership as Norths would go on to re-write the record books by notching up six consecutive premierships – an unbettered record to this day. It’s easy to assume that Norths simply had all the best players at the time, but a quick look at their team line-ups shows otherwise. New coach Bob Bax, who would go on to break a number of coaching records of his own, took over the decimated Norths first-grade side and won the club’s first back-to-back premiership. Only three of the 1959 side played in the 1960 team, then nine from 1960 were in the 1961 side. Only the 1963 side with 12 of the previous year’s premiership players fully resembled a previous year’s side. It is a credit to the Norths club, and Bax particularly, that Norths enjoyed this incredible golden era.

After Easts won in 1950, Souths won two premierships (1951, 1953) and Wests did as well in 1952 and 1954. Valleys (1955, 1957) and Brothers (1956, 1958) then won two premierships each in the 1950’s before Norths began their 6 year streak winning in 1959.

### **1960's**

With the arrival of the 1960’s came another exciting chapter in Brisbane rugby league history when the Redcliffe club was granted first-grade status, and all clubs being able to stage matches at their home grounds for the first time. Notwithstanding that most games were still played at Lang Park and Davies Park, BRL matches were also played at Wynnum Manly’s quality Kitchener Park ground, Crosby Park and the Redcliffe Showgrounds. In the case of Wynnum Manly’s Kitchener Park, the League’s decision was justified when the ground record of over 6,000 patrons turned up to see the match against local rivals Easts. Brothers and Easts were now the only clubs still to find a permanent ‘home’, with both finding it difficult financially to stay afloat. However, after years of failing to obtain a lease over Thompson Estate, a deal was eventually signed for Easts to lease the cricket ground at Langlands Park.

In 1960 Norths were missing 13 of their 1959 squad when Bob Bax took over as coach of Norths. They lost 4 out of their first 6 games and won 11 games straight to finish second going into the finals. Led by great players such as Bill Pearson, Jim Hannam and Ian Massie they won the premiership a second time in a row when they edged out Valleys 18-15 in the grand final.

The 1961 grand final was a replay of the previous year in the sense that Norths played Valleys again but the game itself was nothing like the close game of the previous year. Norths thrashed Valleys 29-5. Norths held the Valleys forwards and ran all over the backs. Bob Bax said the plan was to let Valleys chase all day and it worked. Sutton scored 3 tries and Hegarty 2 tries and John Bates scoed a try and set up two more.

The 1962 grand final was a true replay of the 1961 grand final. Norths played Valleys for the 3rd time in a row and again dished out another hiding to the men in blue from Valleys beating them 22-0. Playing in his first grand final Fonda Metassa scored twice when he swooped on dropped passes. Forwards Lloyd Weier, John Bates, Ian Massie, Bob Poulsen, Alan McLean and Les Geeves outplayed the Valleys pack.

In 1963 Norths made it 5 in a row against a gutsy Souths team that included test players Frank Drake and Mick Vievers. Frank Drake ran over the top of Norths in the major semi final when he was shifted to centre. Instead of taking him back to his favourite position at fullback which gave him more room to make his blistering runs he was kept at centre in the grand final. Learning from the major semi the Norths backs were in Drake's face in defence giving him no room to move. Norths won the grand final 18-8 with Ian Massie outstanding in both defence and attack scoring two tries.

In 1964 Norths won their 6th straight premiership defeating Brothers 13-4. Bob Bax and captain Jimmy Hannam were carried shoulder high from the field after the match. It was Hannam's boot along with a Fonda Metassa try in the 35th minute that got them home for their 6th premiership. It is ironic that the winning run of premierships by Norths occurred at the same time St George were achieving the same feat in the Sydney premiership though they nearly doubled it with 11 titles. It is also ironic that their runs were immediately before the end of unlimited tackles in rugby league. During their 6 year winning streak rugby league was still played with unlimited tackles. In 1967 a limit on the number of tackles was introduced. Initially the number of tackles per set was 4 but this was increased to 6 tackles in 1971.

Norths record premiership run was broken by Redcliffe's first premiership in 1965 when a young Arthur Beetson played for the Dolphins before making his name in the Sydney competition and for Australia. Also playing for Redcliffe was Kevin Yow Yeh, a relative of the former Broncos winger. Yow Yeh scored 2 tries, the first when he followed a short kick by John Treeby and the second a typical winger's dash to the corner. Northey also scored 2 for Redcliffe. Redcliffe had only entered the competition in 1960 and coached by the legendary Henry Holloway they beat Valleys 15-2

Norths came back to win in 1966 when they defeated Brothers in a low-scoring game 9-6 which featured only one try. A player was sent from the field and a spectator attacked referee Henry Albert. Brothers five-eighth Johnny Gleeson was flattened by a vicious head high tackle and then Norths Grant Mould was knocked out. Henry Albert sent Dennis Manteit from Brothers off and was then attacked by a frustrated fan, something I don't think the Brothers Catholic chaplain would have condoned. Peter Lobegeiger engineered Cattanach's try with a great burst.

The 1967 Grand Final was an even lower scoring one but the result was reversed with Brothers defeating Norths in a tryless grand final 6-2. Peter Gallagher led Brothers to its first grand final since the first grand final at Lang Park in 1958. In 1968 Brothers would repeat the performance and win a second premiership in a row defeating Easts 21-4 in an entertaining grand final that was much more attacking than the past couple of grand finals. Wayne Abdy scored twice with Smith, Gelling and Maguire also scoring tries. Peter Lobegeiger, who switched from Norths to Easts scored the only goals and points for Easts.

In the late 1960's the district football rules requiring residential status in the district covered by each BRL club was discarded. Crowd figures for grand finals didn't get back over the 20 000 set for the first Lang Park grand final in 1958 until 1964. By 1967 BRL grand finals were consistently attracting at least 30 000. For most of the early 1970's they peaked at 40 000 when Valleys were on top.

In 1969 Norths had their last taste of glory before a very lean decade in the 1970's. Ian Massie and Peter Hall led from the front as they defeated Valleys by 14 to 2 with Massie and Fonda Metassa scoring tries. Defeated in grand final battle in 1969 the Valleys side were developing a number of star players who would dominate in the early 1970's.

The 1960's was truly Norths decade. Following their 6 year dynasty from 1959 to 1964 they also won the premiership two years later in 1966 and then beat Valleys in 1969. Norths won a total of 7 times in the 1960's (1960, 1961, 1962, 1963, 1964, 1966, 1969). Redcliffe won in 1965 and the other two premierships went to Brothers who did a double in 1967 and 1968 under the coaching of Brian Davies with a side that included test prop Peter Gallagher.

### **1970's**

The 1970 Grand Final involved both Valleys and Norths who contested the grand final the year previous but this time Valleys were the victors 13-11 in extra time. The match lasted 100 minutes and victory was left to fullback Norm Clarke when he landed a magnificent conversion from the sideline that gave Valleys a two point edge until the final whistle. It was an excellent grand final and neither team deserved to lose. In extra time John Brown had set flying lock Jim Adams up for a corner try with a perfect pass after only two minutes but Valleys bounced straight back through two of their best players, Tony Perkins and Jeff Gill with the latter diving over in the corner to level the scores again. Mitch Retchless was inspirational as was young prop John McCabe.

The 1970 premiership was the start of a new dynasty where Valleys would dominate. They would win 4 premierships in 5 years and came very close to winning 5 in a row as they lost one of those grand finals (1972) by a single point. In 1971 the number of tackles per set were increased from 4 to 6 and the number of points for a field goal was reduced from 2 to 1.



In 1971 grand final Valleys beat Easts by 18-10. Two minutes after the start John Lang for Easts made a run down the blind side from dummy half and kicked for Jeff Denman to score. Valleys struck back with Gerry Fitpatrick sending Daryl Abraham in and then Marty Scanlan doubled around Retchless from a scrum to find an overlap for Norris. Mick Retchless also scored a bullocking try from dummy half after half time and clinched the game with a field goal. John McCabe and Ross Threlfo were also standouts.

Easts won an exciting 1972 grand final to avenge the defeat of the year before by winning 16-15 with a late Jeff Fyfe field goal winning the game and Easts first premiership since 1950. It was the first field goal he had ever kicked and it made the difference. While Easts had only scored two tries to Valleys three they narrowly missed three more on corner flag ruins. Outstanding players for Easts were Jeff Denman, Allan Currie, John Lang, Paul Khan and tryscorer, Boris Crasini.

In 1973 Valleys defeated Redcliffe 15-7 in the Dolphins second grand final appearance. Valleys only clinched the win with about 6 minutes to go with a try by tall forward John McCabe. The turning point of the game was certainly the magnificent cover defending tackle by McCabe and Jeff Gill on Ron Carige who made a 60 metre burst. Had he scored the Dolphins may have gotten on a roll. McCabe's winning try was the result of a perfectly timed Tony Perkins pass.

Valleys made it 4 premierships from 5 straight grand final appearances in 1974 when they won a dour, tryless grand 9-2 against a Brothers side that included Wayne Bennett. Ross Strudwick landed 2 penalty goals and a field goal. Alan Mills also scored two field goals with the other goal for Valley coming from John Crilly. For Brothers their only points came from goal kicking great Ian Dauth.

In 1974 a national midweek competition called the Amco Cup began which was customised for television with four quarters and based on England knockout FA Cup. NSW's Western Division were the surprise first year winners. Brisbane clubs weren't invited to compete until the following year in 1975. Initially in 1975 it was just the top four from the previous year and then all eight Brisbane clubs were invited to compete in the next 3 seasons (1976-1978) along with various Queensland country representative teams. Due to some one-sided games it was decided to rationalise the Queensland teams involved in 1979 and from that season only a combined Brisbane and a combined Queensland Country team competed in the Amco Cup.

In the four seasons that Brisbane clubs competed in the Amco Cup only one each season made the quarter finals losing each time. In 1975 Valleys were defeated 33-10 by Parramatta. In 1976 Brothers were beaten by Balmain 19-3. In 1977 Valleys were defeated by Sydney Easts 35-2. In 1978 Easts were beaten 27-10 by Manly-Warringah at Lang Park. Both sides would go on to win their respective competitions that year. The only other time I am aware of where the Sydney premiers played the Brisbane premiers competed in the same year was around 1967 when South Sydney thrashed an ill-prepared Brothers team 55-15. It's a shame that such a contest did not become a regular event though I am glad to see that this has finally happened at the second tier level with the State Championship between the Queensland Cup and NSW Cup winners.

During the 1970's Queensland most keenly felt the player drain of its top players going to Sydney clubs but it wasn't always one-way traffic. The most famous move of a Sydney player to Brisbane was in 1959 when Clive Churchill moved to Brisbane to captain-coach Norths for a year (the first of their 6 premierships in a row). Around the same time Henry Holloway also moved up from NSW playing for Souths, Redcliffe (leading them to their first premiership in 1965) and then coaching Valleys during the 1970's. John Sattler after a great career with South Sydney moved to the Gold Coast drawn to its famous beaches and led Queensland in the 1973 interstate series. Ross Strudwick moved from Sydney to play for Valleys and led them to the 1979 premiership. John Elias was recruited by Wayne Bennett and scored Souths try in their 1985 grand final victory. Tommy Raudonikis also moved to Brisbane and played for Brothers and coached Ipswich helping to develop his great protégé Allan Langer. He also coached the Logan City Scorpions. During the 1970's Norths were able to secure English halfback Tommy Bishop. In the early 1970's Souths recruited some exciting Fijian players including the speedy Isoa Vola Vola.

Ron Raper's Wests side would dominate the next two years. They won a see-sawing classic grand final 26-24 in 1975 against Redcliffe. With a new grandstand on the Hale Street side the game was watched by 40 000 Brisbane fans. Redcliffe were down 19-4 at half time but fought back and may have won if invading children had not interrupted a last ditch effort. A scrum had been packed before the hooter and the ball was whipped to Ian Pearce who kicked ahead only to see it land among a gathering of children. Five eighth Geoff Richardson had featured prominently in Wests first two tries scored by Cameron and Bradshaw. He set up another try for Heading and it looked curtains for Redcliffe at 26-9 but "Bunny" Pearce scored to make it 26-19 with 12 minutes to go. Bleakley crashed over for a try that was converted making it 26-24 but time ran out for Redcliffe in the epic grand final.

The following year in 1976 Wests beat Easts 16-1 after Easts led by 1-0 early in the game following a field goal by John Payne. It would be their only point for the game. Gary Prickett and John Ribot scored Wests two tries and ever reliable Wayne Stewart kicked 5 goals. Richardson helped set up Ribot's try putting up a bomb, regathering, passing it to Greg Oliphant who sent Ribot in.

Easts would contest and win the next two grand finals in 1977 and 1978. Easts was brimming with star players such as Wayne Lindenberg, Johnny Lang, Roger Kuhn, Steve Stacey, Allan Currie and brothers Rod and Des Morris. Easts beat Redcliffe 17-13 in 1977. Redcliffe scored first through a burst by Forrester Grayson before tries to Easts by Callus and Farquhar. The winning try came from a lightning dummy half burst by Wayne Lindenberg who ran 30 metres and weaved past fullback Tony Obst to score.

In 1978 Easts overcame a resurgent Valleys to win 14-10. Valleys led 10-9 until Greg Holben scored a dramatic try 4 minutes from full time. Replacement winger Jeff McDonald kicked a magnificent sideline conversion to put them further ahead. Valleys supporters felt that a young Wally Lewis should have been awarded a penalty try early in the second half after he short kicked and was involved in a mad scramble for the ball over the line.

Valleys would go one better in 1979. Souths, who struggled for many years during the 60's and 70's, began to rise under the coaching of Wayne Bennett who recruited many players from the Police Academy including giant centre, Mal Meninga. They beat Easts in the preliminary final but were no match for Valleys in the 1979 grand final. Valleys thrashed them 26-0 with Ross Strudwick and new star Wally Lewis totally dominant on the day. Both scored field goals and though not scoring tries themselves set up several others, including one set up when Wally Lewis kicked and regathered. Tries to Valleys were scored by Chris Close, Vic Wieland, Peter McWhirter and John McLeod with Mick Neill landing 6 goals.

Valleys took the honours during the 1970's winning 5 times (1970, 1971, 1973, 1974). Easts won three premierships (1972, 1977, 1978) and Wests won twice (1975, 1976) during the 1970's.

### **1980's**

The 1980's saw the titanic struggles between Souths and Wynnum (with Easts winning again in 1983) before Brothers claimed the last BRL premiership in 1987 before the Brisbane Broncos entered the Sydney-come-national competition.

The 1980's also saw the birth of a new statewide competition in 1982 called the Winfield State League played over the first third of the season which was the forerunner to the Queensland Cup. In the 1980s, two further teams were added to the BRL competition: Ipswich (1986) and Logan (1988). Ipswich had been a part of the competition in the very first few years of the competition picking up their sole premiership in 1910. They have lost 2 BRL and 2 Queensland Cup grand finals since their re-entry.

Souths, though greatly outclassed by a more seasoned Valleys team in the 1979 grand final, had been steadily building a side that would become one of two dominant teams in the 1980's. In the 1980's their major rival would be the Wynnum-Manly Seagulls. Their star wouldn't rise until 1982 and Souths faced two different rivals in 1980 and 1981. Wynnum-Manly were full of quality players and they became further strengthened in 1984 by the signing of "King Wally" Lewis, who, though raised in Cannon Hill, started off his career with the Valleys Diehards.

Wally Lewis played a key role for Valleys 1980 when they pipped Souths by a single point winning the minor premiership. This saw the previous years' grand finalists face off in the major semi-final. This time Souths would have their revenge on Valleys for the previous year's humiliation by beating them 22 to 14. In a dramatic preliminary final Valleys were denied the chance to take on Souths again in the grand final when they were beaten by a single point losing 15 to 14 against Norths.. Norths had some great players including their captain Mark Murray and Queensland representatives, hooker Greg Conescu and winger "Smoking" Joe Kilroy and New Zealand captain, Mark Graham. Coaching them was Graham Lowe, who would later have great success coaching New Zealand and even Queensland (1991). With Valleys out of the finals Souths became raging hot favourites to win the 1980 Grand Final. Souths were in all three grade grand finals and won both the third grade and reserve grade grand finals. Everything looked on track for Souths to repeat their 1945 clean sweep, the only side to have done it up until then. Unfortunately things didn't quite go to script. The game was set alight early in the second half by a 50 metre run by "Smoking" Joe Kilroy who beat five defenders and sent Brian Dunn in to score. Souths scored two late tries but were pipped 17-15 and Norths won the 1980 premiership.

The following year in 1981 Souths finished on top of the table winning the minor premiership. They just beat Redcliffe by one point who were strengthened by the return to the Brisbane competition of legendary front-rower Arthur Beetson. He had played two years with Redcliffe including their only previous BRL premiership in 1965 before playing the next 15 years in the Sydney competition. Also playing for Redcliffe was legendary centre Chris "Choppy" Close. The 1981 Grand Final carried a lot of sentiment with it. Souths had not won a grand final for 28 years and Redcliffe had only won one grand final in 1965 and this was the swansong of one of the legends of the game, Arthur Beetson. Like Souths the previous year, Redcliffe had a shot at a clean sweep of all grades after winning both the Reserve Grade and C Grade premierships. They were on track to do it with only a minute left on the clock before Souths spoiled their party. In a tight match Souths were just behind on the scoreboard 9-8 with their last set of six before full time. On the second last tackle halfback Brad Sully set himself for a field goal but was quickly shut down by the defence. On the last tackle, with captain Bruce Astill calling for a field goal, Chris Phelan took the ball up, drew the defence and then whipped a short pass to Mal Meninga who passed the ball in a flash to Mick Reardon on the wing who then charged to and dived over in the corner scoring the winning try with 30 seconds left on the clock.

With a magnificent sideline conversion by Mal Meninga after the full time hooter Souths won an epic game 13 to 9. The Souths players went crazy celebrating and Mal Meninga in all the excitement after that winning try threw Mick Reardon on the ground like a rag doll. It was one of those enduring images of a historic win that brought an end to a 28 year drought for Souths. One of the other enduring images of the game was Mal Meninga running over the top of Artie Beetson who attempted to front on tackle him but was pushed backwards by Mal before Big Artie had enough of a grip on him. Big Artie lost his balance and fell backwards onto the ground.

In 1982, on the back of their phenomenal fan support, Wynnum-Manly beat Souths 17-3 to win their first premiership. Coach Des Morris and captain Rod Morris, who had switched from Easts to Wynnum-Manly combined to spearhead the Seagulls. Souths had spent a lot of time in Wynnum's half without scoring. It took until the 61st minute for Wynnum to threaten the tryline. An errant kick by Gene Miles, struck the upright and landed into the hands of five-eighth Brian Walsh who sent Brett French over. That broke the 7-3 scoreline and one minute before full time Morris split the defence and sent half Peter Dawes over to score under the posts. Ash Lumby, Adrian Higgs and Allan Power were gallant in defeat for the Magpies.

In 1983 Wayne Lindenberg returned for Easts and led them to a 14-6 grand final win against Redcliffe. Surprisingly neither Souths nor Wynnum-Manly made it to the grand final. In the grand final Easts led only by 2-0 up to the 65th minute. Wayne Lindenberg set up two tries—a galloping 80 metre combined effort scored by Brett Tengdhal in the 66th minute and 10 minutes later he threw a classic pass to Brad Backer who raced 50 metres to score. Like he did in 1977 Wayne Lindenberg was the difference between the two sides.

Wayne Bennett returned to coach Souths in 1984, a year that would become known for the complete domination of Wynnum-Manly following their signing of Wally Lewis. Wynnum-Manly won the Woolies pre-season competition, the State League and then the premiership. Led by legends Wally Lewis and Gene Miles, Wynnum-Manly inflicted a humiliating 42 to 8 defeat on Souths who played awful that day. To add insult to injury Souths fans at the game were outnumbered 4 to 1 by Wynnum-Manly's huge fan base. Souths had now been in 5 grand finals in 6 years and only won one of them.

The 1984 loss by 42-8 at the hands of Wynnum-Manly was absolutely crushing for Wayne Bennett who's one other grand final as coach for Souths was the 26 to nil humiliation at the hands of Valleys, ironically involving another dominant performance by King Wally before his switch of teams.

A lot of people look at Wayne Bennett these days and see him as the super coach that has won 7 out of 7 grand finals with the Broncos and St George in the ARL/NRL and could easily think that he has never tasted defeat. Quite the opposite. Before he tasted his first premiership success with Souths in 1985 his teams had suffered two thrashings at the hands of Valleys in 1979 and Wynnum-Manly in 1984. This pattern of great defeat before great success also is seen in his State of Origin coaching career for Queensland. His first season as Queensland coach was in 1986 when Queensland suffered its first 3-0 whitewash at the hands of NSW in three close games.

Things couldn't get any more close or desperate in the first game of 1987 when the scores were locked at 16-all near full time Mark McGaw threw an inside pass that was knocked down by Queensland but was kicked ahead into the Maroon's in-goal. Mick Stone was forced to make a split second decision without the help of the video replay system that we have today. Stone ruled that McGaw had touched down centimetres inside the dead-ball line for a try. Queensland fought back to win the 1987 series 2-1. Wayne Bennett coached Queensland to further success with the 1988 3-0 whitewash and then series wins in 1998 and 2001.

Wayne Bennett had drawn much on the lessons learned by Essendon and their coach Kevin Sheedy in the VFL. In 1983 Essendon were similarly thrashed by Hawthorn yet turned the tables on Hawthorn in the 1984 VFL Grand Final. Wayne Bennett recruited Norm Carr from Wests, Chris Phelan, Wayne Cullen and John Elias to strengthen and add muscle to the Souths forwards.

The mid 80's was perhaps the zenith of the BRL club competition. Wally Lewis made the comment that there were more stars out there than heaven playing for Souths and Wynnum-Manly. For Souths they had Gary Belcher, Peter Jackson, Mal Meninga, Norm Carr, John Elias, Mark Mesckell, Chris Phelan and Wynnum had Wally Lewis, Gene Miles, Greg Dowling, Gary Coyne and the French brothers. It was a quite sight to behold. The Magpies defensive line stood fast to enjoy an historic 10-8 win. The demons of the previous year's defeat had been exorcised. In 1985 Souths had won their second great premiership of the 1980's and made it a more respectable 2 from 6 grand finals.

In 1986 Wally Lewis led Wynnum to another premiership as they won 14-6 against a resurgent Brothers coached by Ross Strudwick. Brothers led 6-4 at half time after Peter Gill produced a cleverly disguised dummy. With 17 minutes to go Wally Lewis and replacement winger Phil Attell swooped on grounded balls and snatched victory for Wynnum Manly.

The last grand final before the birth of the Broncos was the 1987 grand final which was won by Brothers who defeated Redcliffe 26-8 in a highly entertaining game. Redcliffe dominated early before Brothers scored three unanswered tries to lead 14-0 at half time. Clinton Mohr was electric in the backline and set up a brilliant 60 metre try for "Smoking" Joe Kilroy . Tony Rea made the last pass for two tries. Brett Le Man, Steve Carter and Trevor Bailey, one of the tryscorers were also strong.

The 1980's before the Broncos came along was dominated by Wynnum-Manly who won 3 premierships (1982, 1984, 1986) and Souths who won 2 premierships (1981, 1985). The other three premierships in this period went to Norths (1980), Easts (1983) and Brothers (1987) who won the last premiership before the Brisbane Rugby League premiership became a second tier competition to the Sydney-come-national premiership in 1988.

In the State League after Easts won the inaugural competition in 1982 and Valleys in the year after (1983) Wynnum-Manly won all four of the remaining State League competitions (1984 to 1987) before the Broncos came along. Country teams did struggle particularly as the Brisbane clubs were able to poach any country players that showed promise. North Queensland chairman suggested that the State League be played on an origin basis but this never eventuated. The entry of a North Queensland and Gold Coast team in the ARL has helped country teams at the Queensland Cup level since.

### **The Post Broncos BRL Competition (1988-1995)**

When the Brisbane Broncos and the Gold Coast Giants entered the NSWRL competition it marked a point of no return for the Brisbane Rugby League competition. The BRL was now a second tier competition much to the disappointment of many diehard Queensland rugby league fans.

Before the entry of the Brisbane Broncos the top national talent was shared between the Brisbane and Sydney competitions with more playing in the Sydney competition thanks mainly to the bigger money offered by clubs that could benefit from poker machine profits which weren't introduced in Queensland until 1992.

With the entry of the Brisbane Broncos all the top national talent would now be in the NSWRL competition. A player could no longer be picked straight from Souths or any other BRL club to play for Queensland or Australia like you could in the years before the Broncos came along. From now you had to play in the Sydney-come-national competition to ever be picked for Queensland or Australia.

The Brisbane Broncos needed the agreement of the BRL and the BRL clubs to enter into the NSWRL. When a meeting involving the Broncos and BRL delegates to vote on the issue was held the initial vote was 6-4 against.

Gary Balkin, a patron of Souths and former player, was part of the Broncos consortium. He said, "The Brisbane competition was strong at the time and most of the clubs were worried about the implications of a locally-based team playing in Sydney. Everyone was concerned, many for the welfare of their clubs and some for their own positions...I wanted to assure them they would be treated well and looked after if we gained the nod to take a team into Sydney." Their issues of key concern were potential loss of sponsorship, dwindling attendances and a mass exodus of players. Gary Balkin was convincing as the next day they voted 10-0 to put a team into the Sydney competition.

Jack Gallaway in his book "The Brisbane Broncos – The Team to Beat" (p.17-19) wrote that the Broncos promised the BRL a 30% share of profits and that this ongoing annual return was a deciding factor in why the Broncos were chosen ahead of the Norwood-McKay consortium that was reported to have been favourites and had offered a one-off lumpsum of \$2 million to the BRL. There is some controversy over what became of this agreement.

Going to a national competition from the two city-based competitions was inevitable to be able to continue to compete with other sports that had already headed in that direction such as Aussie Rules (AFL), Basketball (NBL) and soccer (NSL). Had Brisbane clubs enjoyed the revenue benefits of being licensed poker machine clubs like the Sydney clubs in the 1980's, rather than from 1992, they may have enticed more Sydney-based Queenslanders back to the BRL competition in the 1980's.

As a result of that extra financial leverage, we may have seen a divisional system with promotion and relegation, like in England, where the top four Brisbane and top six Sydney teams could have formed the beginnings of a new and separate national competition rather than having a national competition that some feel is a glorified Sydney competition. Ron McAuliffe proposed just such a new and separate competition in 1984. In that scenario the two city-based competitions could have still continued separately with the lower ranked teams followed by a cross-over final series between the top teams from Brisbane and Sydney.

A total of 27 players had been lost by Brothers and Redcliffe to the NSWRL competition in 1988. Attendances nose-dived and the Brisbane clubs struggled to cope financially. Brothers were in the midst of a financial crisis when they won the 1987 premiership. Valleys looked over the border to the rich Tweed Heads Seagulls club that was once the richest rugby league club when pokies were still not allowed in Brisbane and hordes of Brisbane and Gold Coast gamblers filled their coffers. Tweed Heads Seagulls would lose a lot of revenue a few years later when the Goss government would allow leagues club to have pokies. Valleys teamed up with Tweed Heads to form the Seagulls-Diehards and won the pre-season competition, State League and BRL premiership in 1988.

The 1988 grand final was played between Valleys-Tweed Heads (Seagulls-Diehards) and newcomers the Ipswich Jets. Ipswich led up until the 51st minute but a penalty goal and try by Shane Kelly put Valleys in front before Brett Daunt sealed the game with a field goal to win 17-14.

The partnership with the Tweed Heads Seagulls dissolved but that didn't stop Valleys dominating in 1989. Again they faced Ipswich in the grand final and they dominated the game thrashing Ipswich 28-4 with Shane Buckley and Murray Feichtner both scoring doubles. Steve Hegarty landed 4 goals for the Diehards as they won back to back premierships.

Valleys and coach Ross Henrich picked up a hat trick in 1990 when they won an epic battle against Norths 17-16. The game is probably best remembered by the all in brawl in the rain that erupted involving all 26 players where Valleys players Bill Holmes suffered a broken nose. Down 16-10 late in the game Peter Coyne, who scored an earlier try, set up Murray Feichtner who levelled the scores. Peter Coyne then kicked the winning field goal with 2 minutes left on the clock. Peter Shields also scored for Valleys earlier in the game. The immediate post-Broncos era was dominated by Valleys who won three premierships in a row before losing their competitiveness as their financial situation worsened.

Easts and Wests contested the next three grand finals. In 1991 Easts secured their last premiership by winning 25-10. They have since lost 4 BRL grand finals and 4 Queensland Cup grand finals without tasting victory. Their 1991 grand final win was a highly entertaining game. Ian Staines and Bruce Crosby were amongst Easts best players on the day. Kurt Wrigley scored a double and Dowden and Neave also scored tries but the play of the game to me was the monstrous 50 metre field goal scored by Easts fullback Ken Jackson that was still climb as it went through the goal posts, one that Queensland union legend Roger Gould would have been proud of.

Wests did a double in 1992 and 1993 by thrashing Easts 40-10 in 1992 with two tries to Graham Strutton and other tries to Green, Smith, Duncan and Schuler and winning again in a closer game 18-12 against Easts in 1993. Some great players out there for Wests that day included Tony Currie who returned from playing in the ARL, Adrian Lam, Craig Bowen and Brad Thorn who would later play for the Broncos and the All Blacks.

After losing the last grand final in 1987 before the Broncos came along, Redcliffe in 1994, not only broke through to win their second first grade premiership in nearly 30 years after their first one but won all three grades that year, the second team ever to win the top three grades in the same year. They would repeat the feat in 1997 and 2002. They won 24-18. Wynnum in 1995 defeated Easts 32-24 to win the last BRL grand final before the competition became the statewide Queensland Cup.

In the post-Broncos BRL premiership era (1988-1995) Valleys took the honours winning 3 times (1988, 1989, 1990). Wests won 2 premierships (1992, 1993). Easts won in 1991, Redcliffe in 1994 and Wynnum won the last full BRL premiership before the Queensland Cup in 1995. In addition to their 1994 BRL premiership Redcliffe won the 1996 and 1997 BRL grand finals played after the Queensland Cup grand final after an additional final series between the highest placed Brisbane clubs in the Queensland Cup season which was abolished after the 1997 BRL grand final was a replay of the Queensland Cup grand final between Redcliffe and Easts.

In the State League Valleys won in 1988 and 1990 with Easts winning in 1989. For two years after it became a regional competition like the old State Championship of the 60's and 70's. North Queensland won in 1991 and Brisbane Capitols in 1992. It reverted back to a club format in 1993 with a strong schedule bias in favour of the country clubs who prospered with Mackay winning in 1993 and 1994 and Rockhampton winning in 1995. The State League would expand into a full season statewide competition in 1996 known as the Queensland Cup.

### **The Queensland Cup**

In 1996 the QRL made the bold move to expand the premiership to a statewide competition. Prior to then the Winfield State League, starting in 1982, had been run over the first third of the season. Now based on certain selection and financial criteria, country teams were invited to be a part of the statewide competition that would run the whole season. There were 16 teams from Brisbane and across the state and even a Port Moresby team. The competition was a great success and culminated in Toowoomba beating Redcliffe 8-6 at Suncorp Stadium to claim the first Queensland Cup.

The intent of the QRL was to still retain the Brisbane premiership and the top Brisbane sides based on their placing in the Queensland Cup would compete in a final series that ran alongside the Queensland Cup as Brisbane teams dropped out of the Queensland Cup finals series. The BRL grand final was played after Queensland Cup grand final. Despite being outscored 3 tries to 2, Redcliffe prevailed over Souths 16-12.

In 1997 Redcliffe beat Easts 18-16 in the Queensland Cup grand final and played each other again in the BRL grand final winning 35-6. Lack of crowd support at the BRL final series including the grand final when the same teams played again led to the decision to abolish the BRL final series leaving only the Queensland Cup season and final series. Part of the reason for the poor support for the BRL final series was the overkill of finals played in those two years. There were too many finals games for even just the Queensland Cup and then to repeat that with almost as many BRL final games was just ridiculous. They did streamline the Queensland Cup final series later on. It would have helped if they just had a preliminary final between 2 and 3 for the BRL premiership followed by a grand final.

Rather than abolishing the BRL final series altogether, what they should have done in my view is have a BRL grand final just in those years that a country team won the Queensland Cup which could be played at either Suncorp Stadium or a suburban ground like Langlands Park. This would ensure there would always be Brisbane premiers every year, whether it was either through winning the Queensland Cup or winning the BRL grand final but not both (like in 1997).

In 1998 Norths initiated a new feeder club arrangement with the Melbourne Storm that would soon become the norm. Dual registration between the NRL and Queensland Cup allowed excess Storm players not in the 17 playing in the NRL that weekend to fly up and play for Norths in the Queensland Cup. For NRL teams this works out a lot cheaper than fielding a whole reserve grade team. When the NRL began in 1998 after re-unification between the ARL and Super League, the national reserve grade competition was abolished and Brisbane, the Gold Coast and North Queensland no longer fielded reserve grade teams and would link up with Queensland Cup clubs to ensure their excess players got match time. The new arrangement with the Melbourne Storm certainly paid dividends for Norths as they beat Wests 35-16 in the grand final to win the 1998 Queensland Cup. Burleigh Heads beat Redcliffe 12-10 to win in 1999.

In 2000 Toowoomba was the sole feeder club to the Brisbane Broncos including several big names that would play in the NRL. They thrashed Redcliffe in the major semi-final but Redcliffe bounced back to beat Toowoomba 14-6 in the grand final. The grand final was taken to Dolphin Oval the next year but the home ground advantage wasn't enough to get Redcliffe home as Toowoomba reversed the result from the year before winning an epic, high scoring game 28-26.

Redcliffe showed themselves the dominant team in the Queensland Cup winning their 3rd and 4th Queensland Cup titles thrashing Ipswich 34-10 in 2002 with Aaron Barba (brother of Ben Barba) scoring three tries and beating Burleigh 31-18 in the 2003 grand final, both of which were played at Dolphin Oval.

In 2003 Souths were fighting for their financial life and with the financial assistance of the Canberra Raiders did they continue and formed a joint venture with the Logan Scorpions. They folded later in their first season with Souths but Souths have retained the name Souths Logan Magpies.

Following a disastrous year in 2003 when they lost all 22 games of the season Wests decided to depart the Qld Cup competition, and guarantee their survival by participating in lower grades only, with hopes of re-entering the Qld Cup competition at a later date.

Valleys, the Brisbane club to have won the most premierships (24), had their last season at the top level in 2004, their only one in the Queensland Cup. In 1988, Valleys formed a short-lived joint venture with the Tweed Heads Seagulls playing under the name Seagulls-Diehards, winning the 1988 premiership. The joint venture broke soon after and Valleys returned to their old name. Financial difficulties in the early 1990s took their toll on the club, leading Valleys to a short-lived merger with the Caboolture Snakes, calling themselves Caboolture Valleys, in 1995. However the club folded at season's end, preventing the foundation club from playing in the inaugural Queensland Cup in 1996.

In 2002, Valleys entered a partnership with another former Brisbane Rugby League team, Brothers, playing under the name Brothers-Valleys. Brothers left the Queensland Cup at the end of 1998 when they acted as feeder club to the Broncos for that year. Playing out of Perry Park, in Bowen Hills, the Two-Blues participated in the lower grades, before being accepted into the Queensland Cup for Season 2004. Based at O'Callaghan Park in Zillmere, the club's only premiership points that season were from a first round draw. At seasons end, Brothers Valleys announced a name change to Brothers Diehards, but were not accepted into the 2005 Queensland Cup, on the basis of club finance, a very sad end for two great clubs with so much history.



Sadly there was little public hue and cry over the demise of such clubs like there was when Souths Sydney were kicked out of the NRL. With the media only really interested in the NRL the Brisbane public has sadly shown little interest in the second tier which the Brisbane-come-statewide competition is now. That is only now slowly beginning to change.

The grand final returned to Suncorp Stadium in 2004 and what an epic encounter it was with Burleigh beating Easts 22-18 in extra time. Playing for Easts in the twilight of their career were Broncos legends Steve Renouf and Darren Smith.

In 2005 two country teams faced for the first time with North Queensland thrashing Burleigh 36-6. Old rivals Redcliffe and Toowoomba faced off again for the 4th time in a Queensland Cup grand final in 2006 with Anthony Griffin's Redcliffe Dolphins winning 27-6 to take their 5th Queensland Cup title. The Queensland Cup went just over the border the next year with Tweed Heads defeating Redcliffe 28-18 in 2007.

Due to a event clash the 2008 grand final was taken to Ipswich Reserve which had a terrific carnival atmosphere and was full to the brim. Thanks to a new feeder relationship with Canberra Souths-Logan Magpies surged to the grand final after beating the Northern Pride in extra time in the preliminary final and got out of the blocks very quickly taking a 18-0 lead. Ipswich surged back to level the score at 18-18. On the last tackle of the game Souths Logan scored a try that took an eternity to award when sent to the video referee. Souths Logan won 24-18 to take the premiership in rugby league's centenary year and the 100th season of the Brisbane competition, quite fitting for the remaining foundation club in the game at the top level.

In 2009 the grand final was played between two country teams for the second time with newcomers Sunshine Coast (bolstered by a feeder relationship Sydney's Manly Sea Eagles) beating Northern Pride 32-18 at Sunshine Coast stadium. Northern Pride went one better in 2010 beating Norths 30-20 at Suncorp Stadium.

Wynnum-Manly, coached by Paul Green, won the next two Queensland Cup premierships beating Tweed Heads 16-10 in 2011 and Redcliffe 20-10 in 2012.

North Ipswich Reserve hosted the 2013 Queensland Cup where favourites Easts were beaten 27-20 by Mackay in a highly entertaining attacking game. In 2014 the Northern Pride humbled Easts 36-4 to win the Queensland Cup and earn the right to play NSW Cup premiers Penrith in Sydney at the NRL grand final where the Northern Pride won the first annual State Championship game 32-28 in a highly entertaining attacking game.

Redcliffe have proven to be the most successful Queensland Cup winning team with 5 premierships (1997, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2006). The next most successful Queensland Cup team is North Queensland who have won 3 times (2005 [NQ Young Guns], 2010, 2014 [Northern Pride]). Toowoomba (1996, 2001), Burleigh Heads (1999, 2004) and Wynnum-Manly (2011, 2012) are the only other teams to win more than once. Other teams to have won the Queensland Cup include Norths (1998), Tweed Heads (2007), Souths Logan (2008), Sunshine Coast (2009) and Mackay (2013) who previously won the State League twice (1993, 1994) in the pre-Queensland Cup era.





The NSWRL have not put the same effort into making the NSW Cup a statewide competition like the Queensland Cup. Not counting Auckland, all the NSW Cup teams are on the coast between Newcastle and Illawarra. I would like to see Tweed Heads in the NSW Cup along with some country sides like Northern Rivers, Riverina and Western Division.

The Queensland Cup, on the other hand, is truly a statewide competition with the country areas represented by the Northern Pride, Mackay, Central Qld, Ipswich, Burleigh, and Tweed Heads. In 2014 the PNG Hunters joined the competition and in 2015 the Townsville Blackhawks will join it. Plans are in place to bring Toowoomba back into the competition and possibly one or two of the Pacific nations. If financially viable, I would love to also see a Brothers-Valleys side back in so those two old Brisbane clubs with such great history are playing again at the top level.

Since 2012 Channel 9 has been televising the Queensland Cup live on Sundays before the NRL. That combined with more money from the broadcast deal being channelled into the second tier (QLD Cup/NSW Cup reserve grade to the NRL) is seeing a resurgence in the public wanting to see the local Brisbane clubs playing each other again and the future looks bright for the Queensland Cup.

# BRISBANE GRAND FINAL RESULTS

## 1909-1997


Venue	Crowd					Final Result Prior To Minor Premiers Challenge
Brisbane Cricket Ground	n/a	1909	 Fortitude Valley Diehards	22-4	South Brisbane	
Brisbane Cricket Ground	n/a	1910	Ipswich	17-2	Toombul	* Replay after 10-10 draw between Ipswich & Toombul
Brisbane Cricket Ground	n/a	1911	 Valley-Toombul	13-2	Ipswich *	Valley-Toombul 13 v Ipswich 0
Brisbane Cricket Ground ?	n/a	1912	Natives *	10-0	South Brisbane	South Brisbane 15 v Natives 10
Brisbane Cricket Ground	n/a	1913	 West End	5-2	Natives	
Exhibition Ground	n/a	1914	 Fortitude Valley Diehards	18-8	 West End	
Exhibition Ground	n/a	1915	 Fortitude Valley Diehards *	10-9	 Wests Panthers	Wests 14 v Bulimba 7 **
Brisbane Cricket Ground	1500	1916	 Wests Panthers *	4-2	 Fortitude Valley Diehards	Valleys 13 v Wests 11
Brisbane Cricket Ground	n/a	1917	 Fortitude Valley Diehards	13-5	 Merthys	
Brisbane Cricket Ground	n/a	1918	 Fortitude Valley Diehards	16-12	 Merthys *	Valleys 16 v Merthyr 12
Davies Park	n/a	1919	 Fortitude Valley Diehards *	28-2	 Coorparoo	Coorparoo 16 v Carlton 9 **
Davies Park	n/a	1920	 Wests Panthers	16-8	 Christian Brothers	
Davies Park	n/a	1921	 Carltons *	12-10	 Coorparoo	Coorparoo 24 v Carltons 18
Exhibition Ground	n/a	1922	 Wests Panthers	20-9	 Coorparoo	
Exhibition Ground	8000	1923	 Coorparoo	13-2	 Fortitude Valley Diehards	
Exhibition Ground	n/a	1924	 Fortitude Valley Diehards *	11-8	 Christian Brothers	Brothers 23 v Valleys 3
Davies Park	6000	1925	 Carltons	24-5	 Coorparoo *	Carltons 10 v Brothers 0 **
Davies Park	n/a	1926	 Christian Brothers *	6-5	 Coorparoo	Coorparoo 7 v Brothers 2
Davies Park	n/a	1927	 Past Grammams	13-11	 Wests Panthers	
Exhibition Ground	n/a	1928	University	10-7	 Carltons *	University 9 v Brothers 7 **
Exhibition Ground	n/a	1929	University	12-11	 Coorparoo	
Davies Park	n/a	1930	 Carltons *	19-8	 Fortitude Valley Diehards	Valleys 10 v Carlton 0
Davies Park	n/a	1931	 Fortitude Valley Diehards *	27-9	 Past Grammams	Grammars 16 v Coorparoo 13 **
Brisbane Cricket Ground	5000	1932	 Wests Panthers *	8-7	 Past Grammams	Grammars 24 v Wests 10
Davies Park	n/a	1933	 Fortitude Valley Diehards	9-3	 Wests Panthers *	Valleys 9 v Wests 3

\* Minor Premiers in year when they challenged the winning finalist








\*\* Minor Premiers knocked out in semi-finals before challenging winning finalist

† Decided in extra time

# RUGBY LEAGUE

Venue	Crowd				
Davies Park	2500	1934	 Norths Devils	7-4	 Wests Panthers
Brisbane Cricket Ground		† 1935	 Past Brothers	11-9	 Fortitude Valley Diehards
Brisbane Cricket Ground	2000	1936	 Wests Panthers	13-12	 Fortitude Valley Diehards
Brisbane Cricket Ground	2000	1937	 Fortitude Valley Diehards	9-7	 Wests Panthers
Brisbane Cricket Ground		1938	 Norths Devils	16-10	 Fortitude Valley Diehards
Brisbane Cricket Ground		1939	 Past Brothers	11-9	 Norths Devils
Brisbane Cricket Ground	5000	1940	 Norths Devils	17-11	 Past Brothers
Brisbane Cricket Ground	4200	1941	 Fortitude Valley Diehards	13-7	 Norths Devils
Brisbane Cricket Ground		1942	 Past Brothers	20-11	 Souths Magpies
Exhibition Ground	3000	1943	 Past Brothers	13-7	 Fortitude Valley Diehards
Brisbane Cricket Ground	8000	1944	 Fortitude Valley Diehards	16-12	 Norths Devils
Brisbane Cricket Ground	10 000	1945	 Souths Magpies	21-11	 Norths Devils
Brisbane Cricket Ground		1946	 Fortitude Valley Diehards	5-2	 Easts Tigers
Brisbane Cricket Ground		1947	 Easts Tigers	15-2	 Souths Magpies
Brisbane Cricket Ground	6000	1948	 Wests Panthers	14-8	 Easts Tigers
Brisbane Cricket Ground	7000	1949	 Souths Magpies	22-8	 Easts Tigers
Brisbane Cricket Ground		1950	 Easts Tigers	14-10	 Wests Panthers
Brisbane Cricket Ground	7000	1951	 Souths Magpies	20-10	 Easts Tigers
Brisbane Cricket Ground	9000	1952	 Wests Panthers	15-14	 Past Brothers
Brisbane Cricket Ground	10 000	1953	 Souths Magpies	21-4	 Easts Tigers
Brisbane Cricket Ground		1954	 Wests Panthers	35-18	 Past Brothers
Brisbane Cricket Ground	14 000	1955	 Fortitude Valley Diehards	17-7	 Past Brothers
Brisbane Cricket Ground	14 000	1956	 Past Brothers	17-10	 Wests Panthers
Brisbane Cricket Ground	16 151	1957	 Fortitude Valley Diehards	18-17	 Past Brothers
Lang Park	20 000	1958	 Past Brothers	22-7	 Fortitude Valley Diehards

# RUGBY LEAGUE

VENUE	CROWD				
Lang Park	18 021	1959	 Norths Devils	24–18	 Past Brothers
Lang Park	14 000	1960	 Norths Devils	18–5	 Fortitude Valley Diehards
Lang Park	10 921	1961	 Norths Devils	29–5	 Fortitude Valley Diehards
Lang Park	17 000	1962	 Norths Devils	22–0	 Fortitude Valley Diehards
Lang Park	18 000	1963	 Norths Devils	18–8	 Souths Magpies
Lang Park	21 000	1964	 Norths Devils	13–4	 Past Brothers
Lang Park	25 309	1965	 Redcliffe Dolphins	15–2	 Fortitude Valley Diehards
Lang Park	22 000	1966	 Norths Devils	9–6	 Past Brothers
Lang Park	30 000	1967	 Past Brothers	6–2	 Norths Devils
Lang Park	n/a	1968	 Past Brothers	21–4	 Easts Tigers
Lang Park	35 000	1969	 Norths Devils	14–2	 Fortitude Valley Diehards
Lang Park	n/a	1970 †	 Fortitude Valley Diehards	13–11	 Norths Devils
Lang Park	40 000	1971	 Fortitude Valley Diehards	18–10	 Easts Tigers
Lang Park	40 000	1972	 Easts Tigers	16–15	 Fortitude Valley Diehards
Lang Park	40 000	1973	 Fortitude Valley Diehards	15–7	 Redcliffe Dolphins
Lang Park	n/a	1974	 Fortitude Valley Diehards	9–2	 Past Brothers
Lang Park	40 000	1975	 Wests Panthers	26–24	 Redcliffe Dolphins
Lang Park	37 000	1976	 Wests Panthers	16–1	 Easts Tigers
Lang Park	37 000	1977	 Easts Tigers	17–13	 Redcliffe Dolphins
Lang Park	n/a	1978	 Easts Tigers	14–10	 Fortitude Valley Diehards
Lang Park	35 000	1979	 Fortitude Valley Diehards	26–0	 Souths Magpies

## RUGBY LEAGUE

VENUE	CROWD				
Lang Park	n/a	1980	 Norths Devils	17–15	 Souths Magpies
Lang Park	30 000	1981	 Souths Magpies	13–9	 Redcliffe Dolphins
Lang Park	36 000	1982	 Wynnum-Manly Seagulls	17–3	 Souths Magpies
Lang Park	25 000	1983	 Easts Tigers	14–6	 Redcliffe Dolphins
Lang Park	n/a	1984	 Wynnum-Manly Seagulls	42–8	 Souths Magpies
Lang Park	31 000	1985	 Souths Magpies	10–8	 Wynnum-Manly Seagulls
Lang Park	n/a	1986	 Wynnum-Manly Seagulls	14–6	 Past Brothers
Lang Park	25 000	1987	 Past Brothers	26–8	 Redcliffe Dolphins
Lang Park	12 000	1988	 Seagulls-Diehards	17–14	 Ipswich Jets
Lang Park	11 000	1989	 Fortitude Valley Diehards	28–4	 Ipswich Jets
Lang Park	13 000	1990	 Fortitude Valley Diehards	17–16	 Norths Devils
Lang Park	n/a	1991	 Easts Tigers	25–10	 Wests Panthers
Lang Park	n/a	1992	 Wests Panthers	40–10	 Easts Tigers
Lang Park	n/a	1993	 Wests Panthers	18–12	 Easts Tigers
Lang Park	n/a	1994	 Redcliffe Dolphins	24–18	 Wests Panthers
Lang Park	12 176	1995	 Wynnum-Manly Seagulls	32–24	 Easts Tigers
Lang Park	n/a	1996	 Redcliffe Dolphins	16–12	 Souths Magpies
Lang Park	n/a	1997	 Redcliffe Dolphins	35–6	 Easts Tigers




















† Decided in extra time In 1996 & 1997 running during (as Brisbane clubs were knocked out) and following the Queensland Cup final series, a separate final series was played involving the Brisbane clubs based on their position on the Queensland Cup ladder for the Brisbane premiership. This was abolished after the same Queensland Cup finalists played the Brisbane Grand Final soon after.



## Amco Cup Games Played by Brisbane Clubs




Date	Game Details	Venue
16/04/75	Balmain 24 v Brothers (BRL) 16	Lang Park
7/05/75	St George 35 v Norths (BRL) 16	Leichhardt Oval
7/05/75	Penrith 37 v Souths (BRL) 9	Leichhardt Oval
18/06/75	Valleys (BRL) 15 v Toowoomba 6	Lang Park
23/07/75	(QF) Parramatta 33 v Valleys (BRL) 10	Leichhardt Oval
31/03/76	South Sydney 17 v Souths (BRL) 8	Lang Park
7/04/76	Brothers (BRL) 19 v Penrith 8	Lang Park
14/04/76	Auckland 30 v Redcliffe (BRL) 5	Lang Park
21/04/76	Easts (BRL) 38 v Canterbury (NZ) 7	Lang Park
28/04/76	Riverina 36 v Valleys (BRL) 2	Lang Park
5/05/76	Wests (BRL) 17 v Norths (BRL) 2	Lang Park
19/05/76	Brothers (BRL) 12 v Northern Division 6	Leichhardt Oval
9/06/76	Manly-Warringah 24 v Wests (BRL) 8	Lang Park
30/06/76	Canterbury-Bankstown 13 v Easts (BRL) 7	Leichhardt Oval
14/07/76	(QF) Balmain 19 v Brothers (BRL) 3	Leichhardt Oval
30/03/77	Brothers (BRL) 16 v Wynnum-Manly (BRL) 15	Lang Park
6/04/77	Redcliffe (BRL) 19 v Wests (BRL) 10	Lang Park
13/04/77	Wests (Sydney) 60 v Norths (BRL) 0	Lang Park
4/05/77	Valleys (BRL) 19 v Illawarra 10	Lang Park
25/05/77	Monaro 21 v Easts (BRL) 18	Lang Park
4/05/77	Souths (BRL) 20 v Canterbury (NZ) 12	Lang Park
1/06/77	Valleys (BRL) 13 v Brothers (BRL) 9	Lang Park
8/06/77	Wests (Sydney) 20 v Redcliffe (BRL) 2	Leichhardt Oval
29/06/77	Northern Division 34 v Souths (BRL) 20	Lang Park
20/07/77	(QF) Easts (Sydney) 35 v Valleys (BRL) 2	Lang Park
30/03/78	Wests (BRL) 8 v Wynnum-Manly (BRL) 8	Lang Park
30/03/78	Newtown 49 v Brothers (BRL) 0	Leichhardt Oval
5/04/78	Souths (BRL) 10 v Gold Coast 4	Gold Coast
5/04/78	Illawarra 35 v Valleys (BRL) 7	Lang Park
19/04/78	Wests (Sydney) 25 v Souths (BRL) 5	Leichhardt Oval
26/04/78	Wests (Brisbane) 4 v Redcliffe (BRL) 3	Lang Park
24/05/78	Illawarra 44 v Norths (BRL) 5	Wollongong
7/06/78	Parramatta 28 v Wests (BRL) 0	Leichhardt Oval
5/07/78	Easts (BRL) 27 v North Sydney 6	Lang Park
19/07/78	(QF) Manly-Warringah 27 v Easts (BRL) 10	Lang Park

## Winfield State League grand final results

Season			
	Premiers	Score	Runner-Up
1982	 Easts Tigers	23-15	 Redcliffe Dolphins
1983	 Fortitude Valley Diehards	21-12	 Easts Tigers
1984	 Wynnum-Manly Seagulls	21-10	 Souths Magpies
1985	 Wynnum-Manly Seagulls	16-0	 Past Brothers
1986	 Wynnum-Manly Seagulls	46-10	 Redcliffe Dolphins
1987	 Wynnum-Manly Seagulls	36-14	 Redcliffe Dolphins
1988	 Seagulls-Diehards	26-10	 Easts Tigers
1989	 Easts Tigers	30-4	QRL Central Division
1990	 Fortitude Valley Diehards	34-26	 Easts Tigers
1991	QRL Northern Division	44-30	QRL Central Division
1992	Brisbane Capitols	30-10	QRL Northern Division
1993	Mackay	18-12	 Wests Panthers
1994	Mackay	34-14	 Wests Panthers
1995	Rockhampton	26-22	Gold Coast Vikings


# RUGBY LEAGUE

## Queensland Cup grand final results

Season	Grand Final Information				Minor Premiers
	Premiers	Score	Runners-Up	Crowd	
1996	 Toowoomba Clydesdales	8–6	 Redcliffe Dolphins	6,500	 Toowoomba Clydesdales
1997	 Redcliffe Dolphins	18–16	 Easts Tigers	?	 Wynnum Manly Seagulls
1998	 Norths Devils	35–16	 Wests Panthers	4,283	 Norths Devils
1999	 Burleigh Bears	12–10	 Redcliffe Dolphins	?	 Redcliffe Dolphins
2000	 Redcliffe Dolphins	14–6	 Toowoomba Clydesdales	7,280	 Redcliffe Dolphins
2001	 Toowoomba Clydesdales	28–26	 Redcliffe Dolphins	7,000	 Toowoomba Clydesdales
2002	 Redcliffe Dolphins	34–10	 Ipswich Jets	10,000	 Redcliffe Dolphins
2003	 Redcliffe Dolphins	31–18	 Burleigh Bears	8,000	 Burleigh Bears
2004	 Burleigh Bears	22-18+	 Easts Tigers	9,398	 Burleigh Bears
2005	 North Queensland Young Guns	36–6	 Burleigh Bears	6,893	 North Queensland Young Guns
2006	 Redcliffe Dolphins	27–6	 Toowoomba Clydesdales	5,538	 Toowoomba Clydesdales
2007	 Tweed Heads Seagulls	28–18	 Redcliffe Dolphins	7,000	 North Queensland Young Guns
2008	 Souths Logan Magpies	24–18	 Ipswich Jets	c. 6,000	 Ipswich Jets
2009	 Sunshine Coast Sea Eagles	32–18	 Northern Pride	c. 2,500	 Souths Logan Magpies
2010	 Northern Pride	30–20	 Norths Devils	6,300	 Souths Logan Magpies
2011	 Wynnum Manly Seagulls	16–10	 Tweed Heads Seagulls	6,182	 Tweed Heads Seagulls
2012	 Wynnum Manly Seagulls	20–10	 Redcliffe Dolphins	9,682	 Redcliffe Dolphins
2013	 Mackay Cutters	27–20	 Easts Tigers	6,706	 Northern Pride
2014	 Northern Pride	36–4	 Easts Tigers	7,135	 Northern Pride

+ after extra time

## NRL State Championship Match

Season	Grand Final Information			
	Premiers	Score	Runners-Up	Venue
2014	 Northern Pride 2014 QLD Cup Premiers	32-28	 Penrith Panthers 2014 NSW Cup Premiers	Stadium Australia



## RUGBY LEAGUE



Valley Football Club — Winners of First League Premiership, 1909  
Matches Played 10, Won 8, Lost 1, Drawn 1 — Points Scored 114, against 35.



FRONT ROW: A. Harvey, D. A. Coffey (Hon. Secretary), E. Hanly.  
SECOND ROW: G. Crawford (V.P.), Dug. McGregor, W. R. Clark (Patron), W. Abrahams (Captain),  
R. W. Eve (President), H. Dickens, T. J. Anderson (V.P.).  
THIRD ROW: N. McGregor, A. Moxley, G. McPherson, A. O'Brien, E. Cartmill,  
J. Carmody, P. McLaughlin, G. Hooker.  
BACK ROW: W. Lovell, E. Buckley, Dave Kelly.



**Above:** West End, one of two clubs based at Davies Park, won the first premiership for the area in 1913. **Below:** Valleys got the jump on all other clubs in terms of winning premierships by winning 7 of the first 11 premierships (1909, 1911, 1914, 1915, 1917, 1918 & 1919).





## RUGBY LEAGUE



Left: The Brisbane club final of 1910 between Ipswich (dark jerseys) and Toombul. Ipswich ran out winners, 17-2.



The Final at the 'Gabba, where Ipswich (plain dark 'Green' jerseys) beat Toombul 17-2.  
Note the headwear of the Toombul halfback!

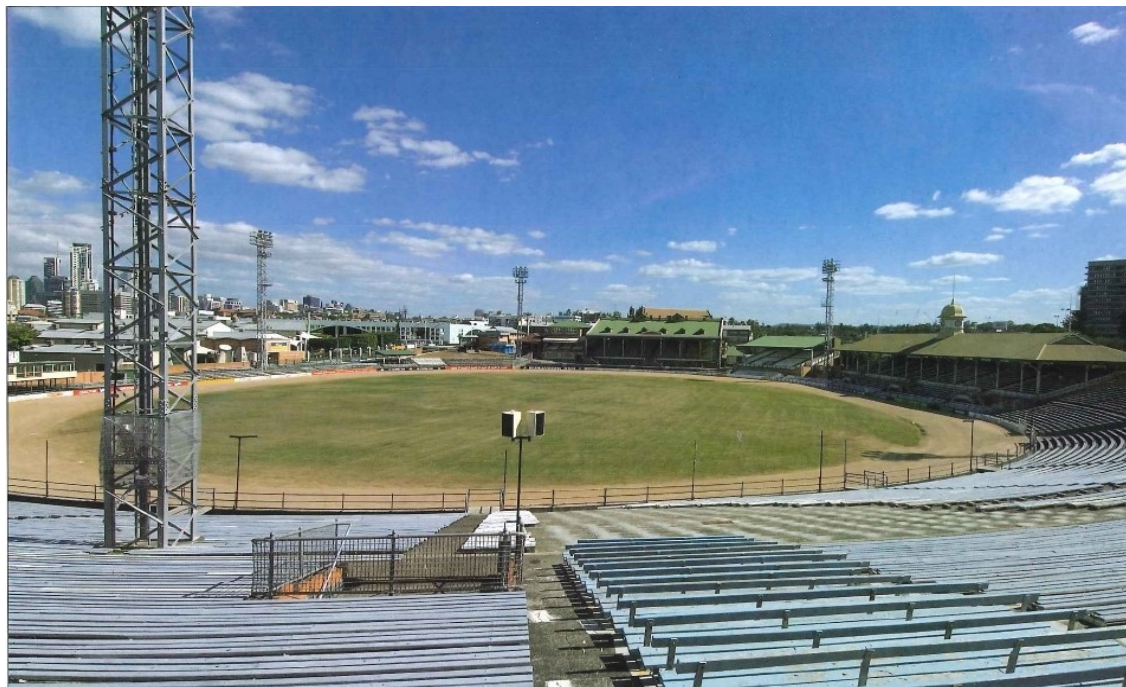




AN INCIDENT IN THE COORPAROO-VALLEY GAME ON SATURDAY WHEN THE "TIGERS" WON THE PREMIERSHIP. THE PICTURE SHOWS THE WINNERS MAKING DOUBLY CERTAIN THAT ONE OF THE VALLEY MEN DOES NOT GET AWAY.



An incident in the Coorparoo-Brothers' League game. It was a semi-final, and was won by the Brothers.



After the Gabba was used up to WW1, grand finals between 1919 and 1935 were shared between the Exhibition Ground and Davies Park. **Above Left:** Action from the 1923 grand final and a 1924 semi final at the Exhibition Ground. **Above Right:** The historic Exhibition ground today. **Below Left:** Davies Park in the 1930's from the air. **Below Right:** Action from the 1930 Grand Final Challenge at Davies Park. Carlton (later Souths) were beaten 10-0 by Valleys in the final but, as minor premiers, exercised their right of a re-match and beat Valleys 19-8 for the 1930 premiership.



*WELL STOPPED.—Donovan, the Valley captain, is well stopped by the Carlton forwards, Ryan and Williams, in the Brisbane Rugby League's Grand Challenge Final at Davies Park on Saturday, when Carlton defeated their old rivals 19-8.*

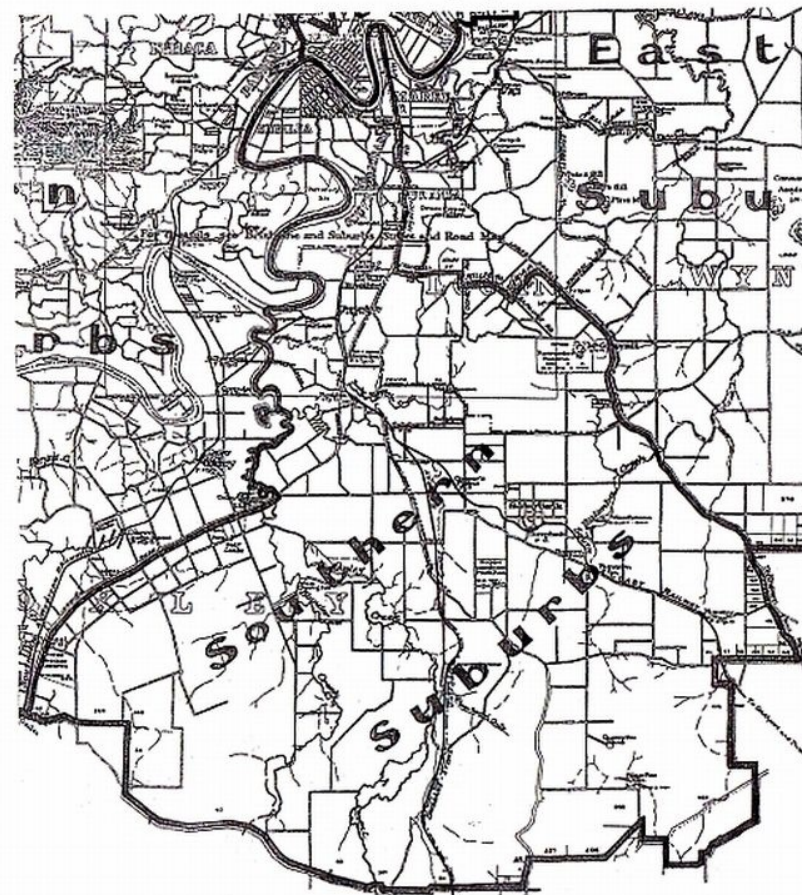




Above: The BRL celebrates its 25th year after forming a break away competition from the QRL in 1922. Photo courtesy The Scott Collection



## Southern Suburbs District Rugby League Football Club



Southern Suburbs: South Brisbane, including that portion of Maree, North East of Stanley Street, bounded by Dock Street, Stanley Street, Main Street and the Brisbane River, Kurlipa, that portion of Oxley east of Oxley Creek to Ipswich Road thence along Ipswich Road to Gables on the Greater Brisbane Boundary and that portion of Buranda and Logan West of Ipswich Road to Chardon's Hotel (Cracknell Road) thence along Cracknell Road and Main Avenue to Toohey Road. Along Weller Road to Bapaume Road and along same to Stereulia Avenue thence to Logan Road and along Logan Road to unnamed road, at the corner of Portion 163, vide map, on the Greater Brisbane Boundary.

**Above Left:** Clubs officials celebrate the formation of the BRL in 1922 which gave Brisbane clubs more control than they previously had under the QRL. **Below Left:** Journalist and league administrator, Harry Sunderland, who was a central figure in the BRL split from the QRL in 1922. **Above:** A map showing the district boundaries each clubs' players needed to reside in during the period of district football between 1933 and the late 1960's.





**JACK REARDON**



An Eastern Suburbs player exploiting the short kick and follow on in the match against Northern Suburbs at the Brisbane Cricket Ground yesterday.

Some of the great players and action from the BRL during the 1930's and early 1940's. Norths' Jack Reardon (Above Left) was one of the best Queensland players of this era and later became a renowned sports journalist for the Courier Mail. From 1935 until 1957 (except 1943) all grand finals were played at the Brisbane Cricket Ground.



J. Stapleton (Northern Suburbs) breaking away from the base of Norths' pack in the Rugby League match against Valley yesterday.



Tom Purtell (Wests) comes up from behind with a diving tackle to jolt the ball out of Collins's hands, in the Rugby League semi-final between Northern Suburbs and Western Suburbs yesterday.



R. ("BUBBLES") Pegg, Southern Suburbs' wing three-quarter, who scored three tries to pave the way for Souths' 21-11 victory over Northern Suburbs in the Rugby League final at the Brisbane Cricket Ground yesterday. In the picture Pegg is shown out-pacing his wing rival, H. Swain, in one of his characteristic dashes.



RAY WHITE, Souths' centre breaking through and slipping out of a tackle by Valley's half back, Dudley Dowling (No. 7). Test forward Mick Crocker with bandaged right index finger is shooting up to support White. A head injury just before half-time forced White to retire.



# PREMIERS 1940



## Northern Suburbs District Rugby League Football Club First Grade B.R.L. Premiers, 1940

Also Winners of President's Cups, Pike Cup, Minor Premiership Cup, Vic. Jensen Cup and Pennant, Q.R.L. Special Round Trophies

**FRONT ROW** – J.V. Hayes, M.L.A. (Patron), J. Stapleton, D.B. Duncan (President), E. Collins (Captain), A.L. Bishop (Hon. General Secretary), J.P. Reardon, C. Webster (Coach)

**SECOND ROW** – D.J. Macpherson (Mang. Comm.) N. Wright, T. Toohey, C.J. Ryan (Vice Captain), J. Hutchinson, J.F. Curran, H. Melrose, F.A.C. Harrold (Treasurer and Selector)

**THIRD ROW** – H. Johnson (Mang. Comm.), C.M. Hooper, A. Nilsson, V. Rudd, R. Stewart, V. Beadle, J.L. Franz (Mang. Comm.)

**FOURTH ROW** – W. Burrup, R. Hambelton, W. Norris, C. Lister, G.J. Cornish, C.H. Rix (Selector and Mang. Comm.)

**AT BACK** – Sgt. A.S. Lane, A.I.F. (Senior Vice-President)

**INSETS** – M. Power, J. Diversi (Selector), P.R. Gordon (Mang. Comm.)

## Southern Suburbs D.R.L.F.C.

Premiers 1st Grade B.R.L., 1945, Winners of Vic. Jensen Cup and Pennant  
Points for 221, against 103



**Front Row**—J. Montgomery (Hon. Sec.), R.L. Johnson, L. Pegg (Captain), Ald. T. Moores (President), G. McRae (Player and Coach), D. Johnson, C. Sanders (Vice-Patron).  
**Second Row**—C. Martin, J. Atkins, E. Kealy, L. Murphy, M. Kingston, L. Vuke.  
**Third Row**—J. Porteous (Mang. Com.), N. Brough, A. Thompson, W. Tyquin, H. Galbraith, T. Langton, A. McCusker (Mang. Com.).  
**Fourth Row**—R. Davis (Mang. Com.), E. Newman, R. Pegg, W. McKee, W.G. Neale, H. Davis (Delegate B.R.L.).  
**Back Row**—E.J. Meikle (Masseur), W. Somerville (Mang. Com.), R. Lyle (Vice-Pres.), J.J. Anderson (Masseur), W. Hedges (Mang. Com.), I. Stanford (Mang. Com.).  
**Absent**—N. Ekelund, A. Howe. **Insets**—H. Bath, R. Narvo (Vice-Captain).

**Left:** The 1940 premiers, Norths, who included E. (Babe) Collins, Jack Stapleton and Jack Reardon. **Above:** The 1945 premiers Souths who included a young Harry Bath. Souths won all three grades in 1945, a feat not repeated until 1994. **Below:** The 1953 premiers, Souths, with Mick Crocker and Jack Vivers.

## Southern Suburbs Rugby League Football Club

PREMIERS 'A' Grade, B.R.L.

Winners President's, Peter Hickey, Jack Stapleton and Pike Cup Fullerton and Vic. Jensen Trophies, 1953



Bobby Riley

310 Queen St, Brisbane

**Front Row**—D. Baker, M. Crocker, G. Mearns, V. Finney, J. Vivers

**Second Row**—N. McLean, A. Hickey, P. Harris, R. Hickey

**Back Row**—R. Hinch, E. Collins, T. Tynan, T. Poulton, N. Munn

Frank Fullerton Trophy, 1953





**Above Left:** An Easts v Souths games in the 1940's. **Below Left:** Don Cory on the attack for Souths against Easts at the Gabba in the early 1950's. **Above Right:** Easts and Souths line up before the 1947 grand final at the Gabba. **Below:** Action in a Wests v Valleys game at the Gabba.

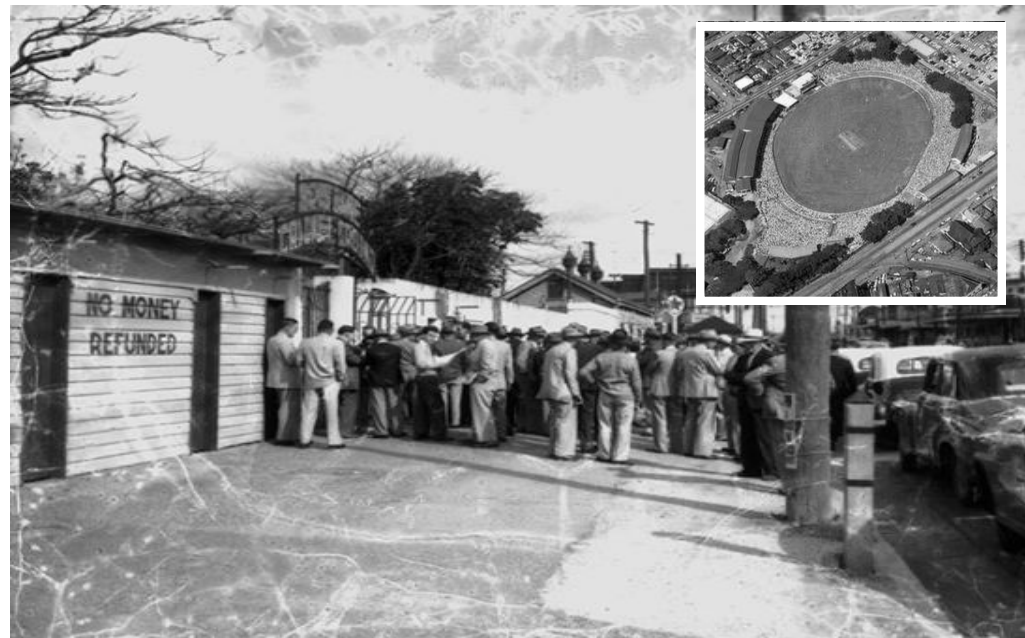






East's v North's at the Gabba in 1952. East's players Ken Booth, Keith Hopp, Reg Pegg and Beau Harkins, while North's Tom Drysdale is about to pounce.

Some more action from BRL games at the Brisbane Cricket Ground in the 1950's. On the right are a couple of photos of crowds lining up to get in to see the football at the Gabba.



**BOB KILLE** (East's winger) raised the dust on the hard ground at the Cricket Grounds yesterday when he went down with the ball after diving into a pocket of South tacklers. J. Veivers (13) is about to pounce for the kill. Frank McLennan, on the right, and Len Pegg, on the left, are ready to complete the smother.



*TYPICAL* running by South's Rugby League forward Jack Veivers during yesterday's BRL semi-final at the Cricket Ground. Veivers, Courier-Mail and BRL best and fairest player of the season, was again the best forward on the field yesterday. Here he is outdistancing Valley forward Bill Sims, and is back-fending another Valley player in a dash for the line.







**HEFTY** young Brothers' lock forward, Barry O'Connor, attempting to fend off Western Suburbs' winger Geoff Little during yesterday's Rugby League grand final at the Brisbane Cricket Ground.



**BROTHERS'** Rugby League captain Brian Davies about to put his hands in jeopardy as he reaches for the ball amongst boots in a ruck in the B.R.L. semi-final at the Exhibition Oval last night. Brothers beat Wests 21-15 and will meet Valleys in the grand final next Saturday. Other players in the picture from left to right are: T. Hickey (B), J. Flynn (W), E. Bishop (W), D. Hall (W), and B. Biggs (W).

*Right: 'Mr Football' featured in many game day programs. Courtesy QRL*

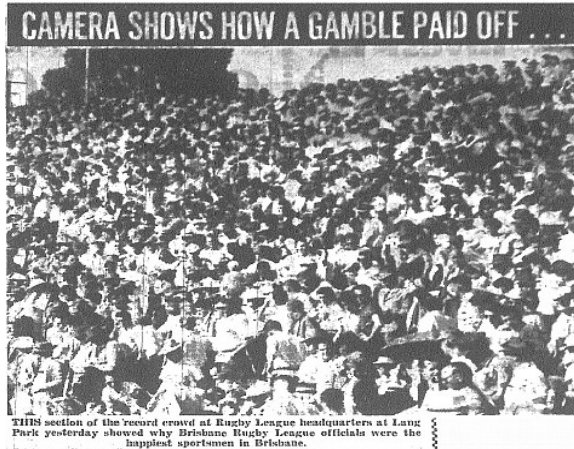
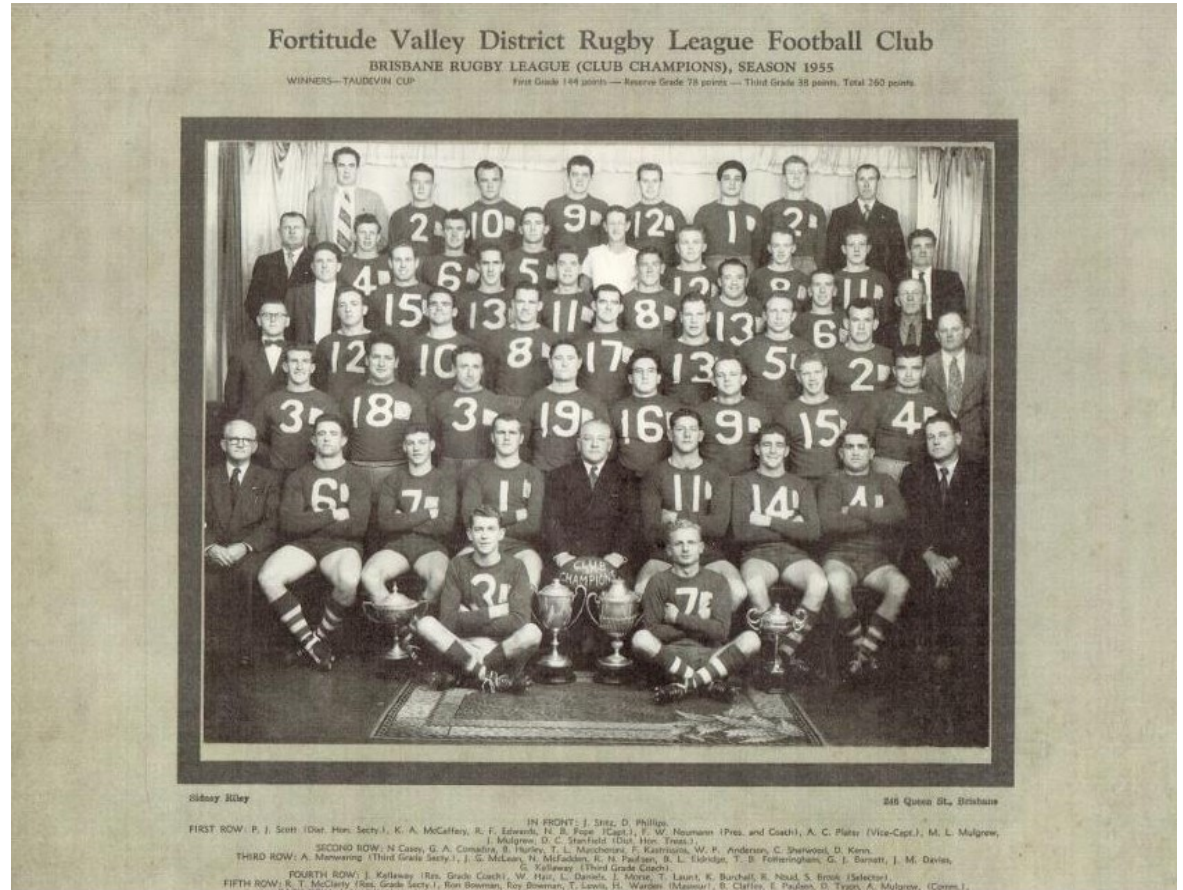


**Above:** Night football was introduced at the Exhibition Ground which became a venue for some of the semi and preliminary finals in the mid 1950's.





**Above Left:** The man with the golden boot, Norm Pope, in action during the 1957 grand final. **Above Right:** The 1955 premiers, Valleys, who went through the season undefeated, a feat only repeated by Wests in 1920. **Below Right** (with ball in hand): Part of the terrible six for Brothers in their 1958 grand final win was international prop Peter Gallagher. It was also the first grand final at Lang Park.



Last year the executive took a gamble—it decided to leave the Brisbane Cricket Ground and establish its own playing area in the face of pessimists who said the move was premature and certain to fail.

Jubilant Rugby League secretary (Mr. Ron McAuliffe) said last night: "Our move has been completely justified.

"We had a record premiership final crowd estimated at 20,000, and a record club 'gate' of £1679, £500 better than last year at the Cricket Ground.

"The crowd was 5000 up on our previous premiership grand final best."

**"Best year"**

Mr. McAuliffe added: "The Brisbane Rugby League will enjoy the greatest financial year since its inaugural year of 1922.

"The main contributing factor to this great success has been the move to Lang Park.

"Work at Lang Park commenced in 1956, and the Queensland and Brisbane Rugby Leagues jointly have spent £51,000 on the grounds. With continued public support we envisage a total expenditure on the ground of £250,000 within five years."

**For spectator**

A week ago Clive Churchill, international full-back, said in Brisbane: "Lang Park is the finest sporting oval I have ever played on."

Lang Park has been specifically designed for football from a spectator viewpoint. In yesterday's huge crowd the farthest spectator from the playing area was 72ft. up in the air, but only 30 yards from the side line.

In summer months the Queensland Amateur Athletic Association has been given the use of the ground on Saturdays for £5 or 10 per cent. of the "gate," whichever is the greater.

**BROTHERS'** captain Brian Davies grins happily after the Rugby League grand final yesterday, when Brothers beat Valley 22-7. Last year they lost on a last-minute try. Holding the Cup, Brian said: "We made sure this year." Gamble came off, Page 38.







The spiritual home of rugby league in Queensland—Lang Park. **Above Left:** Lang Park in the 1940's before it was acquired by the BRL. **Above Right:** A view from the outer during the 1960's. **Below Left:** Lang Park around 1959 with a basic clubhouse where the Frank Burke stand would shortly be constructed (1962).. **Below Right:** Lang Park around 1970 after the construction of the Frank Burke stand.





## RUGBY LEAGUE



**Above Left:** Don Cory for Souths against Easts at Lang Park in the late 1950's. **Above Right:** Norths and Valleys doing battle at Lang Park in 1960. **Below:** Action from the Peter Scott Memorial Trophy game in 1962 at Lang Park between Norths and Redcliffe.





Norths giant Lloyd Weier is about to be tackled by Kevin Brasch who played for Valleys in 1959.



Valleys' winger Graham Shields goes down in a tackle by Norths Kev Doherty in the 1960 Grand Final.



**Below:** Wests v Easts at Lang Park in the early 1960's.



**Below:** Bob Bax and Fonda Metassa celebrate a grand final win.



Baxie the innovator was the first to use a megaphone to get messages to players.





# STAND UP & CHEER

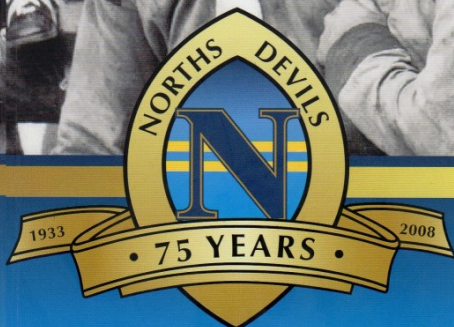
Bill Pearson is held aloft with his boys, Craig and Mark after the 1963 Grand Final win. Team mates (from left) Les Geeves, Ian Massie, Harry Bates, and Jimmy Hannam were a part of the team of champions that day.

## NORTHS DEVILS FAMOUS DYNASTY OF 6 STRAIGHT PREMIERSHIPS

**1959 def. Brothers 25-18**  
**1960 def. Valleys 18-15**  
**1961 def. Valleys 29-5**  
**1962 def. Valleys 22-0**  
**1963 def. Souths 18-8**  
**1964 def. Brothers 13-4**

**Also won in 1966 & 1969**  
**dominating in Brisbane**  
**at the same time as**  
**St George dominated in**  
**Sydney.**

**Below:** Norths coach in 1959—  
the legendary Clive Churchill and  
Norths coach for the 1960's, Bob  
Bax.



**75 YEARS OF  
NORTHS DEVILS**



# BROTHERS ARE DEFEATED BY 13 TO FOUR

## Norths take sixth League title in row

**COACH CHAIRED OFF FIELD** **DOUR DEFENCE BY TWO SIDES**

By JACK REARDON

NORTHS Rugby League team made it six premierships in a row when they beat Brothers by 13-4 in a tough grand final before a crowd of 21,000 at Lang Park yesterday.

The win was a triumph for Norths' coach, Bob Bax, who has moulded Norths into a winning combination for the fifth successive season.

Bax and their captain, Jim Hannam, were carried shoulder-high from the field by jubilant Norths players after the match.

Hannam has been in every premiership team that Bax has coached for Norths. Yesterday he kicked five goals and splendidly held his team together under pressure.

It was a most unspectacular match, notable more for the dour defence by both teams rather than for open attack.

Norths scored the only try of the match in the 35th minute of the first half, and it was a "beauty."

The ball came out smartly from a ruck and centre Henry Hegarty sliced through a gap in Brothers' defence.

He ran diagonally towards the corner, then turned the ball inside to winger Ponda Metasa.

**Nearly over**

Metasa caught Brothers' defence on the wrong foot and went over between the posts. Metasa earlier had got across the goal line but lost the ball forward when tackled.

Brothers' five-eighth Ron Oxenham also narrowly missed a try in the second half when a desperate diving tackle by a Norths player just tipped his ankle and he slid to

stop two feet short of the goal line. Brothers made too many errors to be in the race of winning yesterday.

Scrum finished even 12-12 but a lost count of the number of times that Brothers dropped the ball. There was hardly a mistake possible that Brothers did not make.

There was plenty of fire in the match.

Brothers' captain, Peter Gallagher, was the first man cautioned by referee Don Lancashire, following a tackle by Gallagher of Norths' forward Don Simpson.

But five minutes previously Lancashire had missed two wild swings that Simpson made at Gallagher.

Brothers' centre, Garnett Kerr, was also cautioned by the referee.



BROTHERS' international forward and captain Peter Gallagher goes down in a solid tackle by three Norths forwards in the tough Rugby League grand final at Lang Park yesterday.

## WE KILLED THEM AGAIN

By BOBBY BAX, Queensland's most outstanding Rugby League coach  
Yes, we killed them again! And I would like to quote the words of Winston Churchill: "This was their finest hour."



# PREMIERS 1959



## Northern Suburbs District R.L.F.C.

Premiers First Grade & Winners Minor Premiership, Peter Scott Memorial Trophy, Vic Jensen Flag, Frank Fullerton Trophy, & B.R.L. Champions, 1959

### IN FRONT: Peter Dixon, Bruce Hand (Mascots).

**FRONT ROW:** N.G. Warburton, G.R. Fowler, W. Pearson (V. Capt.), J. Bayada (Pres.), K.R. Anderson, B.F. Stevens, J.J. Catton.

**SECOND ROW:** Alan Ward (Sen. VP. & Del. B.R.L.), K.G. Weedon, W.A. Thomas, M. Cox, S. Kirkman, H.B. Kirby (Sen. Secty.).

**THIRD ROW:** W.H. Butterworth (Masseur), J.R. Hannam, R.A. Poulsen, Ald. W.H. (Bill) Cook (Patron), M. Laurent,

R.H. Dixon, K.F. Hyde (Team Manager)

**FOURTH ROW:** A.L. Bishop (Hon. Treas. & Del. B.R.L.), R.H. Collins, R.F. Waldon, L.M. Weier, H. Kelly, R. Richards (Hon. Jun Secty.).

**BACK ROW:** H. Batchelor (Comm.), F. Matassa, S.G. Hassum.

**INSETS:** Clive Churchill (Capt. & Coach), J. Coyne (V. Capt.), D. Dall.

**ABSENT:** V. Gohdes, N. Paxton, E. Spain, R. Johnson (Selectors), W. Burrup, G. Jones (Masseurs).

# PREMIERS 1964



## Northern Suburbs District Rugby League Football Club First Grade, 1964

Premiers, B.R.L. Pennant, Frank Fullerton Trophy, Runners-up President's Cup

**FRONT ROW:** O.S. Denman (Hon. General Secretary), R.B. Cattnach, J.R. Hannam, (Captain), A.L. Bishop (President), F. Metassa, H.H. Hegarty, R.D. Bax (Coach)

**SECOND ROW:** D. Gordon, H. Whittaker, H. Roberts, M. Breen, E. Walters, P. Lobegeiger

**THIRD ROW:** A. McLean, I. Massie (V-Captain), D. Simpson, W. Cook (Patron), L.J. Greeves, R.A. Bell (V-Captain), M.J. Baldwin

**FOURTH ROW:** G. Warburton (Selector), S.P. Edwards (Treasurer), J. Bates, B.L. Cook, R. Richards (Selector), M. Rees, (Mang. Com.)

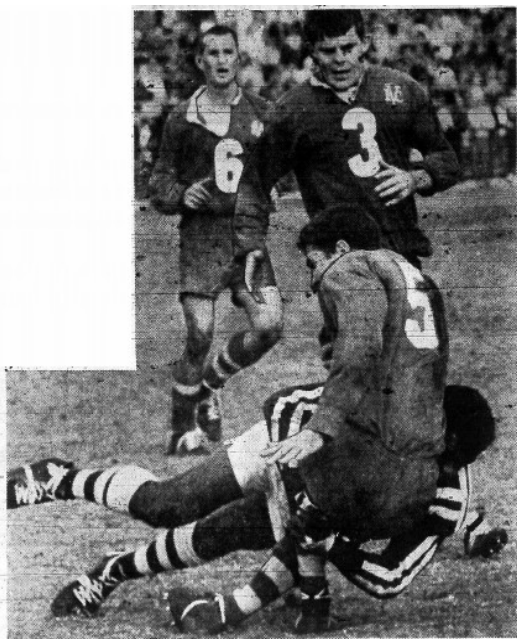
**BACK ROW:** J. Mulgrew (Mang. Com.), S. Hassum (Selector), K.G. Weedon, C.M. Bax (Manager), J.J. Nugent (Selector)

**ABSENT:** R. Parton, A. Ward (Senior V-President), D. Christison (Mang. Com.), N. Paxton (Mang. Com.),

K. McRae (Mang. Com.), C. Cox (Mang. Com.), M. Beattie (Masseur), W. Butterworth (Masseur), W. Burrup (Masseur).

**Above:** Team photos of the first and last teams in Norths' 6 in a row dynasty from 1959 to 1964.





A FLYING low tackle by Redcliffe Rugby League-winger Kevin Yow Yeh, made sure that Valleys top try scorer, winger Robin Gilbank, made no progress in yesterday's semi-final at Lang Park. Yow Yeh's defence and his close watch on Gilbank were features of the keen match which Valleys won by 15-11



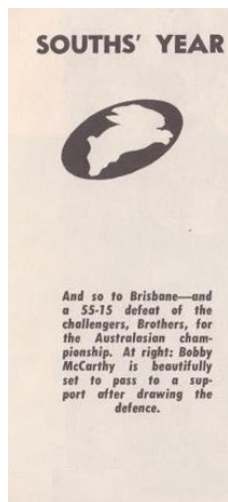
Norths dynasty was broken in 1965 when Brothers beat them in the minor semi final. The premiership that year would go to newcomers (since 1960) Redcliffe. They were captain coached by Henry Holloway and featured a young Arthur Beetson (fourth from left in back row of top right team photo). Also playing for Redcliffe was the uncle of Jahral Yow Yew, Kevin Yow Yeh.

Action from the 1965 Brisbane Grand Final, with Redcliffe prop Col Raaen being tackled during the early exchanges. The referee is Henry Albert. The Dolphins, with Henry Holloway as captain-coach and featuring a couple of likely prospects in Kevin Yow Yeh and Arthur Beetson, won 15-2 over Valleys.

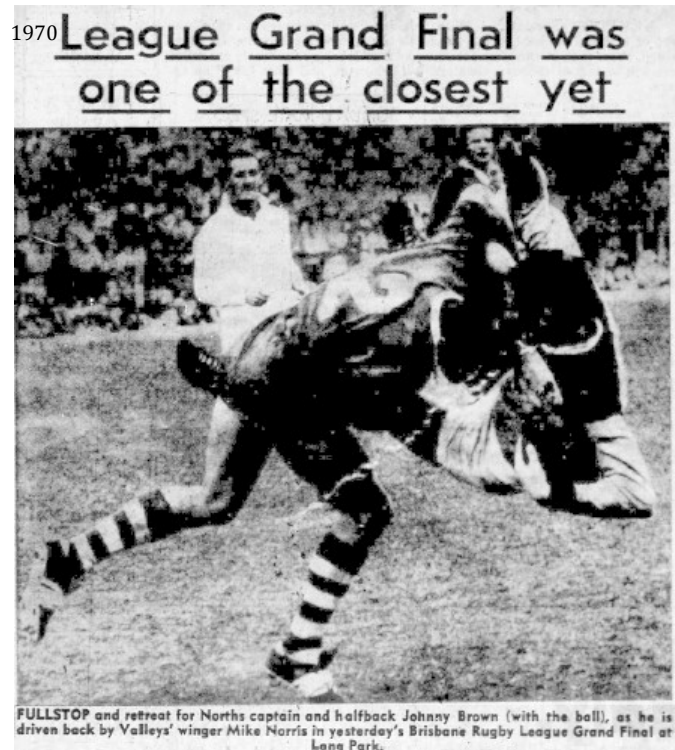




## RUGBY LEAGUE



**Above:** Unlimited tackle rugby league ceased at the end of 1966. From 1967 to 1970 there were 4 tackles per set before increased to the current 6 per set in 1971. The first two seasons of 4 tackle league in the BRL were won by Brothers coached by Brian Davies. The Catholic boys were whipped 55-15 in a one-off game against the Sydney premiers, South Sydney. Ironically, both Bob McCarthy and John Sattler pictured above later moved to Queensland.



A massive crowd at Lang Park watched Valleys take out a nail biting 13-11 Grand Final win over Norths ending the golden years in 1970. Norths Peter Kleinhans and Bob Richards take on Valleys Norm Clarke and Tony Perkins in a thrilling encounter.





**VALLEYS RUGBY LEAGUE FOOTBALL CLUB B.R.L. Premiers — 1970**

FRONT ROW — H. Holloway (Coach), T. Perkins, M. Retchless (Capt.), F. Neumann (Pres.), J. Crilly (V. Capt.), M. Scanlan, D. Stanfield (Hon. Treas.)

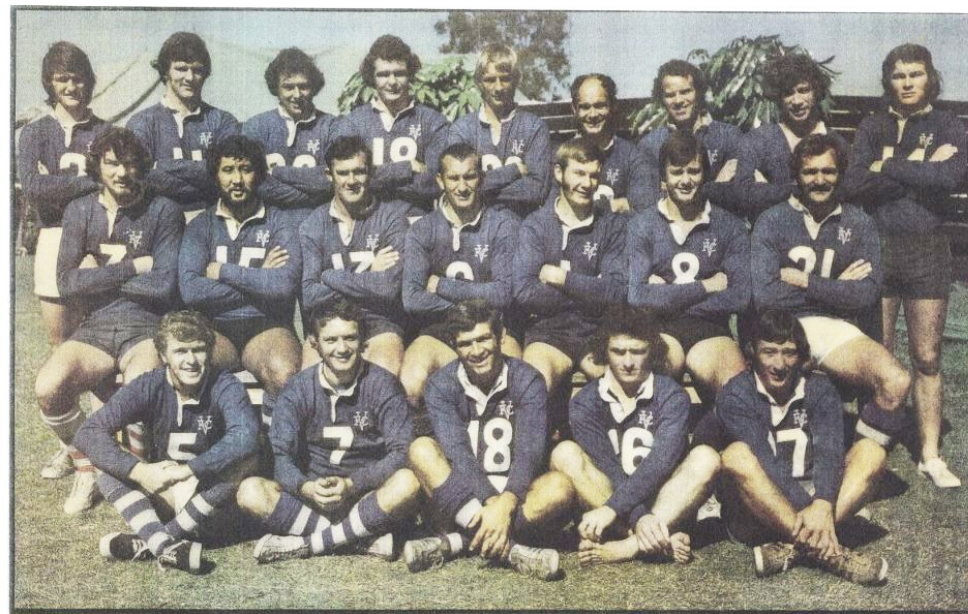
SECOND ROW — G. Dziewicki (Manager), R. Threlfo, F. Clancy, D. Abraham, J. Gill, L. Dellit (Asst. Secty.)

THIRD ROW — M. Brown (Hon. Secty.), N. Clarke, L. McGuire, J. McCabe, A. Miers, R. Smith, M. Norris, N. Henderson (Snr. V. Pres.)

INSET — H. O'Doherty

The Grand Final was over. Valleys had defeated Easts, 18-10, in a rugged, exciting match before a crowd of about 40,000, to take their second successive premiership . . . and Valleys forwards, John Crilly, (left) and Leon (Moose) McGuire, carried their skipper, Mick Retchless from the field while a gladiator waved his sword in triumph.

The great Valleys team of the early 1970's almost won 5 premierships in a row. A Jeff Fyfe field goal meant they only won 4 out of 5 grand finals (1970, 1971, 1973 and 1974).



**Valleys Rugby League  
"DIEHARDS"  
1973 BRISBANE  
RUGBY LEAGUE PREMIERS**

Back row (from left): P. Gayler, R. Hughes, R. McDougall, M. Rathborne, J. Abbott, H. O'Doherty, T. Perkins, R. Beatson, A. Beauchamp.

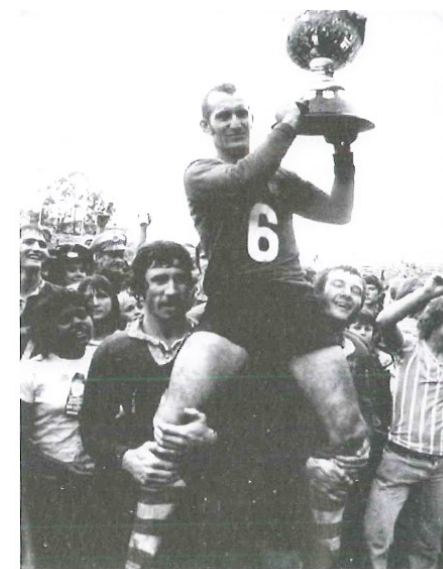
Centre row: G. Fitzpatrick, D. Herbert, J. Crilly, M. Scanlan (Captain), A. Mills, J. Gill, R. Garnett.

Front row: G. Jones, R. Strudwick, R. Clark, J. Deleforce, H. Kirk.

Valleys also won the 1973 President's Cup and Peter Scott Memorial Shield.

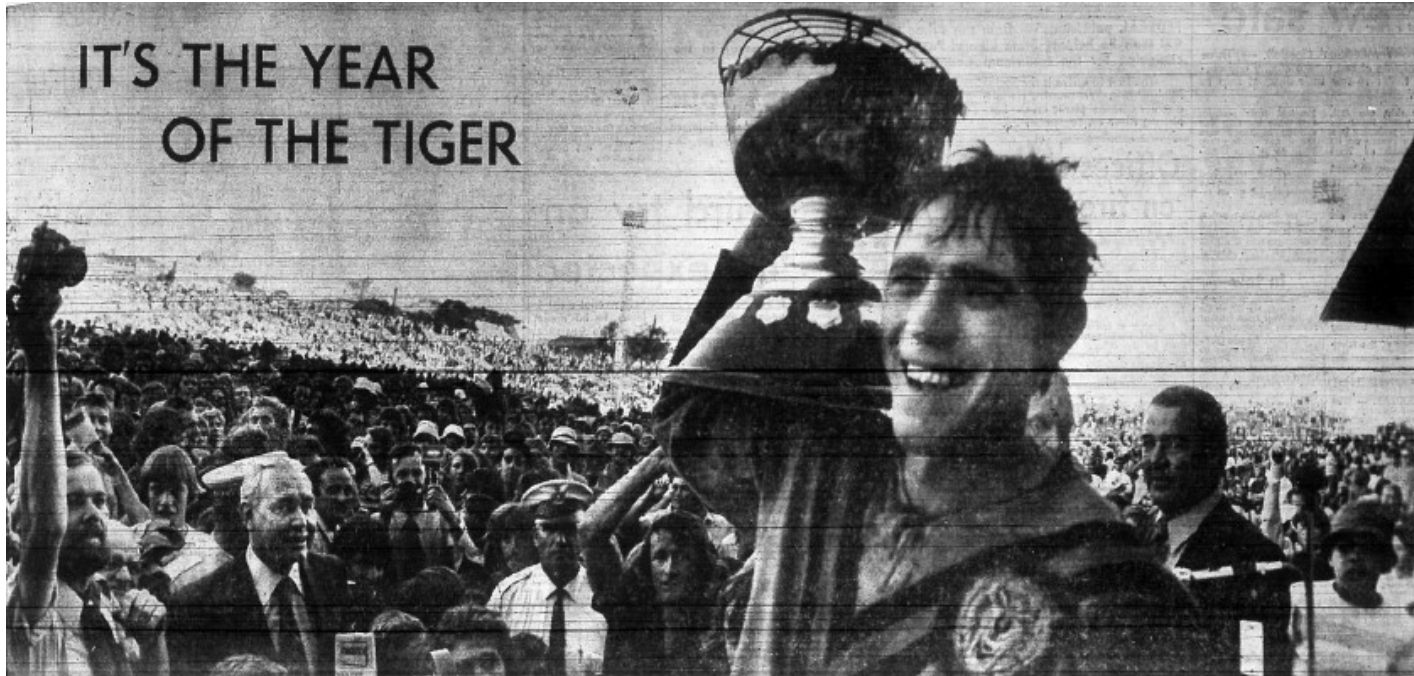


Valleys' Marty Scanlan is about to be taken down. Nick Geiger is ready to swoop



Above: Marty boddling up the premiership cup as captain.





**CAPTAIN OF THE TIGERS** Des Morris held the Premiership Trophy above the milling crowd at Lang Park yesterday, after his team, Eastern Suburbs, beat Valleys by one point in the Brisbane Rugby League Grand Final. Easts' colours are gold and black.

Action from the 1972 grand final where Easts denied Valleys by a point in what could have been 5 premierships in a row. Jeff Pyfe field goal was the difference in the 16-15 win.



40,000  
Saw  
Easts  
Win

**LEFT:** Hero of Easts Grand Final win Jeff Pyfe is doused with beer by Valleys forward Russell Hughes who called by the Easts dressing room after the match to congratulate the winners. Pyfe didn't seem to mind Hughes' unorthodox congratulations.





## RUGBY LEAGUE



**Above:** Players run onto Lang Park for the 1973 Reserve Grade Grand Final. **Below:** A Redcliffe players is wrapped up with the ball during the 1975 Grand Final won by Wests 26-24.



RUGBY League maestro Geoff Richardson leads 11 forwards on a merry chase in the Wests-Souths second knockout semi-final at Lang Park yesterday.



BRISBANE RUGBY LEAGUE GRAND FINAL — Lang Park, Sunday September 21st, 1975. Western Suburbs 26 Redcliffe 24. CROWD: 34,142





Souths Greg Viewers is tracked down by Shane Bernardin and Bob Carroll



**Above Left:** Souths' Fijian recruit Isoa Vola Vola. **Below Left:** Current ARLC Chairman, John Grant, playing for Souths. **Above and Below Centre:** Souths international forward, Greg Viewers. **Above Right:** Ross Strudwick. **Inset:** Easts playing Manly-Warringah in a 1978 Amco Cup Quarter Final. **Below Right:** Action from a Norths v Valleys game. The referee is Bernie Pramberg.





## RUGBY LEAGUE



**LANG PARK THE HOME OF THE GREATEST GAME OF ALL - RUGBY LEAGUE**  
(SCENE FROM LAST YEARS ACTION PACKED GRAND FINAL)



*The Rugby League crowd at Lang Park watches an exciting moment.*



**THE B.R.L. BIG ONE!!!**

The colourful Scene as the ACTION gets under way in Brisbane's Grand Final — Eastern Suburbs v Redcliffe, Lang Park, 18/9/77.





**Above Left:** Wayne Lindenberg on the burst for Easts who won the premiership in 1977 and 1978. **Above Right:** Des Morris **Below Left:** Roger Kuhn on the burst.



NORTHS Vs EASTS  
LANG PARK  
28TH AUGUST, 1977



East's lock Alan Currie in a typical pose . . . flying across the ground to take Ian Pearce's legs from under him. The other Redcliffe players, from left, are Steve Williams, Alan Nunan and Forrester Grayson.



# FORTITUDE VALLEY R.L.F.C.

1979

PREMIERS, PRESIDENT'S CUP, MINOR PREMIERS AND PRE SEASON WINNERS



This is the awesome Valleys machine that threatens to smash their way to the premiership no matter who they play. The Diehards entered the grand final with a mauling of Easts that left no room for excuses. Who can stop them now? FROM LEFT: Brian Canavan (strapper), Ross



**Top Right and Bottom Centre:** A young Wally Lewis on the burst and kicking for Valleys who dominated and won the 1979 premiership. **Above:** One of Valleys' biggest fans, always on hand to see them play—Happy Jack.





**Above Left:** The 1980 premiers, Norths. **Below Left:** Joe Kilroy made a 50 metre burst setting up a key try for Norths. **Below Centre:** Norths' Kiwi connection, forward Mark Graham and coach Graham Lowe.



Mark Graham and Graham Lowe, the morning after the 1980 Grand Final victory.

# Telegraph

PHONE 52-6011 15 CENTS\*  
BRISBANE, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 1980

**LEAGUE  
FINAL  
souvenir**

**Keeping the ball alive**  
... Norths ability to keep the ball moving played a big part in the 17-15 grand final win over Souths.

Norths lock Nev Draper spins in a tackle and unloads a pass as hooker Greg Conescu looks on.

Yesterday was the day of the

## The outsiders

underdogs. Norths had lost to Souths in their three fixture clashes.

It was a triumph for Graham Lowe in his second year as coach.

Teamwork, more than anything, laid the foundation for the win — before a near-capacity Lang Park crowd of 32,000. Picture by Geoff McLachlan.

More pictures: Pages 2, 39



## RUGBY LEAGUE



*Southern Suburbs, Brisbane's rugby league premiers of 1981. Back row (left to right): Graham Kerr (committeeman), Peter Jennings (masseur), Jim McClelland (assistant secretary), Mal Meninga, Geoff Naylor, Ken Rach (masseur), Carlo Costa (trainer). Middle: Tony Testa (president), Sel Deed (secretary), Brad Sully, Ash Lamb, Alan Power, Steve Glynn, Bob McCarthy (coach), Jim Elder (manager). Front: Darryl Higgs, Bruce Harry, Billy Johnson, Bruce Astill (captain), Mick Reardon, Gary Thompson, Chris Phelan (absent: Adrian Higgs).*

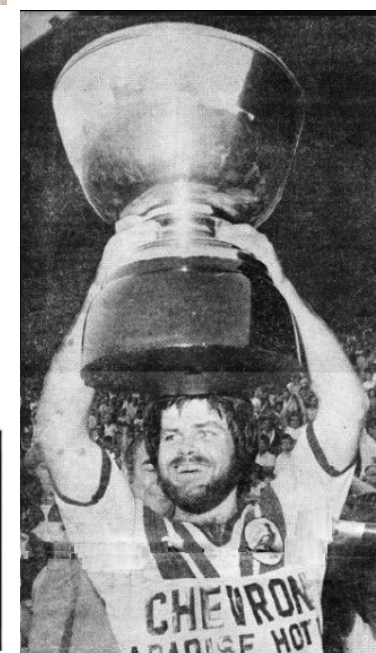


**Above Left:** The 1981 premiers, Souths. **Above Centre:** Winger Mick Reardon celebrates after his match winning try on the last tackle of the game. Behind 9-8, the try and sideline conversion by Mal Meninga saw Souths win 13-9. **Above Right:** A West End shop shows its support for Souths. **Below Right:** Souths captain, Bruce Astill holds aloft the 1981 Winfield Cup.

**Below:** Mal Meninga runs over the top of Arthur Beetson in the 1981 Grand Final against Redcliffe.



**Below:** That magical moment with 30 seconds to go on the last tackle when Mick Reardon scored in the corner to win the Grand Final.









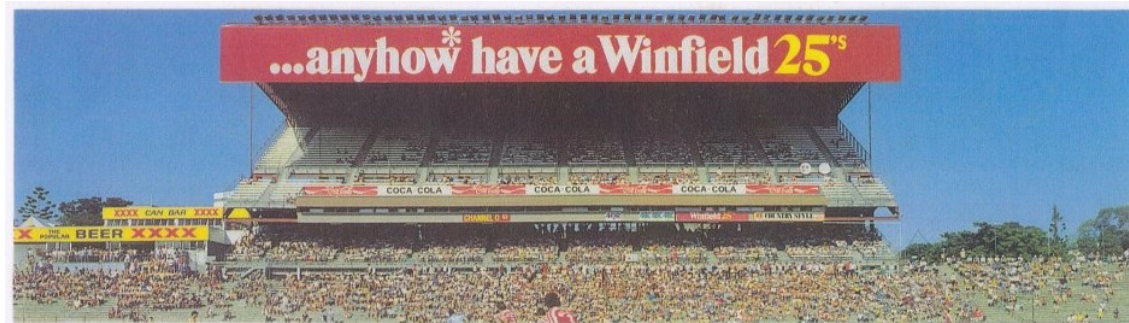
## ‘Ours at last!’

Seagull fans have waited 30 years to see this ... Wynnum-Manly players with the Brisbane rugby league premiership trophy. With the Winfield Cup after the 17-3 win over Souths yesterday are Gary Seaton (left) and captain Rod Morris.

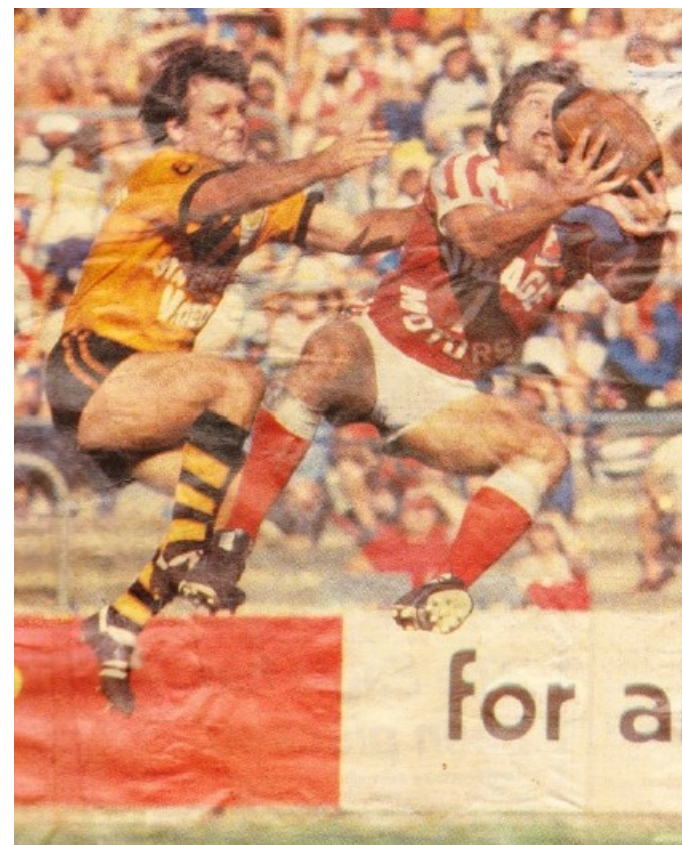
Picture: ROMAN BIEGI.

• More on the big leagues: Pages 36,37,38





Scenes from the 1982 and 1983 Grand Finals. **Left:** Wynnum claimed their first premiership in 1982 with former Easts players. Rod Morris (captain) and Des Morris (coach). **Right:** Like he was in 1977, halfback Wayne Lindenberg was again the difference for Easts as they won the 1983 Grand Final against Redcliffe.





## Tiger's title charge!

Redcliffe fullback Mark Forster brilliantly fields an Easts bomb, in spite of a strong challenge from Tigers five-eighth Wayne Lindenberg, in Brisbane rugby league grand final action at Lang Park yesterday. Easts won 14-6.

Picture — Brian Church





OCTOBER 4, 1984

PAGE 5

# WYNNUM WOULD EAT BULLDOGS' WILLEY

WYNNUM-MANLY's record-smashing win in last Sunday's Brisbane grand final has sparked a blazing controversy over the quality of the Seagulls.

As he left Lang Park Canberra coach Don Furner declared that Wynnum wouldn't make the semi-finals in Sydney.

"They'd beat a few sides in Sydney - but they'd be no better than a middle of the ladder team," said Furner.

South Sydney's Ron Willey, another spectator at the 42-8 annihilation of Souths, disagreed strongly.

Willey rated Wynnum capable of beating the Sydney premiers, Canterbury. I honestly think they could do it. I think some of their top players are better," he said.

An ex-Australian and 1984 Cronulla coach Terry Fearnley declared he would "come out of retirement" to coach Wynnum if they ever joined the Sydney premiership.

"The Wynnum side I saw last Sunday would make the Sydney semi-finals, I'm sure of that," said Fearnley.

In Brisbane many keen judges rated the Seagulls as the best Brisbane club side ever.

And their power-packed display has led to a cry for a 'Champion of Champions' match - Sydney premiers v Brisbane premiers in future seasons.

Here's how the Sydney experts saw Wynnum's performance last Sunday:

## RON WILLEY

"If Canterbury and Wynnum played a 'Champion of Champions' match this coming weekend, there wouldn't be a struck match between the sides.

"I've given this matter plenty of thought since the weekend and I honestly think Wynnum could beat the Sydney premiers.

Think some of their top players are better. Wally Lewis is the best player going around at the moment and I don't think there's anyone in Sydney better than Gene Miles. And Greg Dowling is as good as any forward in Sydney.

"From all indications, both Canterbury and Wynnum will agree to the respective premiers next season, so maybe some bright promoter will organise a match. I know I'd be there to see it."

## TERRY FEARNLEY

"The Wynnum side I saw last Sunday would make the Sydney semi-finals. I'm sure of that. But, of course, a lot would depend on their back-up strength.

"Frankly, I'd love to see a match between the Brisbane and Sydney premiers.

## By TONY DURKIN

It is a great promotional idea.

"Canterbury's defence would certainly be much, much stronger than the defence Souths had last Sunday, but that doesn't mean Wynnum still wouldn't be able to break it."

"How could anyone write off a team with Wally Lewis, Gene Miles and Greg Dowling in it?"

## DON FURNER

"WYNNUM are a good team up here, but they'd only finish halfway up the ladder in Sydney.

"They've got lots of good players, but they still wouldn't make the Sydney five."

## STEVE MORTIMER

"FIRSTLY, let me say that anyone who played against Souths last Sunday would have looked a million dollars. I was very disappointed in their display.

"But that's not taking anything away from Wynnum. Their attack was terrific and with players of the calibre of Lewis, Miles and Dowling, they'd stretch any Sydney side they played. Maybe though, the defence of Sydney's top sides would be a bit much.

"It's impossible to say whether they'd make the Sydney five. Things like depth, which is most important, which is most important into consideration then.

"But on a one-off basis, like the mid-week cup for instance, Wynnum would certainly be competitive."

## Laurie Freier:

"If both teams were playing under the same instance, Wynnum would be competitive."

"And on a one-off situation, it would also be a

confest.

"But Wynnum would find the tremendous defence of teams like Canterbury very hard to break, and in a match like this, defence would be the key.

"A 'Champion of Champions' match could be well worthwhile, providing there was no incentive for the players."

The Emperor of Lang Park - Wally Lewis - had done it again.

With Wally the kingpin Wynnum-Manly wiped out Mal Meninga's Souths 42-8 - dealing out one of the two greatest thrashings in the history of the premiership, Sydney or Brisbane.

Only Easts' (Sydney) destruction of St George in 1975, 36-11, had provided a wider grand final margin.

To the fans it was more a case of basking in champagne on the Australian - but not the Wynnum - captain held court in the Seagulls dressing room.

Fun-loving officials and players chased each other around the room, firing bottles of bubbly.

Several pressmen showed autographing footwork as they dodged the spray.

Everyone tossed Wally the question: "How did today's win rate in comparison with all the other things you achieved in 1984?"

Heads. It would be folly not to utilise them," he said.

The QRL chief says there are a number of factors behind his thoughts on a Super League, none more important than the interest it would create in the code.

"But the inevitability of ground sharing and club

sharing, and the introduction of Aussat (national satellite), will only heighten this type of a competition," he said.

"Look at the brilliant tactics of Seagulls at Tweed

see it, there is going to be much ground sharing and club sharing in the future.

"In fact, I can foresee club amalgamations in both Brisbane and Sydney."

McAuliffe said centres such as Newcastle, Canberra, Wollongong, Tweed Heads and North Queensland could play an extremely important role in the conduct of a Super League.

"And it won't hurt us to have a beacon on the hill at which to aim."

And he suggested two divisions, with a relegation and promotion system.

"But if there are 12, it won't necessarily mean eight from Sydney and four from Brisbane," he said.

"And it won't necessarily be one single club. The way I

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"Next year is far too soon, and '86 is a Kangaroo tour year," he said.

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# LEAGUE FINAL '85 WYNUM versus SOUTHS

## Sweet revenge



# It's Souths — hail to the champs!

SOUTHS are the new Brisbane rugby league champions after tackling big match specialists Wynnum-Manly out of the Winfield Cup grand final at Lang Park yesterday.

The Magpies earned their victory lap with a magnificent defensive effort and the mere fact that they were able to win the grand final 10-8 without scoring a point in the second half spoke volumes for their commitment to a pre-set match plan.

Souths could not have hoped to match Wynnum-Manly in a free-flowing attacking game, so the players devoted themselves to nullifying the Seagulls' attack — and reaped the reward.

To say that they were helped slightly by referee David Manson's unwillingness to police the five-metre rule would be churlish.

Champions do not deserve to have their triumph tarnished by sour grapes about a referee's performance and the Wynnum camp

### SOUTHS-WYNUM BARRY DICK

was not about to whinge about Manson.

Seagulls coach Des Morris was quick to give credit where it was due. "We were beaten by a better team on the day," he said.

In capturing their first premiership since 1981, the Magpies wiped memories of last year's grand final disaster when they were on the wrong end of a record margin against Wynnum.

They also prevented what would have been an historic clean sweep by Wynnum, who were chasing the third leg of an unprecedented triple crown after earlier winning the Woolies and Winfield State League championships.

And the Magpies did it in style, picking up the under-21 and third grade titles on the way — with the only sad note on the day coming in reserve grade where Brothers finished on top of Souths.

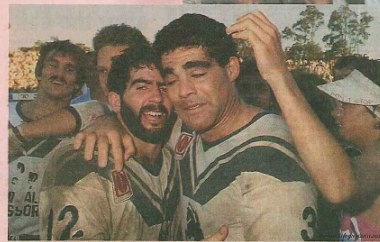
Rugby league purists would have been enthralled by the contest between two evenly-matched sides and, if sections of the 31,000 strong crowd walked away disappointed that they did not see more attack, they were hard to please.

There was more than enough action to satisfy the hungriest of appetites and the defence was as good as any seen at Lang Park, at club level at least, for a couple of seasons.

Despite reassurances from Souths coach Wayne Bennett that he was not nervous at any stage, there must have been some palpitations on the Magpies' bench when the Seagulls began mounting desperate attack in the closing stages.

Forever the innovators, Wynnum tried everything to crack the defence in the final 10 minutes but they were thwarted by Souths' bravery and their own mistakes.

In the end the Seagulls paid the ultimate price for some basic handling errors.



An emotional Mal Meninga, in his last game of a long career for Souths, is warmly embraced by Edie Muller after the win.

Brisbane did not see the best of Wynnum in the last couple of months, but that was to be expected when one considered the tragic injury toll at Kougari Oval with quality players such as Bob Lindner, Brian Walsh, Mal Green and Tony Kajewski falling by the wayside.

And the sorry tale continued yesterday when Queensland fullback Colin Scott played as a passenger for 49 minutes after tearing rib cartilages in an early tackle.

It was perhaps fitting that Souths' "war horse" skipper Norm Carr, a player written off by many at the start of the season, should score the first of the only two tries in the grand final.



• In a nail-biting Winfield Cup rugby league grand final at Lang Park yesterday, Souths beat last year's premiers Wynnum-Manly 10-8. Above, Souths' fullback Gary Belcher leaps high to take a bomb behind his tryline ahead of Wynnum's half-back Peter Dawes, who chased the kick. Souths' centre Mal Meninga watches anxiously. More pics, stories, Pgs 15, 16, 17, 18.

**RUGBY LEAGUE**  
**WINFIELD CUP**  
**GRAND FINALS**  
**SOUTHS 10 WYNUM-MANLY 8**  
Scores — Souths: W Carr try, G Scott 3 goals. Wynnum-Manly: C Adams try, M Green 3 goals. Kick scores: Souths 6, Wynnum-Manly 5. First try scores: Souths 6, Wynnum-Manly 6.  
**RESERVE GRADE**  
**BROTHERS 20 SOUTHS 16**  
Scores — Brothers: S McCarthy, B Davidson, J Tapp, S Carter tries, B Henry 3 goals. Souths: M Cawson, G Parker tries, B Lesso 4 goals.  
**THIRD GRADE**  
**SOUTHS 18 BROTHERS 12**  
Scores — Souths: W Wilson, C Croome, P Benge tries, L Jones 2, B Ticker goals. Brothers: V O'Brien, M Crowther tries, L Newman 2 goals.  
**UNDER 21**  
**SOUTHS 18 BROTHERS 14**  
Scores — Souths: P Macdonald, S Hamilton, T Waddipati, C White tries, W Adams 2 goals, J O'Brien free goal. Brothers: M Gordon, P McGraw, H Sullivan tries, K McMaster goal.







**Above:** Trevor Bailey, Brothers captain, and Wally Lewis, Wynnum captain, hold the 1986 Winfield Cup before the Grand Final. **Below:** Wally Lewis goes over for the winning try for Wynnum who won the 1986 grand final 14-6.



*In one of the toughest Brisbane rugby league grand finals in years, underdogs Brothers led at half time with this try from five-eighth Peter Gill. Here, Wynnum captain Wally Lewis goes low, with Gary Smith backing up Gill, and referee Eddie Ward on the spot. Wynnum fought back to score two tries in the second half to seal the Winfield Cup.*





**Above:** The 1987 premiers, Brothers. **Left:** Captain, Trevor Bailey and coach Ross Strudwick hold the 1987 Winfield Cup.



■ Brothers' rugby league prop Steve Carter said he was in a mean and hungry mood before yesterday's Winfield Cup Grand Final at Lang Park and he proved it with some fearsome charges into the Redcliffe defence. This one resulted in Brothers' first try, despite the tackle of Redcliffe's former Test hooker Greg Conescu. Carter unloaded the ball and skipper Trevor Bailey was there to accept and race 25 metres for a try. Brothers went on to win 26-8.



**ABOVE:** Brothers skipper Trevor Bailey embraces Steve Carter after scoring an early try.

## Brothers break out the bubbly



A jubilant Brothers skipper Trevor Bailey clutches the Winfield Cup at Lang Park yesterday.

**BROTHERS** Rugby League Club last night pushed aside their financial woes and broke out the bubbly after outclassing Redcliffe 26-8 to take premiership honors.

The win gave the coach Ross Strudwick's Brethren - in receivership with debts of more than \$3 million - their first premiership success since 1968. It was just the tonic for Brothers,

who atoned in convincing style for losing last season's grand final to Wynnun-Manly.

They were never in trouble yesterday, leading 14-0 at half-time before going right on with the job in the second half.

The Brethren scored five tries to one.

Brothers also captured the reserve-grade grand final for the

third successive season, beating Souths 16-1.

Apart from yesterday's two grand final wins, the club also clinched the Woolies Trophy and club championship this season to give loyal supporters cause to forget the financial wrangle and celebrate.

● For more grand final news, see Back Page and our football liftout.





Meninga in 1982, wearing the black and white colours of Southern Suburbs, his Brisbane club from 1979 until 1985. This was his first game back after dislocating his left elbow during his Test debut, against New Zealand at the SCG.

**Left:** Mal Meninga playing for Souths against Wynnum.

**Below Right:** Wynnum players celebrate a try



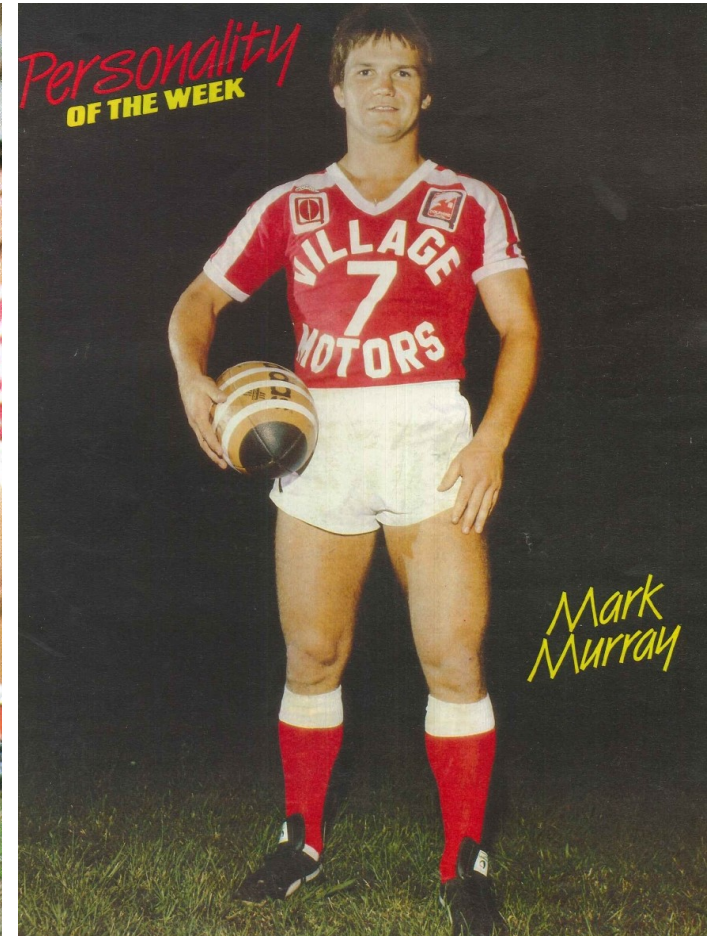
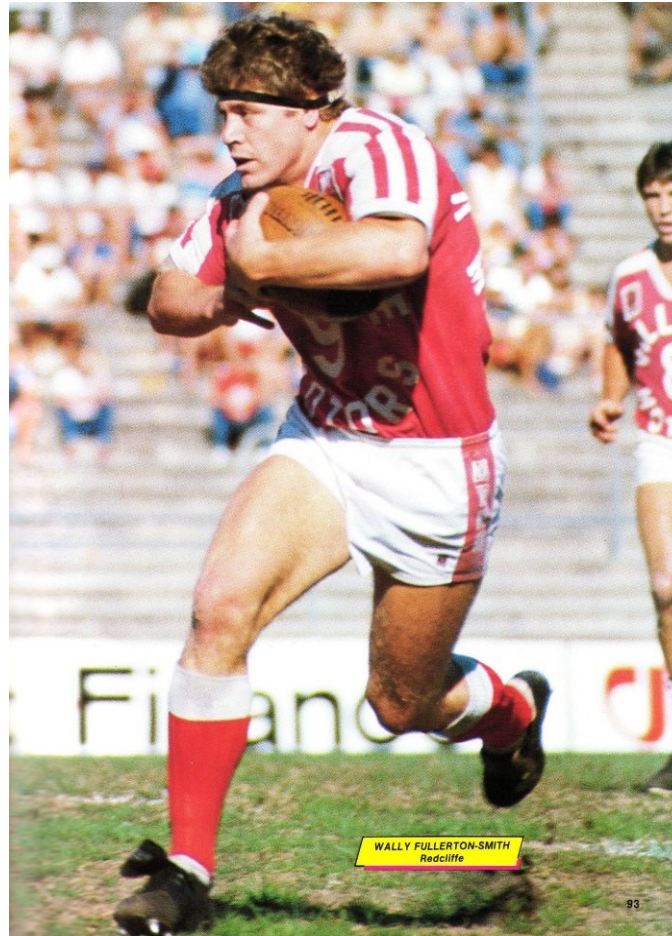




**Above Left:** Gene Miles **Above Right:** Shane McNally kicking. **Below Right:** Some Brothers players with their State League jerseys with the Colonel's noggin' on front.







Below: A couple of views of a Souths v Valleys game from the early 1980's at Davies Park.

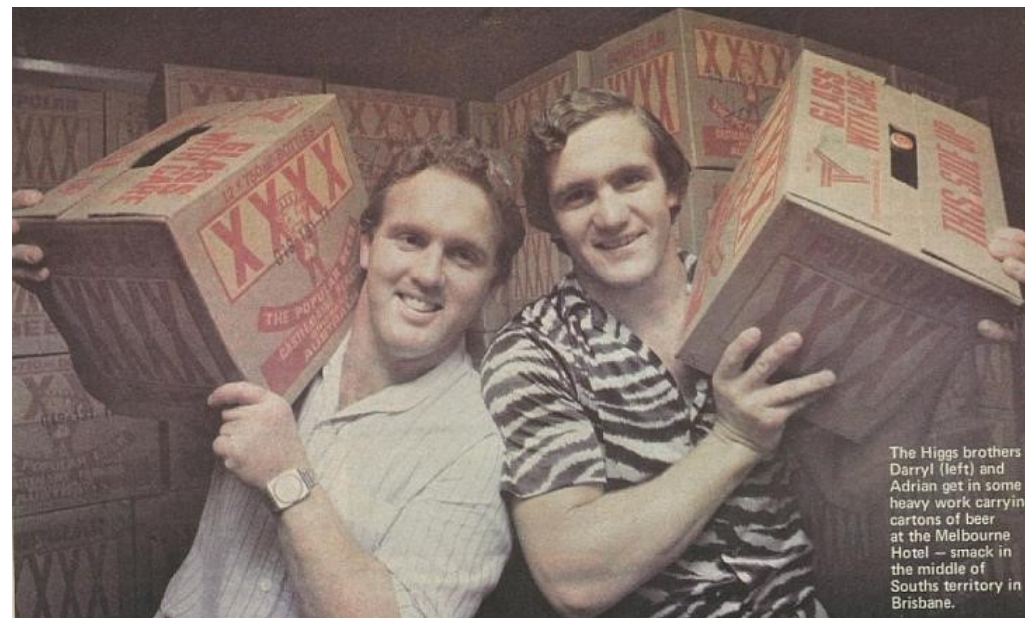


Below: Greg Holben taking an eternity to line up a kick.

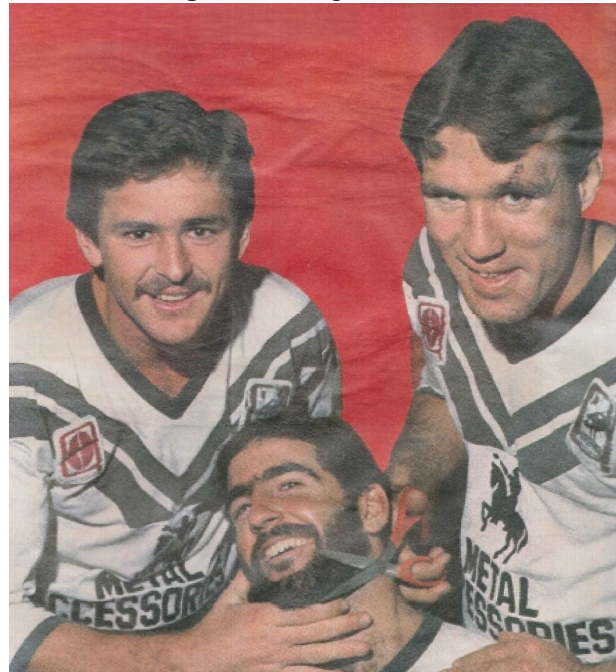




## RUGBY LEAGUE

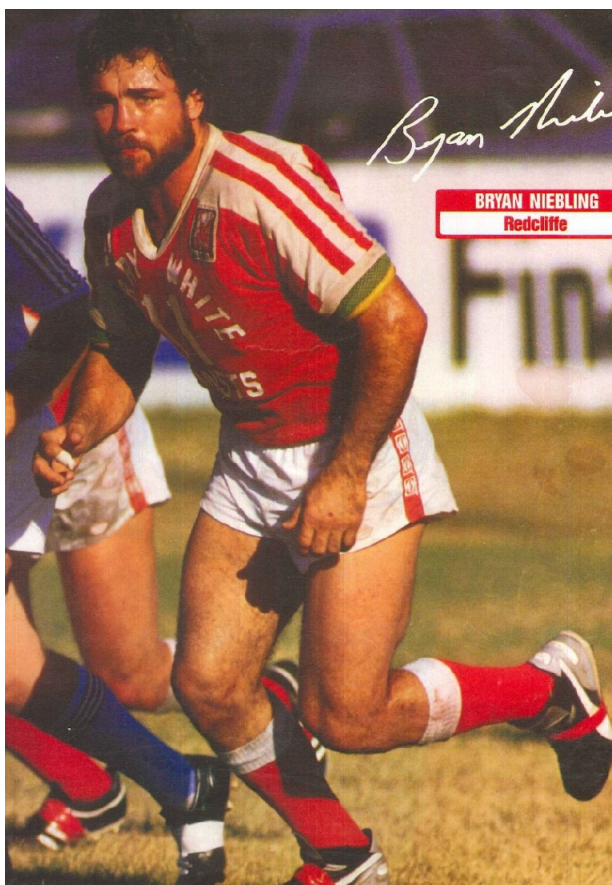


**Above Left:** Eddie Muller with the ball for Souths against Easts in a State League game. **Below Left:** Billy Johnstone in the good ol' days when the scrums were still a contest. **Below Centre:** Gary Belcher and Norm Carr take on Eddie Muller's beard. **Below Right:** Brett Tengdahl for Easts about to be tackled by three Valleys defenders including an airborne Ross Henrick.



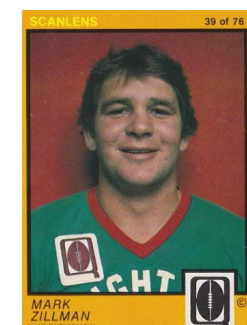
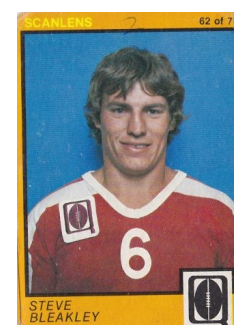
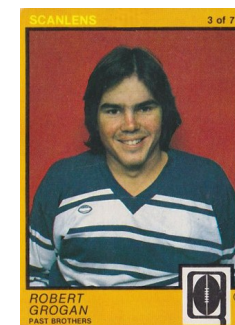
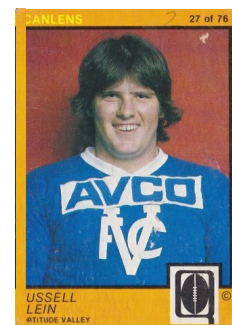
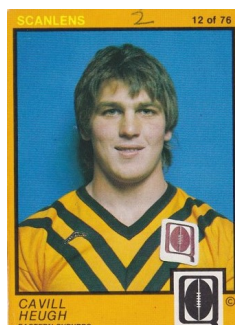


## RUGBY LEAGUE



**Right:** Ian French of Wynnum Manly wins a Rothmans Medal for Best and Fairest.

**Below:** Some Scanlens rugby league cards showing some of the local Brisbane league players.





## RUGBY LEAGUE



**Above and Below:** Club logos for the Brisbane rugby league clubs and the country teams that competed in the new Winfield State League that began in 1982 that was played for the first third of the season.





## RUGBY LEAGUE



**Back Row:** Wayne Bennett (coach), Mark Meskeil, Chris Phelan, Scott Tronc, Ash Lumby, Gary Grienke, Jim Elder (Manager).  
**Middle Row:** Wayne Cullen, Gary French, Gary Belcher, Ken Gittens, Peter Jackson, Hubie Abbott, Paul Wallace, Bill Gardiner (Trainer).  
**Front Row:** Mal Meninga, David Bourke, Norm Carr, John Elias, Eddie Muller, Gary Thompson.



**NORTH'S Devils**  
 1980  
 Nanda Norths (from left):  
**BACK ROW:** Ross Henrick,  
 Simon Pollard, Brian Dunn,  
 Peter Dutton, Brian Bird,  
 Neville Draper. **CENTRE:**  
 Bill Davies (manager), Joe  
 Kilroy, Mark Graham,  
 Campbell Dewes, Greg  
 Walker, Gary Warnock,  
 Garry Walker, Hilary  
 Pocock (masseur). **FRONT:**  
 Stan Napa, Tony Proberts,  
 Mark Murray (captain),  
 Graham Lowe (coach),  
 Shane Barnard, Greg  
 Conescu, Ziggy Strasser.



**EASTERN SUBURBS DISTRICT RUGBY LEAGUE FOOTBALL CLUB**

**FIRST GRADE TEAM – 1983**

**FRONT ROW** (left to right): Lachlan Bogle, Ray Kelly, Larry Briggins (Capt.), John Lang (Coach), Shane McNally, Steve Stacey, Trevor Paterson.  
**SECOND ROW** (left to right): Brad Backer, Brett Tengdahl, Brett Leman, Mark McDonald, Gavin Payne, Trevor Cook, Wayne Lindenberg.  
**THIRD ROW** (left to right): Martin Bella, Gavin Jones, Michael Booth, Luciano Nobile, Michael McLean, Cavill Heugh, Max Sahl.



**PANTHERS Western Suburbs**  
 1984  
 FOR the fifth successive season Wests have failed to make the semi-finals of the Brisbane competition.  
 But this season, at least, the blame can hardly be laid at any particular person, or reason, although injuries have been heavy. The Panthers have been rocked by injuries, right from the start of the season. And it has been in vital positions, such as the front row, the halves and the centres, that Wests have been most seriously hit.  
 Generally, coach Greg Olliphant has done a first-class job with the side. His enthusiasm and the team's willingness never to throw in the towel has impressed all and sundry.  
 Next season will be the 10th of the club's great sponsors, ORX Transport. It may also be the return of the Panther:  
**BACK ROW:** Wayne Sengstack, Tony Currie, Tim Watson, Paul Stewart, Gordon Ballhary, Andy Dible, David Keir, Clyde Wooderson. **CENTRE:** Kerian Allan, Karl Williams, Clinton Storey, Tony O'Leary, Owen Moffett, Mick Neill, Jamie Sandy. **FRONT:** Greg Olliphant (coach), Mark Trimble, Kevin Langer, Steve Carter, Norm Carr (captain), Neil Wharton, John Butler, Steven Wells.



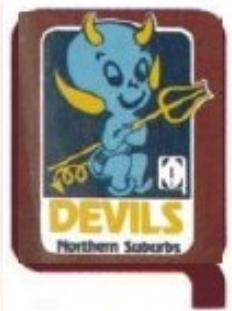
## RUGBY LEAGUE





# RUGBY LEAGUE

## NORTHS DEVILS



Norths, formerly Grammars, were formed in 1933 at a meeting at the Windsor School of Arts.

As a symbol of the passing of the old club a Past Grammar badge was cremated and presented to the officials of the new club with the expressed desire that Norths live up to the high standards of its predecessor.

Norths won their first top grade premiership in 1934 and snared others in 1938 and 1940.

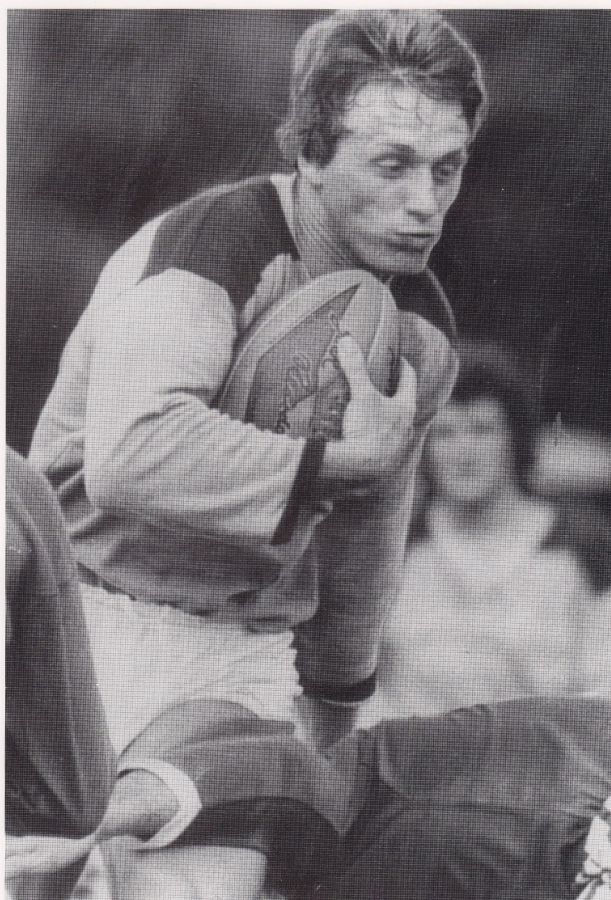
In 1959 they began a golden era in the club's history winning six premierships in a row, five under the coaching of Bob Bax. Australian coach Clive Churchill was in charge in 1959 although he was in England with the Kangaroos when Norths won the title former South Sydney forward Jack Coyne taking over the coaching reins.

Also under Bax Norths won the 1966 premiership, the last under the old unlimited tackle rule, and the 1969 title under the four tackle rule.

There was an 11 year break before Norths won again - in 1980 under the coaching of New Zealander Graham Lowe.



Clive Churchill started Norths' run



Mark Graham of the great 1980 side

In 1998 they became a feeder club with National Rugby League newcomers, the Melbourne Storm, which attracted much needed finance, as well as some quality players and securing the Devils' future. Also in 1998, the club won its first premiership since 1980, beating Wests in the Queensland Cup Grand Final.

In the 2006 NRL Grand Final Melbourne's 17 man team had 13 players who had played with Norths in past years such as Cameron Smith, Billy Slater, Greg Inglis and Cooper Cronk. In 2008 Norths celebrated 75 years and began a new feeder arrangement with the Brisbane Broncos. Their last grand final appearance was in 2010 when they lost 30-20 to the Northern Pride.

For many years Norths played out of Oxenham Park in Nundah, but they moved to their current home ground, Bishop Park, in 1969. It borders the Schulz Canal in Nundah, and is named after club stalwart Albert Bishop and is nicknamed "Bashup Park".



PREMIERSHIPS: 1927 (as Grammars), 1934 1938 1940 1959-64 1966 1969 1980 1988

Reserve grade: 1923 1927 1937 1938 1950-53 1956 1963 1964 1967-69 1971 1972 1989.

Third grade: 1939 1952 1954 1966-68 1971 (undefeated) 1973 (undefeated). 1998, 2000, 2004, 2005, 2006.

Internationals: Jack Reardon, Eddie "Babe" Collins, Bob Hagan, Lloyd Weir, Elwyn Walters, Barry McTaggart, Paul McCabe, Johnny Brown, Nick Geiger, Greg Conescu, Mark Murray.

Ten Prominent players: Bill Pearson, Fonda Metassa, Peter Lobegeiger, Peter Hall, Ray Cattinach, Glen Harrison, Lee Hutchinson, Steve Calder, Nev Draper, Craig Grauf.



Above: A young Greg Inglis on the burst for Norths.

Right: The 1959 Norths Premiers.





## RUGBY LEAGUE

### SOUTHS MAGPIES



Souths trace their history back to South Brisbane, one of four original clubs in the first Brisbane competition in 1909. Souths are the only one of the original four teams still competing today. In their first match they defeated Valley 12-2.

Sharing Davies Park from the same local area was West End who won the 1913 premiership against Natives 5-3. South Brisbane competed until 1915 and one of their jerseys was the same maroon and beige hoops that would be the jersey for Carltons from 1919 until the 1930's when, under the banner of Southern Suburbs, it would change to black and white.

Souths originally were known as Carltons and they won three premierships under that banner before changing their name under the district football format introduced in 1933.

Since that year Souths have had the distinction of being the first club to win three major grades in one year (1945), a feat that would not be repeated until Redcliffe did it 3 times in the 1990's.

Souths were formed at the West End School of Arts by about 40 members following the break-up of Carltons who left the new club with a debt of \$180. The first president was Jack Adams who bought the first set of jerseys himself. During World War II Souths had to leave their home ground Davies Park because the Americans required it as a camp. The Magpies were forced to play at Musgrave Park where they made showers under gum trees for use after training.

The most famous names to appear on Souths books were Bill Tyquin and Mal Meninga.

Tyquin, vice-captain of the 1948-49 Kangaroos to England and France, led Souths to one of their most memorable premierships - the 1949 grand final against Easts at the Brisbane Cricket Ground.



*Peter Scott presents his trophy to Bruce Astill.*

It was a wild match with referee Digger Chambers assaulted by spectators along with steward Harry Hunter.

It was Souths second premiership the first having been achieved in 1945 under the captaincy of Len Pegg.

Meninga played for Souths from 1978 to 1985 before he linked with the Canberra Raiders.

He first represented Australia in 1982 against New Zealand and he has been a fixture in Test sides ever since inheriting the captaincy from Wally Lewis in 1990.

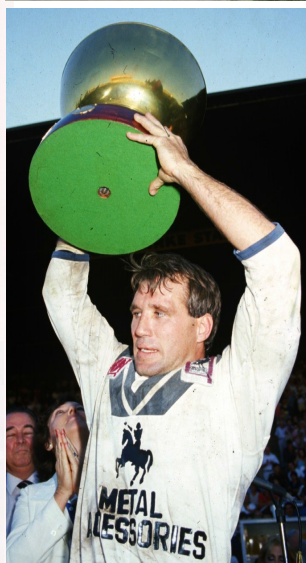
After Carltons three premierships (1921, 1925 and 1930) there have been two periods of premiership glory for the men from Davies Park. Souths won four premierships in the first decade after World War II (1945, 1949, 1951 and 1953).

Souths, under Wayne Bennett's coaching, made the grand final in 1979 only to be thrashed 26-0 by Valleys in a team dominated by Ross Strudwick and a young Wally Lewis.

Joe Kilroy broke Souths fans hearts when Norths beat Souths in the 1980 Grand Final. Bob McCarthy took over the coaching reins and coached the side to its first premiership in 1981 after snatching a last minute try by Mick Reardon in the corner and winning 13-9.

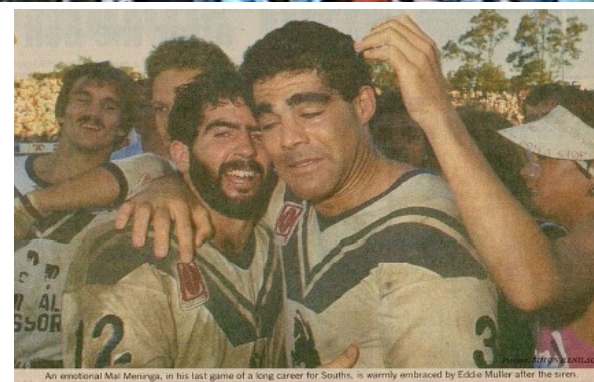
They lost the 1982 Grand Final when Wynnum won their first premiership. Souths and Wynnum battled another two grand finals after Wayne Bennett returned to Souths in 1984 and 1985. Wally Lewis reigned supreme in 1984 as Souths were thrashed 42-8 but the tables were turned in Mal Meninga's 1985 swangsong winning 10-8.

In the post-Broncos era Souths financial struggle became even more desperate but by some miracle they managed to survive. Linking up with the Canberra Raiders a joint venture was formed in 2003 with the Logan Scorpions to form the Souths Logan Magpies. The Scorpions club folded later that season but Souths retained the Logan name.



After many lean years at or near the bottom of the ladder Souths were transformed in 2008 with the addition of Raiders players through their feeder arrangement and changed quicker than Superman in a phone booth according to one reporter and won the 2008 Queensland Cup grand final. After going to an 18-0 lead Ipswich came back and levelled the game and then on the last tackle of the game, reminiscent of Mick Reardon's 1981 try, Kyle Lodge scored a heart-stopping try to win the game 24-18.

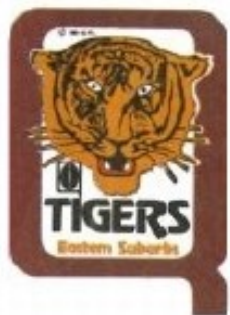
In 2015 Souths begin a new feeder arrangement with the Brisbane Broncos. They have played out of Davies Park for over 100 years though they also have played at Meakin Park in the past and occasionally play out of their junior ground at Acacia Ridge.



*An emotional Mal Meninga, in his last game of a long career for Souths, is warmly embraced by Eddie Muller after the siren.*



## RUGBY LEAGUE EASTS TIGERS



Easts were established in 1933 when district football boundaries were introduced the club previously known as Coorparoo.

The publican of the Stones Corner Hotel Tom Bird was the founding president and the secretary George Shields.

Easts first premiership came in 1950 although Coorparoo had won a title in 1923.

It wasn't until the famous Jeff Fyfe field goal grand final in 1972 that Easts snared another title.

Under captain-coach Des Morris Easts won successive premierships in 1977 and 1978 after being beaten by Wests in 1976.

Test hooker John Lang coached Easts to a 1983 premiership with his youthful pack surprising the critics with their whole hearted displays.

Lang also snared a premiership in 1991 and the next two years made the grand final only to lose to Wests.

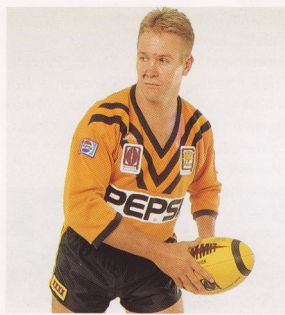
Since that last grand final win in 1991 Easts have lost the 1995 and 1997 BRL grand finals and four Queensland Cup grand finals (1997, 2004, 2013 and 2018). The most heartbreaking of those was in 2004 when fielding a team that boasted former Broncos Steve Renouf and Darren Smith they were beaten by Burleigh 22-18 in extra time.

For most of their time in the Queensland Cup they have been one of several feeder clubs to the Brisbane Broncos but since 2013 they have switched to being a feeder club to the Melbourne Storm.

Premierships: First grade: 1923 (As Coorparoo) 1947 1950 1972 1977 1978 1983 1991.



John Lang in 1978

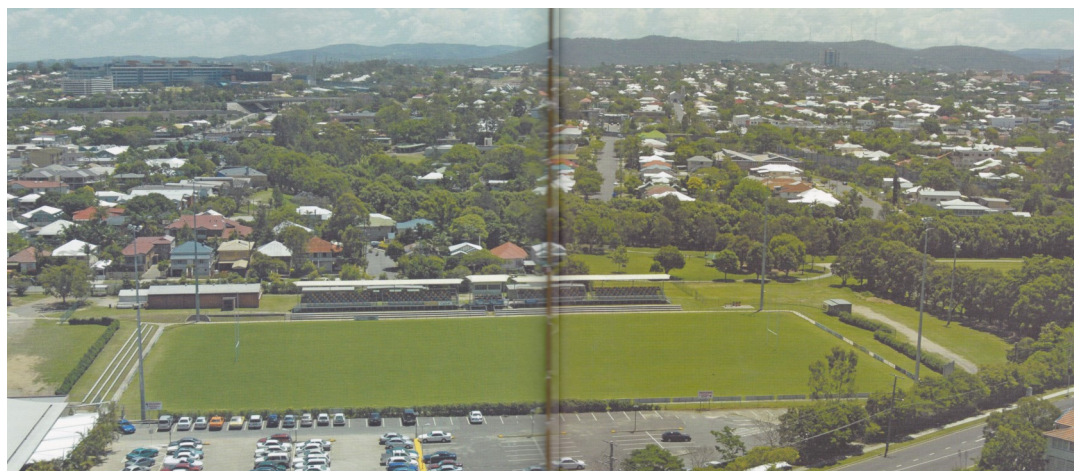


Reserve grade: 1922 1925 1930 (all as Coorparoo) 1940 1949 1960 1970 1974 1977 1991 1992, 1996, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2008, 2012, 2013, 2014.

Third grade: 1927 1929 (both as Coorparoo, the latter undefeated), 1946 1949 1965 1978 1983, 1988, 1991, 1995, 1996.

Internationals: Nev Broadfoot, Jeff Denman, John Payne, John Lang, Rod Morris.

Ten Prominent players from the Lang Park era: Des Morris, Wayne Lindenberg, Alan Currie, Greg Holben, Brad Backer, Larry Brigginsaw, Trevor Paterson, Gavin Payne, Ian Stains, Paul Green.



Wayne Lindenberg clears the ball



EASTERN SUBURBS DISTRICT RUGBY LEAGUE FOOTBALL CLUB  
FIRST GRADE TEAM – 1983



## RUGBY LEAGUE WESTS PANTHERS



Lang Park was once Wests' home ground and crowds of 20000 for Panthers home matches were not uncommon.

The Panthers trained at Lang Park up until 1973 when they moved to Purtell Park at Bardon.

Formed in 1915 with the amalgamation of North Brisbane and Toowong, Wests went within an ace of winning a premiership in their inaugural year going down to Valleys 19-9 in the grand final.

Two seasons later Wests made amends by winning the premiership and by 1980 they had won another eight. After a lean period in the 1980's the Panthers have roared back winning consecutive premierships in 1992 and 1993 under the coaching of Gary Grienke who left this month to take up an appointment as coach of the London Broncos.

Ron Raper was the coach when Wests also won premierships in 1975-76 with former rugby union Test five eighth Geoff Richardson at his majestic best.

"A prince" former Wests president and current Australian selector Hugh Kelly called Richardson.

Wests were undefeated in winning the 1922 premiership one of only two Brisbane clubs to achieve the feat the other being Valleys in 1955.

The first president of the Brisbane Rugby League came from Wests - Peter Scott - and one of the major Brisbane trophies played for by teams was named in his honour.

But the undisputed "Mr Wests" was Tom Purtell a Queensland representative in 1935-36, a Wests first grader for 13 years, skipper for three and president for 20 years. A QRL and BRL Life Member Purtell died last year.



"The prince" Geoff Richardson

**PREMIERSHIPS:** First grade 1922 1948 1952 1954 1975 1976 1992 1993.

Reserve grade: 1926 1933 1934 (all undefeated) 1947 1956 1957 1976.

Third grade: 1923 1928 1930 (undefeated) 1933 1934 1959 1951 1956 1959 1964 1977, 1992, 1993.

Colts: 1986. Open grade: 1990. Under-23: 1979. Under-21: 1978, under-18: 1982.

Club championships: 1932 1933 1934 1950 1952 1956 1957 1960 1975 1976.

**Internationals:** Harry Fewin, Norm Potter, William Richards, Cec Aynsley, Jim Bennett, Henry Denny, Duncan Hall, Ken McCrohon, Alex Watson, Barry Muir, Col Weir, Ken Day, Ian Robson, Rob Thompson, Wayne Stewart, Warren Orr, Geoff Richardson, Steve Crear (All playing with Wests when selected). Other internationals: Tony Currie, John Ribot, Paul Vautin,

Greg Oliphant.

Ten Notable Wests players: Ritchie Twist, John White, Henry Williamson, Gary Prickett, Bob Green, Arty Connell, Norm Carr, Kev Lingard, Ray McCarron, Adrian Lam.



Wests last grand final appearance was in 1998 when they lost to Norths by 35-16.

Following a disastrous year in 2003 when they lost all 22 games of the season, including a club record 78-0 loss to Norths at Bishop Park, the club decided to depart the Queensland Cup competition, deciding to instead guarantee their survival by participating in lower grades only, and planning to re-enter the Queensland Cup competition at a later date.

Wests' first home ground was the Botanical Gardens, but played at Lang Park between 1955 and 1973. In 1974, the club moved wholly to its training premises on Mount Coot-tha, naming their new home Purtell Park after club stalwart Tom Purtell. In 2010 Purtell Park underwent a multi-million dollar upgrade.





## RUGBY LEAGUE

### VALLEYS DIEHARDS



Valleys have proved the most successful side in the history of Brisbane rugby league winning 22 first grade premierships.

The mighty Diehards won the first premiership in 1909 and in 1955 they went through the season undefeated.

The most famous Diehards of all have been fullback Norm Pope and 1980's Test skipper Wally Lewis.

A Life Member of Valleys Pope, also had a spell as first grade coach. In 1953 he scored more points in a single season than any other Queenslander - 330 from 10 tries and 150 goals. Three times he topped the 200 mark.

Lewis made his senior debut for Valleys in 1978 and remained with the club until 1984 when he switched to Wynnum-Manly.

The Diehards home ground is Neumann Oval at Albion named after the man who served as club president for two decades, Fred "Firpo" Neumann a former international.

When league moved to Lang Park in 1958 Valleys contested all three grand finals.

After a golden era in the early 1970's Valleys enjoyed another successful run from 1988-90 under the astute coaching of Ross Henrick to dominate the Brisbane scene in the immediate "post Broncos" era.

Valleys' great tradition is exemplified by a club saying: "Though the personnel of the team may change the spirit lives on."

In 1988, Valleys formed a short-lived joint venture with the Tweed Heads Seagulls playing under the name Seagulls-Diehards, winning the 1988 premiership. The joint venture broke soon after and Valleys returned to their old name.



Al McInnes gets his try

Financial difficulties in the early 1990s took their toll on the club, leading Valleys to a short-lived merger with the Caboolture Snakes, calling themselves Caboolture Valleys, in 1995. However the club folded at season's end, preventing the foundation club from playing in the inaugural Queensland Cup in 1996.

Valleys, Brisbane's most successful premiership winning club, had their last season at the top level in 2004, their only one in the Queensland Cup.

In 2002, Valleys entered a partnership with another former Brisbane Rugby League team, Brothers, playing under the name Brothers-Valleys. Brothers left the Queensland Cup at the end of 1998 when they acted as feeder club to the Broncos for that year. Playing out of Perry Park, in Bowen Hills, the Two-Blues participated in the lower grades, before being accepted into the Queensland Cup for Season 2004. Based at O'Callaghan Park in Zillmere, the club's only premiership points that season were from a first round draw.

At seasons end, Brothers Valleys announced a name change to Brothers Diehards, but were not accepted into the 2005 Queensland Cup, on the basis of club finance, a very sad end for such clubs with so much history for which there was little public hue and cry over like there was when Souths Sydney were kicked out of the NRL.

Their home ground of Neumann Oval was sold off to Queensland Cricket and is now Allan Border Field.

Valleys will be a part of the new BRL lower grade competition that will replace the FOGS Cup in 2015 and will be a feeder club for Norths in the Queensland Cup.

The start of a legend





# RUGBY LEAGUE

## BROTHERS LEPRECHAUNS



comes in with 17 year history.

"Past Brothers" have played at Davies Park, the Brisbane Cricket Ground, the Domain, Valley State School, Ballymore, Corbett Park and Crosby Park.

Corbett Park was to be Brothers' home for ever after the club bought seven acres of freehold land for three thousand five hundred pounds in 1963.

Formerly Hickey's dairy farm, victory celebrations were held in a barn and then a modest clubhouse until the construction of a modern premises in 1971.

Brothers remained there until 1989 when dire financial times forced them out and they became nomads of the competition until the move to Bray park this year.

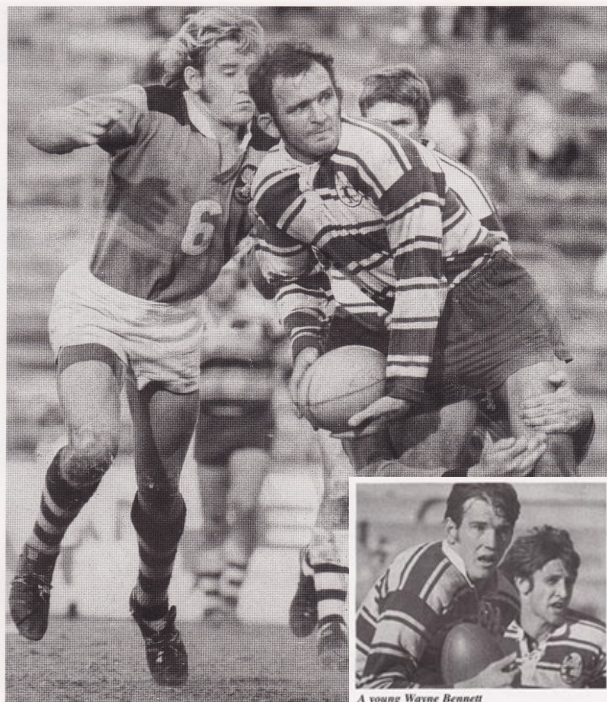
Ironically Brothers were born of financial strife with the original Brothers Rugby Union club getting into financial trouble over injury insurance for players. So the club swiched to rugby league.

In 1926 the legendary Tom Gorman became Brothers first paid player and he took Brothers to their first premiership that very year.

Brothers' next premiership was in 1935 when a goal from the sideline by skipper Vince Hogan in extra time provided a 17-15 victory over Valleys.

Brothers had the honour of winning the first grand final at Lang Park - in 1958 when they defeated Valleys 22-7.

Brothers were led to premierships in 1956 and 1958 under captain Brian Davies who would captain Australia. He would also coach Brothers to victory as they did a double in 1967 and 1968.



Col Weiss in 1973

A young Wayne Bennett

Brothers won the last Brisbane premiership in 1987 before the Brisbane Broncos started playing in 1988. Led by Trevor Bailey they defeated Redcliffe 26-8 in a very memorable final.

Brothers left the Queensland Cup at the end of 1998 when they acted as feeder club to the Broncos for that year.

In 2002, Valleys entered a partnership with another former Brisbane Rugby League team, Brothers, playing under the name Brothers-Valleys. Playing out of Perry Park, in Bowen Hills, the Two-Blues participated in the lower grades, before being accepted into the Queensland Cup for Season 2004. Based at O'Callaghan Park in Zillmere, the club's only premiership points that season were from a first round draw.

At seasons end, Brothers Valleys announced a name change to Brothers Diehards, but were not accepted into the 2005 Queensland Cup, on the basis of club finance, a very sad end for such clubs with so much history.

Currently there is a bid for the Brothers fraternity across the state to join the NRL and talk of putting in a side into the new BRL lower grade competition that will replace the FOGS Cup though they won't take part in it in 2015.

Internationals: Tommy Gorman, Eddie Brosnan, Brian Davies, Noel Cavanagh, Dennis Manteit, Johnny Gleeson, Wayne Bennett, David Wright, Mark Thomas, Graham Quinn, Dan Stains.

Ten Prominent Players: Larry Gillespie, Len Dawson, Mick Shannon, Len Dittmar, Johnny Smith, Bob Cock, Ian Dauth, Alan Power, Peter Gill, Trevor Bailey.

Premierships: First grade: 1926 1935 1939 1942 1943 1956 1958 1967 1968 1987.

Reserve grade: 1928 1955 1973 1979 1985 1986.

Third grade: 1935 1947 1953 1986 1990.

Colts: 1991.



David Wright in action





## RUGBY LEAGUE

### WYNNUM-MANLY SEAGULLS



Wynnum were first accepted into the Brisbane premiership in 1931 and remained there until World War II.

In 1951 Wynnum returned to the Brisbane League and based themselves at Kitchener Park the current home of the Wynnum juniors.

The seniors remained there until 1967 when they moved to their current base Kougari Oval.

The biggest day in Wynnum's history was their first premiership in 1982 when they rolled Souths at Lang Park sparking unprecedented scenes of celebration with an estimated 10 000 people cramming into Kougari Oval for overnight celebrations.

It took the Broncos first NSWRL premiership in 1992 to evoke pandemonium reminiscent of those heady days of Brisbane football.

It was a year when Test prop Rod Morris came out of retirement to help his older brother Des who was coaching the Seagulls.

Rod Morris said some people thought he would take it easy when he finally decided to play.

He said he had not been that keen early in the season because he didn't want to let anybody down particularly with expectations high in the southern bayside area.

"I wanted to be able to contribute. It was already a side with a lot of capabilities and strengths," Morris said. "It was a side keen to learn and Des was a proven coach."

"In the early part of the 82 finals series I think the players were just content to be there but as we went on and made it to the grand final their confidence grew."

"To go out on the field that day against Souths and to skipper a side branded



*A real stalwart, Colin Scott in action*

perennial losers to an historic premiership win was a very special memory.

"The whole crowd seemed to be behind us and you had to feel a little sorry for Souths. I think everyone was hoping Wynnum would get up to win their first grand final after being so far down the ladder for so many years."

Wynnum, still coached by Des Morris, won another premiership in 1984 and then with Wally Lewis as captain-coach grabbed the title in 1986. Wally's father Jim had been coach of the 1972 C grade premiership winning side and later coached the firsts.

Beset by financial problems the club went through a period of crisis including a forced shift away from Kougari Oval to Kianawah Road for the 1990 season.

They moved back to Kougari Oval which was upgraded and in 1995 defeated Easts 32-24 to win the last BRL grand final before the competition became the statewide Queensland Cup.

Apart from 1997 when they were minor premiers but failed to make the grand final, Wynnum struggled for most of their time in the Queensland Cup until, bolstered by the feeder arrangement with the Brisbane Broncos, they won back to back premierships in 2011 and 2012 under the coaching of Paul Green.

Premierships: First grade: 1982, 1984, 1986.

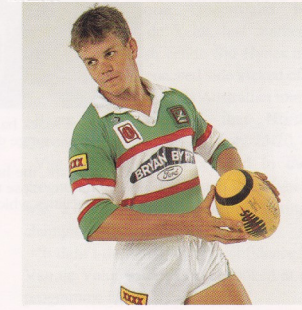
Reserve grade: 1975, 1993.

C grade 1972, 1975, 1976, 1979.

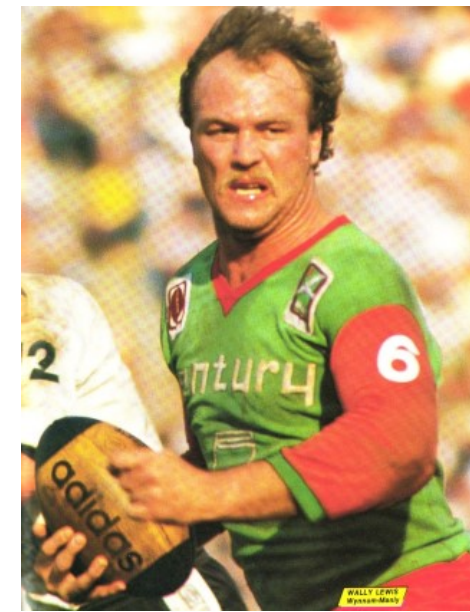
Australian representatives: Lionel Morgan, Johnny Gleeson, John Wittenberg John Rhodes, Lou Platz, Rod Morris, Greg Dowling, Wally Lewis, Gene Miles, Colin Scott, Bob Lindner.

Wynnum juniors who went on to represent Australia from country areas were Noel Gallagher and Warren Orr. Rothmans Medal winners: Len Brunner, Gene Miles, Neil Tierney.

Noted Wynnum players: Keith "bomber" Brown, the Greenhill brothers, Billy McDermott, Nev Homery, Brian Walsh.



W/MANLY V. REDCLIFFE  
KOUGAR OVAL  
SUNDAY 20TH MAY, 1977





# RUGBY LEAGUE

## REDCLIFFE DOLPHINS



Accepted into the Brisbane competition in 1960 Redcliffe reached the semi-finals in their second year and under the coaching of Henry Holloway won a premiership in 1965.

That Dolphins' side included Arthur Beetson and Kevin Yoh Yeh who moved to Balmain the following season.

Since then Redcliffe have always finished the bridesmaid sometimes in the most heart breaking of circumstances.

In 1977 they won the Peter Scott Memorial Trophy and that same year the minor premiership. Easts defeated them in the grand final then the following year Redcliffe failed again to capitalise on a minor premiership being eliminated by Valleys in the preliminary final.

Redcliffe played at the city's showgrounds before moving to their own impressive ground, Dolphin Oval which is one of Queensland's most prosperous leagues clubs.

Dayboro dairy farmer Peter Leis (261) holds the record for the most number of first grade matches a record his former teammate Tony Obst (230 games) says will stand forever.

"Peter had a season at Wests too," Obst said. "I remember playing against him at Lang Park and tackling him. He never spoke to me for 12 months.

"In another match for Redcliffe against Easts he scored two 100 metre tries from dummy half. It was one of the first televised matches and Easts flogged us by 50 points. His try scoring feats were incredible and gave a lot of people a lot of pleasure."

Of the modern era Tevor Benson clocked up 237 games whilst spending a season at St. George in the NSW competition.



*Peter Leis fires a pass*

They were runners-up when Arthur Beetson returned from Sydney in his final season as a player. The fairytale was dashed when Mick Reardon scored for Souths in the last minute to win 13-9. Had the try been stopped Redcliffe would have won all three grades emulating Souths feat of 1945.

After losing the last grand final in 1987 before the Broncos came along they not only broke through to win their second first grade premiership in nearly 30 years after their first one but won all three grades in 1994, the second team ever to win the top three grades in the same year. They would repeat the feat in 1997 and 2002.

Running one of the most financially successful leagues clubs, boosted since the early 90's by poker machine revenue, has enabled Redcliffe to attract quality and depth in playing talent and become the most successful club in Queensland Cup history.

After losing the first Queensland Cup grand final to Toowoomba 8-6 in 1996, they went one better winning in 1997 against Easts who they played and beat again that year in the last ever BRL grand final.

They have won 5 Queensland Cup titles in 1997, 2000, 2002, 2003 and 2006 to add to their 2 BRL premierships before the Queensland Cup. Two of those Queensland Cup titles were against Toowoomba who they battled in 4 grand finals. Currently, they are a feeder club to the Brisbane Broncos.

**Premierships:**  
First grade: 1965.

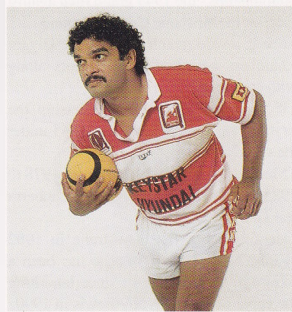
Reserve grade: 1959 1962 1966 1978 1981 1982 1988.

Third grade: 1981 1984 1987 1989 1993.

**Australian representatives:** Bob Gehrke, Greg Oliphant, Chris Close, Wally Fullerton Smith, Mark Murray, Bryan Niebling, Greg Conescu, John Ribot, Arthur Beetson.

**Ten Prominent Players:** Trevor Harken, Steve Crear, Tony Obst, Rod Halley, Peter Leis, Steve Bullow, Ian Thinee, Ian "Bunny" Pearce, Brian Gardiner, Trevor Benson.

**Rothmans Medal Winners**  
Ian "Bunny" Pearce      Trevor Benson  
Tony Obst                Bryan Niebling



*Tony Obst wrapped up*



*Trevor Benson takes it up*





## LOGAN SCORPIONS



The Logan City Scorpions were admitted to the Brisbane League in 1987 as a C grade side. That year they made the grand final and in 1988 they were accepted as a fully fledged club with firsts, reserves and colts.

There have been some hard times on the financial front and the colts have struggled to be competitive.

But generally there has been consolidation and growth and the Scorpions have a fine home base at Meakin Park, Kingston.

Former Test halfback Tom Raudonikis has brought a new spirit and will to win to the club and former Test prop Sam Backo has thrown his weight behind the club even playing at one stage.

They made the Woolies final in 1988 which they lost to Valleys and in the FOGS A grade they made a grand final they lost to Easts. In their final year they failed to win a single game in either the Queensland Cup or Brisbane A Grade. A full corporate merger between Souths and Logan under the umbrella of Canberra to be named the Souths-Logan Raiders with the Raiders calling the shots was the plan at the time Souths and Logan played their last games in the 2002 season.

The corporate merger did not eventuate and a joint venture happened instead. Souths Magpies and Logan Scorpions remained separate corporate entities but merged their teams for the 2003 season with the generous financial backing of the Canberra Raiders. A couple of months after their final game as separate teams, the decision was made to drop the name Raiders for the joint venture team and call the team the Souths-Logan Magpies.

The club split its home games between Davies Park and Logan's Meakin Park in Slacks Creek, although they had moved full time to Davies Park by the end of the year. About this time the Logan Scorpions licensed club folded and all games were transferred back to Davies Park. Though the Logan Scorpions folded, Souths has chosen to continue with the merged name of Souths-Logan Magpies.

Prominent players have included, Paul Bartier, Paul Fisher, Brad Pike, Bradley George, Glen Haggath, Bill Dart, Shane Perry, Brendon Lindsay and Shane Tronc.



Ipswich competed for just a few years in the very earliest days of the Brisbane competition and took out their only premiership in 1910. Ipswich and Valley-Toombul played a 10-10 draw, the only one in BRL grand final history. Ipswich then won the grand final replay 17-2.

Ipswich representative sides also had a great tradition in the Bulimba Cup competition with Brisbane and Toowoomba playing many memorable matches at Lang Park.

They won 11 Bulimba Cups (Brisbane won 19 and Toowoomba 16). They were utterly dominant in the 1930's winning 6 Bulimba Cup titles. Their last Bulimba Cup title was in 1966 when they defeated Brisbane 7-2 in the final.

Ipswich also hosted touring sides from Great Britain, France and New Zealand right up until the late 1970's.

In the modern era they entered the Brisbane competition in 1986 after competing for 4 years in the Winfield State League.

Les Stokes, co-manager of the 1990 Kangaroos, was foundation chairman of the Jets, a position he held until 1990 when he was succeeded by the incumbent John Edyvean.

Former Test halfback Tom Raudonikis was foundation coach and he has been followed by Jim Landy, Ken Coles and Kevin Langer.

The Jets played at the traditional home of league in Ipswich - the North Ipswich Reserve - until 1993 when they moved to Briggs Road.

Ipswich appeared in two grand finals - 1988 and 1989 - when they lost to Valleys.

After the BRL premiership expanded to become the Queensland Cup, Ipswich would make it to another two grand finals. In 2002 they were humbled 34-10 by a Redcliffe side would win 3 grand finals in 4 years.

Ipswich finished minor premiers in 2008 and were favourites to win that year when the grand final was moved from Suncorp Stadium to their home ground at North Ipswich Reserve due to an event clash.

A huge crowd turned out for it but Souths got the jump on them quickly going to a 18-0 lead. Ipswich powered back to level but were denied a premiership for a fourth time since their (re)entry in 1986 when Kyle Lodge snatched a try for Souths Logan and Ipswich lost 24-18.

Premierships: 1910

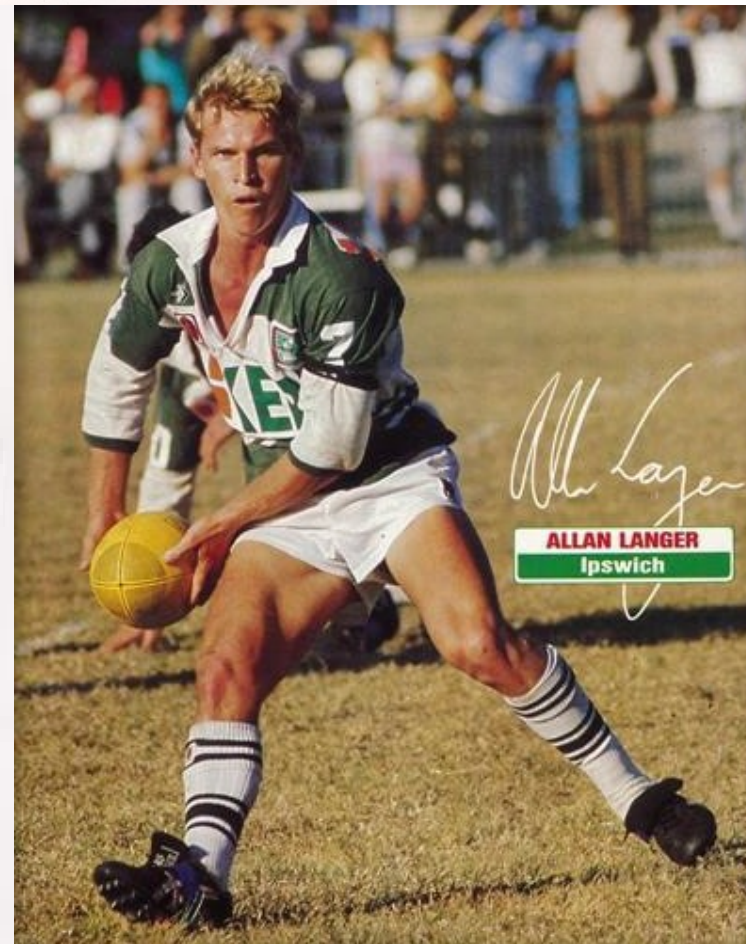
Colts: 1990.

Internationals: Allan Langer, Kerrod Walters, Kevin Walters.

Prominent players: Steve Parcell, Craig Spark, Brad Chicken, Jim Lenihan, Andrew Walters, Brad Chicken, Glen Haggath, Ray Ovens, Darren Wolens.



## IPSWICH JETS





## RUGBY LEAGUE



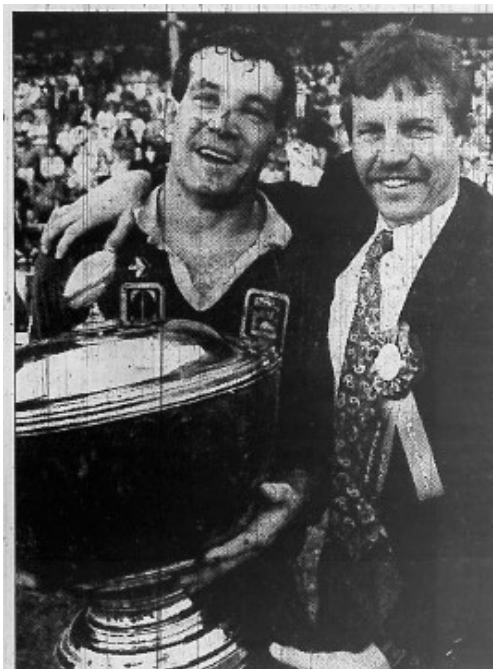
**Above Left:** Some of the game's TV commentators in Brisbane including Henry Holloway, Barry Muir, George Doniger, Billy J Smith and Fonda Metassa. **Inset:** Channel 9 commentators Chris "Bomber" Bombolas, Alan Thomas and Rod "Mr T" Tile. **Above Right:** Wally Fullerton-Smith and Gerry Connelly about to broadcast at Davies Park at a Queensland Cup game with the ABC. **Bottom Left:** Legendary league radio commentator, John McCoy, Peter Meares and David Wright who covered the game for 20 years with the ABC. **Below Right:** Billy J Smith and "Farmer" Mick Viers.



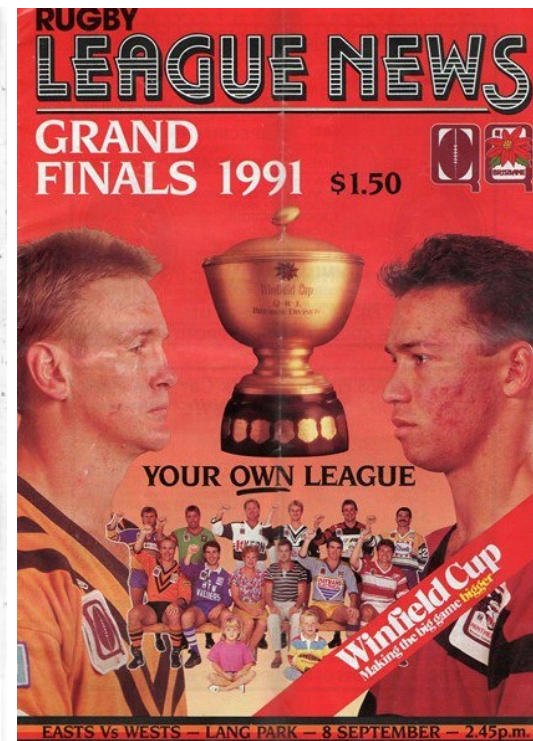




**Above:** Valleys won 3 premierships in a row between 1988 and 1990. The first was as a joint venture with the Tweed Heads Seagulls. **Below Left:** Wests won two years in a row in 1992 and 1993. **Below Right:** Redcliffe broke a 29 year drought to win the 1994 premiership.



*TO THE victors go the spoils... Valleys coach Ross Henrick and a bloodied Bill Holmes celebrate after claiming the club's third successive premiership.*







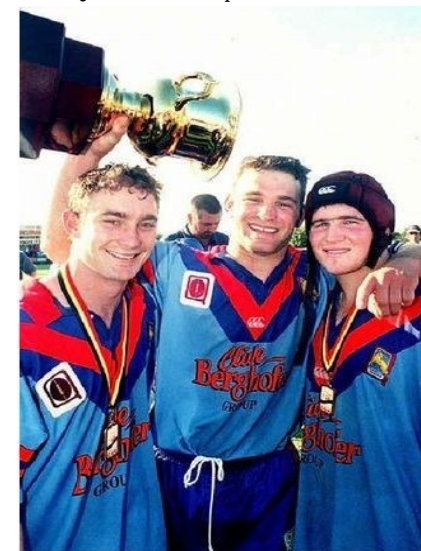
**Right:** Don Saunders celebrates Toowoomba winning the inaugural Queensland Cup in 1996 beating Redcliffe 8-6.



Norths 1998 Premiership winners celebrate their Grand Final win at Suncorp Stadium. The Devils after a slow start, the champion side piled on 35 unanswered points to thrash Wests 35-16



**Above Right:** Redcliffe not only won the Queensland Cup in 1997 but won all three top grades as they did in 1994. **Below Centre:** Burleigh Bears won their first Queensland Cup in 1999.



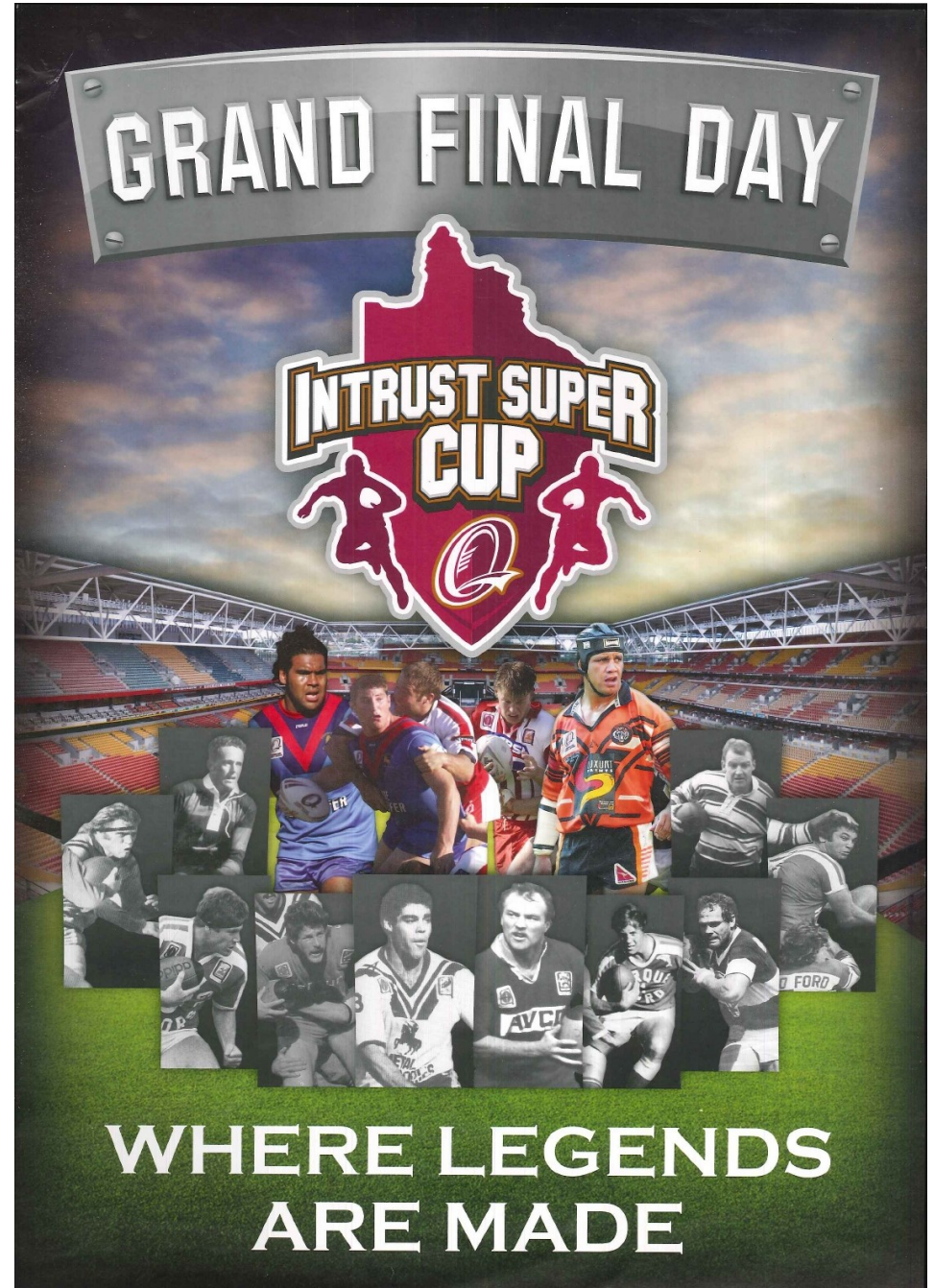
Former Clydesdales Tony Duggan, Darren Ingram and Nathan Friend celebrate the 2001 Queensland Cup title win.





Cronk, Slater, Smith line up for Norths in 2002

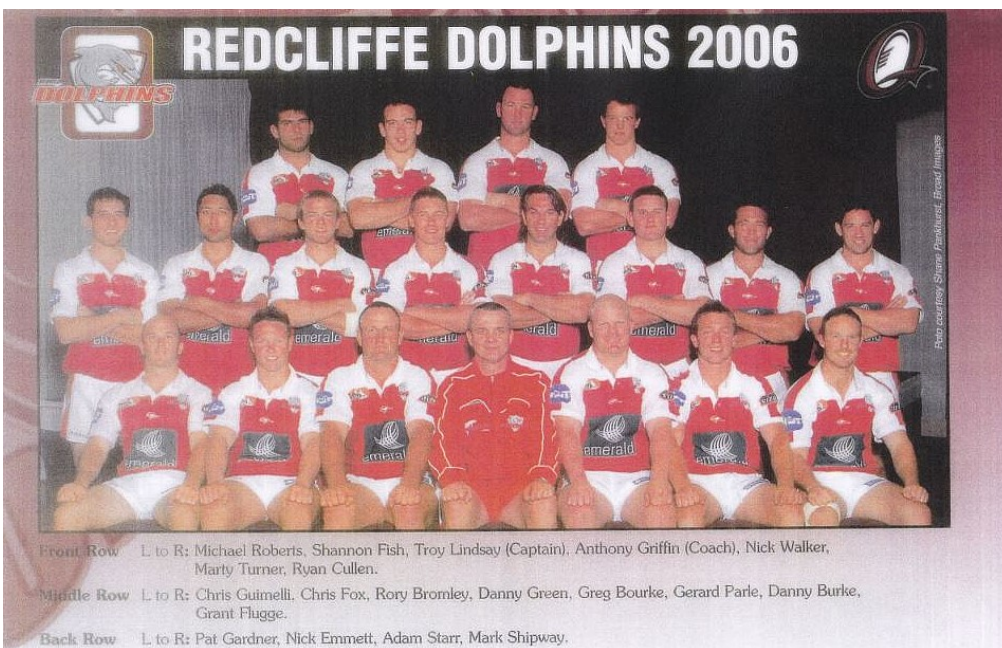
**Below:** Dual registration allowed fringe NRL players to also play for their Qld Cup feeder clubs. Playing for Norths included later Melbourne stars Greg Inglis, Israel Folau, Billy Slater and Cooper Cronk.







**Above Right:** Burleigh Bears won their second Queensland Cup title in 2004 in one of the closest grand finals won in extra time against Easts 22-18. Playing for Easts included Darren Smith and Steve Renouf after they finished their NRL careers.



**Front Row** L to R: Michael Roberts, Shannon Fish, Troy Lindsay (Captain), Anthony Griffin (Coach), Nick Walker, Marty Turner, Ryan Cullen.  
**Middle Row** L to R: Chris Guimelli, Chris Fox, Rory Bromley, Danny Green, Greg Bourke, Gerard Parle, Danny Burke, Grant Flugge.  
**Back Row** L to R: Pat Gardner, Nick Emmett, Adam Starr, Mark Shipway.



**Above and Bottom Left:** Redcliffe have been the most successful Queensland Cup team winning 5 premierships winning in 1997, 2000, 2001, 2002 and 2006.

**Bottom Centre and Below:** Tweed Heads took the Queensland Cup over the border in 2007 beating Redcliffe in a game that included a spectacular try by Shannon Walker.





**Below:** Souths Logan Magpies in their 100th season won the 2008 Queensland Cup. After leading 18-0 Ipswich came back and levelled and then Kyle Lodge scored on the last tackle of the game for Souths Logan to win 24-18.

**Above Centre:** Sunshine Coast celebrate their 2009 Queensland Cup win.

**Above Right:** Under the coaching of Paul Green, Wynnum Manly won twice in 2011 and 2012.



## MAG-NIFICENT

### Kevvie misses his fairytale as the Jets crash

Damien Stannard

KEVIN Walters' hopes of coaching Ipswich to a Queensland Cup title will, for now, remain just a dream. In his farewell match at the helm of the Jets, the hometown hero was denied by Souths Logan Magpies who were in raptures after claiming a 24-18 win in yesterday's grand final at North Ipswich Reserve.

The Jets trailed for most of the game but stormed back to level the scores at 18-all with less than 10 minutes remaining.

It took an act of brilliance in the 80th minute from man-of-the-match Alby Talipeau to settle the premiership.

With the rest of the Magpies prepared for a field goal attempt, the halfback ran the ball before sending centre Kyle Lodge over for a try.

"I just took a chance, looked up and saw some gaps," the Duncan Hall Medalist said. "They didn't know I was going to do that. There was a hole and I backed myself."

Souths' punishing defence made the difference. It rattled Ipswich and the Jets did well just to ensure the game was still alive in the 80th minute.

Walters, who has signed to coach Catalans Dragons in the English Super League, had no complaints.

"We weren't up to scratch today. Souths deserved their victory," the former Broncos five-eighth said.

"We did well to get back in the game. But it didn't happen. It wasn't to be."

Front-row Aaron Sweeney recovered from a jolting hit in the first tackle to play a

gargantuan role for the Jets. He scored a long-range try and went close to notching a double to be Ipswich's best.

While the outcome was disappointing for Ipswich supporters, the day was a winner for the city and the QRL.

Forced to move from Suncorp Stadium due to last night's Bledisloe Cup match, the QRL was beaming after more than 6000 people provided a carnival atmosphere.

Ipswich, although on its home turf, started the game nervously.

Sweeney's loose carry and dropped ball in the first set seemed to encourage the Magpies to hit even harder.

A try to Souths' forward Cy Lasscock in the second minute was followed by another error when Ipswich pivot Josh Lewis put the ball out on the full.

It was not one of Lewis's best outings and he took some low-percentage options when the game was on the line.

The Jets' jitters appeared over in the second half after Sweeney and hooker Michael Ryan helped settle their side.

A period of sustained pressure yielded three unanswered tries for the home side.

The Magpies bench fumed after Lewis's conversion of the second try was awarded, believing the kick had not made it through the uprights.

But the controversial decision did not play a lead role in the result.

SOUTHS LOGAN 24 (Lasscock, Gibson, Templeman, Lodge tries; Cannard 2, White 2 goals) d IPSWICH 18 (Ryan, Malone, Sweeney tries; Lewis 3 goals).

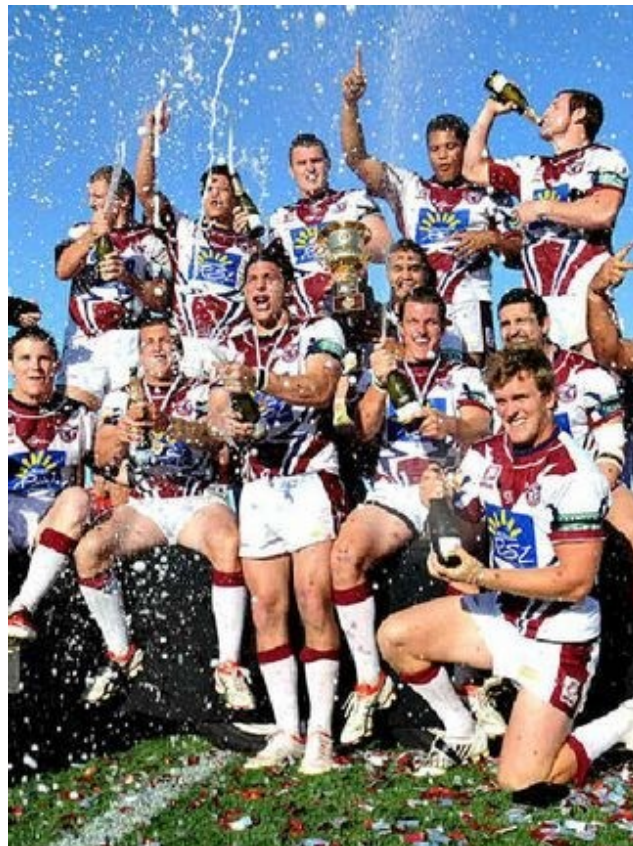


PHIL'S GOOD: Magpie Phil Dennis celebrates victory

Pictures: Peter Wallis



ALL ACTION: Tempers flare (left) and McKanah Gibson takes his eyes off the ball



Trophy falls apart but Sheppard keeps it all together for Northern Pride



The Northern Pride won twice in 2010 (Chris Sheppard seen **above** with the poorly glued trophy) and in 2014 when they thrashed Easts 36-4, the biggest grand final margin. On the **right** they celebrate winning the inaugural State Championship beating NSW Cup premiers, Penrith, 32-28.

