

Pirates first U19 premiership 1996

Joy in a first-ever junior premiership win

U19 Pirates in a cliffhanger

PIRATES held off a late charge from Tamworth to land the clubs' first ever U19 premiership with a thrilling 14-10 grand-final win at Rugby Park, Tamworth on Saturday.

Last year's runner-up went one better in 1996 but the young Magpies made their rivals earn the title by mounting a strong finish.

Tamworth poured on the pressure in the final 10 minutes with talented half-back Joe Toohy crossing in the corner for a converted try to reduce Pirates' lead to 11-10.

But Pirates' captain

THE SCORERS
U19 CNRU grand final.
PIRATES 14 (Matthew Nolan try, Andrew Yeo 2 pens, 6/10) & TAMWORTH 10 (Tim Jenner try, Brett Walsh pen, conv).

Andrew Yeo, one of 11 Pirates backing up from the 1995 grand final, sealed victory with a late 37m penalty.

"We wanted to redeem ourselves after coming bridesmaid last year," Yeo, a popular choice for Player of the Match, said.

"We wanted to be the groom this year. We are just ecstatic. (Coach) Gordon Barbara has been at the club for 10 years. He really wanted it bad and we all dug in and we got there."

Pirates' mobile forward pack laid the platform for victory by outplaying Tamworth at the breakdown.

The frontrow of Jamie Burkett, Craig Simpson and Paul Tongue gave Pirates a solid base in the scrum and they were also in the thick of the action across the paddock.

Tamworth opened the scoring with promising full-back Brett Walsh landing a penalty but winger Matthew Nolan put Pirates in front 5-3 in the 10th minute when he finished off a good backline movement which started from a Tamworth error.

Yeo sparked some good attacking moves before the break but Tamworth's defence was sound.

Pirates started the second half well and Yeo turned pressure into points with a penalty and field goal for an 11-3 lead.

Centres Ben Watts and Vince McClelland both looked dangerous at times but Tamworth held on.

In fact the Magpies began to charge home and McClelland was forced to pull off a try saving tackle on Tamworth wing Damian Brown.

Walsh also went close in the right-hand corner before Toohy crossed after five-eighths Will Figueira took a quick tap and passed to burley prop Scott Jenner.

"It was a good finish," Figueira said afterwards.

"Just didn't start off well enough.

"We always come home and we picked up 200 per cent in the second half but there wasn't enough talk in the first half.

"The feeling was good in the second half when we got the ball wide to our fast men Matt Allwell and Damian Smith but we didn't do it enough."

Coach Barbara said Tamworth had surprised him with its defence.

"Our intention was to run the ball wide but Tamworth's defence was pretty good," he said.

"It looked ominous when we scored. I thought we might run away with it then.

"Tamworth is a good rugby team, their turn will come just as it was just our turn today."

He said lock Tim Mazengarb had played a major role in the win.

"His lineout play was the decisive factor today, his jumping was brilliant.

"It was emphasised here late in the second half when they could have scored and he took our ball at number two," he said.

"He did what had to be done and it just epitomised the total character of this team.

"We've done it hard this year not being able to put our number one team on the paddock through work commitments and injuries have taken their toll.

"But we have come through."

LEAP OF FAITH: Pirate lock Quinn Bruce soars to a lineout win.

YEAR OF THE PIRATE: Pirates celebrate their impressive 14-10 grand final win over arch rivals Tamworth. It was Pirates' first ever junior crown and their first premiership since first grade won in 1985.




Northern Daily Leader Rugby Union Grand Final Souvenir - A3

1996 final at Narrabri

PIRATES' veteran Barry Everyingham turned the clock back 11 years on Saturday when he potted a late fieldgoal to clinch a dramatic 8-7 win over Narrabri in e the CNRU final on a wind-blown Dangar Park mud-heap.

A survivor of Pirates' last premiership in 1985, the 38-year-old replacement five-eighth lifted his side into next week's grand-final against Tamworth with a clinical 15metre snap in the 75th minute.

'1 was in the right s place at the right time," Everyingham said.

"It's the other blokes that deserve all the credit. I couldn't believe their defence in the first s half."

His drop goal sealed a stirring comeback by an injury ravaged Pirates s after Narrabri, with first use of a strong wind, led the rugged, wet-weather clash 7-nil at the break.

But victory exacted a heavy price. Pirates. lost captain and centre Michael Hayes (rib) and flanker David Gourley (dislocated shoulder) in the first half and then five eighth Chris Ajani (shoulder) and No 8. Neil Albert (arm).

But their replacements all had huge games.Loose-forwards Brett Seivers and Peter Brazel and backs Campbell Chambers and Everyingham made telling contributions. It was Brazel who scored Pirates' try in the 65th minute. The human beer keg with legs had been on the field less than a minute when he smashed through a wall of defenders one off the ruck to touch down after lock. Mark Phillips had set the platform with a strong drive from a penalty tap.

It was Brazel's big offensive hit on Narrabri winger Tony Bennett just seconds earlier which led to the try. "I was, there, it was always going to happen," a jubilant Brazel said afterwards. It was the powerfully built centre's first game back in the top grade since he suffered a serious knee injury against Tamworth in June. But the biggest influence on the final was a strong, cold wind blowing almost straight up the ground. It sentenced both sides to 40 minutes of almost constant goal-line defending in quagmire conditions. With battle-lines drawn the Blue Boars had first use of the wind but it took them 38 minutes to score. Narrabri, with a glut of possession, mounted many

attacking raids in the first half but try scoring opportunities were ruined by either poor handling, poor options or by enthusiastic and resilient defenders. Country prop Bob Ford eventually crashed over after sustained forward pressure for a converted try. "We knew at halftime we were a real show," Pirates coach Gary Walsh said. "They had pressure on us for 38 minutes and only came up with one try." "We did too, but we scored our try with 12 minutes to go. "Narrabri 'Won an enormous share of lineout ball and was right on top in the scrums but the entire Pirates team played inspired rugby all over the paddock to continually win back possession with aggression at the break-down. Outstanding were props Tony Cook and Jarrett Wyeth, hooker Paul Taylor and Phillips while halfback Andrew O'Halloran, centre Peter Galvin. and fullback Brendon Blowes played with great urgency. O'Halloran was brilliant, especially in the second half, when he made at least six blind-side dashes, one of which almost led to Blowes breaking through 20m out. For Narrabri, Ford and No 8. Cameron I Williams were terrific while lock Colin Parkes made his presence felt with some damaging runs but at times became isolated. Centre Sam Powell and Bennett had their moments in attack but it t wasn't a good day for running rugby.

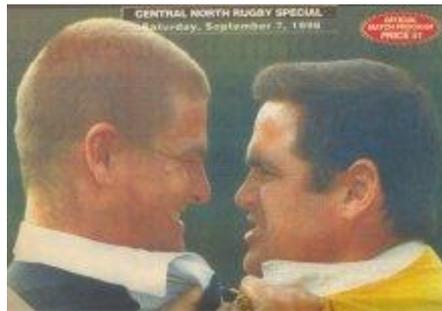


Andrew O'Halloran churns through the Dangar Park mud pursued by Narrabri centre Sam Powell. O'Halloran played superbly in the wet and supplied the passes for Peter Brazel's try and Barry Everingham's field-goal.



Brendon Blowes was one of the teams heroes.

1996 1st Grade Grand Final v Tamworth



Captains Bernie Whale (Tam) and Mick Hayes go head to head.

Northern daily Leader Headline Article

The storm is brewing. It's crunch time.

A grand-final collision course between Tamworth and Pirates has been brewing for 32 years - and finally it's arrived. The two fierce rugby rivals last met in a first grade grand-final in 1963 with the Magpies winning 16-6.

Since then Tamworth has won in 1969, 1991, 1993 and, 1994 while Pirates grabbed its sole first grade title in 1985. Today's long-awaited showdown is much more than a grand-final contest for these clubs, it represents a powder keg of emotion which has been simmering beneath the surface since 1962. That was the year a group of dissatisfied Tamworth players, mostly farmers, decided to split from the Magpies to form the Pirates because they couldn't get to training and were not getting picked. Secondrower Noel "Blue" Skewes is one of those original Pirates and he remembers the first local derby grand-final and other clashes between the two rivals during the mid 60s. "Hostile," is how he describes the on-field atmosphere. "Doug Smith was always a thorn in our side and their little halfback used to come off with claret all over him. I used to like to get hold of him but he never gave up." After the local derbies the losing side would always go up to the other team's pub to buy them a beer. "You felt obligated to go to the 'other person's watering hole,'" Skewes said. More than 30-years later and the rivalry is still as intense now as it was then.

1996 Reports

Presidents Report

Dear Pirates and Friends,

"When young Pirates first did play,
upstart Magpies turned away,
Now ugly upstarts have to look,
For Pirates are here by crook or by hook.

Ode from an Original Buccaneer.

"The worm has turned"

Well! Colleen and I are extremely disappointed that we are unable to be with you all tonight to celebrate one of this club's most successful years. Congratulations to Gordo and the juniors for making history, by winning the club's 1st ever Under 19 Grand Final and the club's 2nd Grand Final win in 35 years.

I don't have to repeat the club's climb back to the top because the media has well documented these facts during the year.

I guess that's an indication of the club's organisation and the level of commitment by the publicity officers & the Pirate committee.

I would like to thank everyone involved in the club this year from ball boys, players, supporters, social committee, coaches, trainers and sponsors.

I reserve a special mention to Gary Walsh for his two years of hard work, loyalty and the professionalism that he has brought to coaching at Pirates.

He has been a great support to me and the committee and he inspired me to work even harder for extended personal goals as the season progressed. To "Treas" and "Gordo" and all the support staff, such as Mazo, Scotty, Louise and Suga - Thank-you.

To the club secretary who wanted to give the job away because of study, I'm glad I refused his resignation. Thanks Paul, for a great job.

To Helen and Graham Yeo~ I cannot express adequately in words~ my feelings of appreciation for all the support and hard work.

To all captains~ thank you for your great leadership. To "Nugget" the long wait and commitment has been worth it. To "Tongie" ~ who couldn't get a regular run with Tamworth~ a few years ago~ congratulations. To Mick Hayes~ thank you for the professionalism towards training and attitude on the field. You led by example and the spirit of Pirates came to the fore.

To our major sponsors~ Kensell's Holden~ Imperial Hotel~ Prime Television, Rutec (Miskle Family)~ Meers and Shelton (Rex Hyson) and Tamair (Paul Bredereck)~ we could not have promoted the club to the level we did without your support. Thank you to all other sponsors and player sponsors for 1996.

To all those who helped in the canteen~ bar and ground preparation, the club thanks you.

The Pirates played in 3 Grand Finals in 1996~ winning the Under 19's. We achieved this result because a large number of people were working in an atmosphere with common ambition to win~ enjoy, be positive on and off the field~ sacrifice & loyalty to the Pirate Rugby Club.

Have a great night and congratulations to all trophy winners.

Pip McCann
President
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First Grade Coach's Report

It was an early start to the "96" season with a gathering of 45 odd players and officials in November "95", where the resolve was evident, that good things were in store for the Pirates of "96".

It is easy to sit back now and say we predicted the outcome of 1996, however there was a group of believers who, after the first round clash with Narrabri at Dangar Park, witnessed a diminutive pack of forwards withstand five scrums in succession within meters of their own line. This was a display by a group who could develop a rare commodity in a rugby team - internal character.

This quality can not be coached or instilled, but it can be developed and it was that process that placed the team, in good stead at the business end of the season.

It is always rewarding to look back at the years results and it is interesting to note, that Tamworth was the only side who defeated us, both in the first and second rounds.

We turned in second place suffering losses to Walcha 9-19 and Tamworth 9-16. We suppose the highlight of that first round was the grafting 13-0 victory over Barraba at Barraba. In that match we lost Jim Withers & Brendon Blowes to the sin bin, whilst Barraba lost a mid fielder. The Wally Allen try was a classic and looking back it was one of Wallys most determined performances (spurred on by some of Barraba's bigot supporters and players).

The second round provided some free flowing attack "individual brilliance and team commitment the like of which we have never seen before.

The free flowing attack was never more evident than in our outstanding first half against Gunnedah at Gunnedah, where Blowsey, Hayes, Allen and Galvin moulded into one, to cut hole after hole in the opposition defence.

Whilst the individual brilliance by Fenny in the Moree game at home, to score a try by stealing the ball, literally off the toe of a Moree defender, was sensational. Blowsey's skills to score off a Spindle switch kick, was bordering on freakish. Not to mention Wallys length of the field run, chip, chase, regather and score against Quirindi. Individual brilliance was certainly overflowing in the team.

The team commitment, although possessed by the entire team, was definitely the corner stone of our forward pack, they continually gave away height and weight but their tenacity to overcome these disadvantages was, from a coaching point of view undoubtedly the highlight of our season.

To mention some and not others would be unfair however it would suffice to say that their hearts were definitely the largest muscle that all these forwards possessed.

After the referee debacle of the Barraba game, second place was gone and the thought of playing Walcha in an elimination semifinal looked to be a daunting task, and with 30 seconds to go all seemed lost. However Mark Phillips had just won his third consecutive line-out and the ball was flowing out wide where McHayesy received an inside ball from Fenn to crash over and level the scores at 17 all, then Wally to cap it off with a sideline conversion which gave us a 19-17 victory.

For me, this was the years pinnacle to come from despair to sheer adulation, all with my seven year old son at my side is a memory I shall treasure forever. Thank you. The Narrabri game was guts, plus, again to give weight away in such muddy conditions, speaks volume for the internal character of this football team. Andrew O'Halloran's performance was superb.

The Grand Final, well what can we say, Spindle and Haysey carrying severe injury. Gourley and Galvin also requiring needles. Brods at 80% and Tufrey less than fit. It was evident, just maybe our grand final was played against Narrabri a week earlier. We are not looking for excuses, on the day Tamworth had the luck, we were void of it, Tamworth were fully fit we were not and Grand Final victories don't come cheaply.

It's in this statement that the First Fifteen Pirates can hold their heads high as they have done their club, their coaches and more importantly themselves proud. We stand in awe of you.

In closing I have used the word we throughout this summary and this is so because a bloke, no, a mate has supported me, coached, selected, managed and inputted all year, not openly acknowledged. However I know all the players appreciated his involvement as much as I did. Thank you David Russell. It was a pleasure and a thrill to work so closely with you, lets do it again.

Also Peter Treasure, your openness was always welcomed and valued, congrats on a great season in your debut year. To Gordon, I hope this year proves to you that persistence is a valuable quality. You, more than most thoroughly deserve your success, and thanks for your invaluable hours at the start of the season.

Finally the true legends of "96". Pip and Yeoie you guys made our coaching job easy, your support has been greatly appreciated and we look forward to it continuing in "97"

Gary Walsh

P.S. Last but certainly not least, a very special thanks to Scotty, Louise and Dr Tim Stanley.

Reserve Grade Report

FELLOW BUCCANEERS,

1996 Has been a huge year for Pirates, not only in footballing achievement but in also in club strength, through supporters involvement and club moral.

For me personally it has been a constant challenge, not only to coach and mould a competitive football team but also dealing with the selections of players and constant change of playing personnel that occurs during the Reserve Grade.

My job this year was made much easier because of the involvement of Gary Walsh, Dave Russell, Gordon Barbara and Steve Mazengarb. In all my years of playing I have never been involved with a coaching personnel as professional and dedicated to the task, as Gary, Dave, Gordon and Steve.

I would like to thank them sincerely for all their help during 1996 and state that it is more because of these men, than the acquisition of new players that has insured Pirates Rugby to be successful, now and in the future.

I was lucky enough to have approximately 50 players at some stage play Reserve Grade during the year and out of these players we were able to have a side good enough to play in the Grand Final.

A win was not to be, but along the way during 1996 we discovered some great new talent, which is already being talked about as likely First Grader in 1997.

The difference I found in Reserve Grade this year, as opposed to previous years I've been involved with Pirates, is that from the beginning of training in January to the end of the season, every player was aware if you didn't

train you wouldn't be selected. I'm sure our fitness and generally better attitude shone through and helped towards our strong achievements in 1996,

Finally, I would like to thank all the players for training, playing and genuine dedication towards achieving our best in 1996. A hearty thanks to Pip McCann, Helen and Graham Yeo and their helpers for a job well done.

I congratulate 1st grade on reaching the Grand Final and Juniors on doing a fine job in winning the Premiership,

Yours in Rugby, Peter Treasure

Junior Coach's Report

Well, well, what a season, GRAND FINAL WINNERS! Where does one start? Perhaps it's pertinent to recap the whole season.

Preparations for the 1996 season began October 1995 with gym work under the tutelage of Michael Hayes. The overall desire as a club to become assertive in the Central North competition in all grades was now in motion. This carried into the pre-season training at Viaduct Park and the Longyard, under the new direction of Gary Walsh and Michael Hayes.

The 1996 season saw the return of fifteen members of last years highly successful team. These being Andrew Yeo, Ben Austin, Gary Fitzgibbon, Craig Simpson, Jamie Burkett, Allan Partlin, Timmy Baker, Gary Miller, Tim Mazengarb, Paul Tongue, Patrick McCann, Quinn Bruce, Steve Burke Simon McCann, and Brett Ring.

The influx of new players has herald a new era in Pirates Juniors. Talented newcomers were Howard Webster, Jeremy Richards, Will Howarth, Ben Watts, Gerard Callinan, Vincent McCellan. Peter Swane, Cameron York, Luke O'Dell, David Lewis, Matthew Nowland, Alister Pitt, James Newlan, Ross Knight and Matthew Stuart, making a squad of 31.

Others making appearances during the season were Derek Duns, CES black Warwick Crosby and Kyle Leonard.

Pre-season games and trip a to Sawtell, Port Macquarie, Gunnedah and Armidale saw the new talent produce some efforts worthy of note; Luke O'Dell v Port Juniors, Tim Mazengarb and Will Howarth v Old boys, Jeremy Richards v Gunnedah, Matt Stewart v Sawtell.

Andrew Yeo - disco Port, Craig Simpson - fan club disco Port, round about Howie, hanging out Patrick and Ginger the frog.

Another junior away trip of note was Moree. Fantastic bus, great bus driver - Graham Yeo, singing manager - Pip McCann, fantastic result 20-0 (revenge for 95) best pub - Gurley, revisited (last time when Pip was a player). Best Port - McWilliams Invalid!! These were definite highlights for 1996.

The loss of key players - Allan Partlin (knee reconstruction), Matt Stewart (appendix), and Brett Ring (collar bone) certainly did not contribute to the coaches highlight list.

The actual season progressed along smoothly and predictably with odd shock results. These being Barraba 23-5, Moree 21-0 and Tamworth 18-9.

This was balanced by some memorable wins and performances during the season: Narrabri (home) 27-0, Gunnedah 48-11. Moree (away) 20-0, Quirindi (away) 14-11, Barraba (home) 12-3, Moree (major semi) 11-3 and Tamworth (GRAND FINAL!!) 14-10.

Although the 96 team matured into a fine unit, who at times seemed to coast through games, this was fairly evident in the shock results mentioned above.

Representative C.H.S honours was achieved by Alistair Pitt congratulations to Alistair - well done!.

It was strange for a Pirates Juniors team to top the competition for the entire season to be pipped for minor premiers by Moree in the last round. In hindsight these games were character builders for what was to come in the final month.

The very torrid and fiery match verses Moree at the Longyard brought about a resolve and spirit that carried the team through the Major Semi (Moree) and the GRAND FINAL (Tamworth).

This feeling and determination was special, and was in effect comradeship of the highest calibre. The manner in which this fine young team played the grand final will live long in our memories.

To all parents of these young Pirate men, you should feel justifiably proud of their achievements and the manner in which they have conducted themselves throughout the year.

I would like to acknowledge the valuable assistance given to me throughout the season by Neil Albert, Steve Mazengarb, Pip McCann, Chris Ajani, Michael Hayes, Gary Walsh and Graham Yeo.

To the entire squad I thank you sincerely for your cooperation and dedication throughout the season, I'm happy to be a part of your history making Grand Final performance. You are all worthy ambassadors to your families, to the game of rugby, and lastly to the proud Pirates Rugby Club.

Number playing rugby for the first time

13

Number of players returning from 1995

15

Games played

16

Won

12

Drew

1

Lost

3

Gordon Barbara

1996 END OF SEASON ROAD TRIP PIRATES DO COFFS

For all your Pirates who failed to jump on the UNCLE GUS and tour to Coffs, here is a little JOHN DORY about our travels and experiences.

The journey started early for two intrepid travellers who left Tamworth for the Hoey Moey and upon disembarking from their JAM JAR found themselves surrounded by a mad mob of OLD HACKERS who sang and entertained them all night.

It's now Friday afternoon and the full tour hits THE FROG AND TOAD with five BULL AND WHEELERS, ONE CLAM and TWELVE DOROTHY STOKES. The Minister for Silence started as per game plan, however, after a few RAY STEERS in the back seat of the SUGAR EMBARGO, his 30ml bladder kicked in as did his NORTH AND SOUTH. This put the strangest looks on the face of Treasures TROUBLE AND STRIFE.

Speaking of Treasure, now that we were mobile, he informed us of his true motive for touring, he was debt collecting and we were his hench men. The victim, a Mr xxxx xxxxxx. We were all curious as to how many thousands of OXFORD SCHOLARS or how many videos this TEA LEAF had flitted with. Upon investigation it turns out this DOROTHY STOKES KING CREOLE one lousy Super Mario Brothers card.

Friday Flying Kite and Coffs was hit by two natural disasters, the first, more NECK PAIN than the ANKLE SPRAINS could handle and of course the second "PIRATES RUGBY CLUB". Activities on Friday Flying Kite, were fairly sedate for most of us, with a quite, DON'T SNEEZE feed and a relaxing BIRDIE AND PAR to finish the evening. However, a small but select group, hand picked by the Piano Man, attack Coffs night life with the next result being the Mad Junior using five words all night, "Yeah, I'll have another Bourbon". The Minister for Silence PROWLED AND PRANCED for the first time in COWS EARS, Doctor, who dressed twice for the one FLYING KITE, the Freak who thinks a RONNIE COOTE is a RUBBER CHEQUE on the ARABIAN SHEIKH and the Piano Man wandered around all night with two OXFORD SCHOLARS in his ONGAPARINGARS and no JUMPING FOX to put it into.

Saturday hit us very BLUEY AND CURLY with the NECK PAIN teaming down and a committed group of LESLEY HICKS, DOROTHY STOKES who jumped into the SUGAR EMBARGO for the sodden Bonville Golf Club to compete in the Long John Daley Ambrose Hit out with over 700 golfers teeing off 'ver the three SUN RAYS. Needless to say the golf was very TENNIS NET with the highlight being the "I DON'T KNOW WHY" on the 12th hole performed by..... and.....

Saturday FLYING KITE was devastating for many reasons, first the BULL AND WHEELERS were filthy that we couldn't get to the Hungie that the Hallquens Rugby Club was to put on. However, a poor unsuspecting restaurateur accepted a late booking and it was off to Portholes to put the nosebag on.

It was at this establishment that the realisation we had more than one impressionist (Mick Jagger) in our midst. First it was the CLAM and the short MAGIC WAND who performed their very white version of the Diana Ross Dancers, followed by a Didgeridoo solo that left no doubt as to where this DOROTHY STOKES got his SCOTCH

AND GIN colour from, then an accompaniment on the salt and pepper shakers that left the Minister for Concrete with a lap full of NUTS & BOLTS and SIDESTEPPER. All quietened down till Steddy Eddy strutted his stuff to the call of "Sing the one about the horse". However, we were spared, as the DOROTHY STROKE tickling the ivories didn't have a clue what Steddy was saying, neither did we.