



Country Rugby League
Level 5, 165 Phillip St
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COUNTRY ORIGIN THUMPS CITY 36-18

Two Country Origin debutants - one a teenager, the other 28 - gave NSW selectors something to think about Friday night as they led the men from the bush to a 36-18 come-from-behind victory over City at Port Macquarie.

Nineteen-year-old Canberra fullback Josh Dugan was a standout, scoring one try and laying on another, while Parramatta veteran Luke Burt notched a personal tally of 16 points as well as sublimely setting up a four-pointer for Michael Robertson.

Country came from 12-0 down in the first half to lock the scores up at 12-12 by the break and score another four tries, including a double to Dean Young, in the second in front of a record 7,688 at the Regional Sports Ground.

Next Big Thing Dugan was everywhere, his 70m burst in the first half giving Country the field position for him to be able to pluck a Brett Kimmorley kick from the air to score his side's first try in the 28th minute.

The lanky No.1 then threw a classy long ball to Timana Tahu to help set up Burt's 49th minute try.

Burt added six conversions to that effort but perhaps his biggest contribution was a deft set-play grubber from a scrum in the 62nd minute for Manly's Robertson to score and make it 22-12.

City hit back late through Anthony Minichiello but were outscored in the second half 24-6.

Earlier, the game's whiz-kids had ruled with Dugan joined by opposite number Lachlan Coote, City five-eighth Kris Keating and Country centre Jamal Idris in posting first-half tries.

In a blow for NSW and North Queensland, City lock Luke O'Donnell was helped from the field in the 67th minute with what looked like a serious knee injury, while Keating also suffered a knee problem.

Robbie Farah continued his unhappy time against rival Michael Ennis, while Country halves Kimmorley and Todd Carney, and returning forward Willie Mason, did their State of Origin chances no harm.

Country coach Laurie Daley praised Dugan's toughness as well as his talent, after he copped a head knock early and then a knee injury just before halftime.

"We talk about his talent but I think we focus on his toughness there as well," Daley said.

"He was knocked out early, we thought we'd lose him and then he got a nasty cork on his knee which needed a lot of work on it at halftime." Dugan put his stunning debut down to playing his natural game.

"I think I was a little bit immature there at the start, I had a few nervous touches but I got rid of them and just went back to my normal game and tried to do what I do best and that's going forward," he said.

But Blues selector Daley warned it would be tough for the rising star to crack the NSW team.

"It's going to be difficult for him, you've got the likes of Jarryd Hayne and you've got (Brett) Morris on the wing, they're playing for Australia," Daley said.

[Courtesy- www.nrl.com](http://www.nrl.com)

REBELS STOP POWER IN FINAL VICTORY

The Newcastle Rebels defeated the Central Hunter Power 36 - 6 in the final of the AAMI Under 18's Regional Championships at Port Macquarie's Regional Stadium on Friday night.

Playing in front of a capacity crowd of 7500 people in the lead up to the Country v City match, the Newcastle Rebels overcome a 22 year drought to take the title in convincing fashion.

It didn't take long for the Rebels to open their account as they crossed in the 4th minute through a clever dummy half run from Mitch Cullen who failed to convert his own try from just left of the uprights. Newcastle were at it again after the restart when an intercept chance went begging for the Central Hunter Power gifting Newcastle another set of six in the Power's half which they took full advantage of. Matt Ireland found some space on the right hand side after some nice lead up work to slice through and beat the fullback to score his 3rd try of the AAMI Regional Championships. Mitch Cullen made no mistake with the conversion and Newcastle lead 10 - 0 after as many minutes.

The Power gave themselves every chance to reduce the lead after forcing a turnover from the restart. The Power's Kerrod Holland rallied his troops as they went close to putting some points on the board on numerous occasions but it was the Rebels defence that came out top.

They repelled the Power, marched up the other end of the park and with possession in good field position were able to mount significant pressure of their own. A neat little set play between Tom Rouse and Matt Ireland sent Raymond Buchanan through a hole in the middle of the ruck. Buchanan with plenty of work to do beat the fullback to score with the successful conversion extending Newcastle's lead to 16 points to nil. That lead was further extended 2 minutes before half time when Jayden Rosberg offloaded to Matt Ireland who crossed for his try of the match giving Newcastle a 22 - 0 lead at the break.

The scoring dried up in the early parts of the second half as the match turned into an arm wrestle and after 10 minutes Newcastle all but sealed their win when Jason Savin barged over under the sticks to lead 28 - 0 with 25 minutes left in the match.

With time running out Central Hunter revived their slim hopes of a comeback when work horse Daley Boney crossed for a much deserved four pointer which was converted to reduce the margin back to 22 points. Any hope of a miracle comeback was dashed when Felsie Taufaa offloaded for Ryan Wood who raced 50 metres to score under the posts. A last minute penalty goal to Mitch Cullen round out the scoring and handed Newcastle their first AAMI Country Championship victory since the late 1980's.



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COUNTRY UNDER 18S ANNOUNCED

Congratulations to the following players named to take part in the Country Under 18s squad for 2010. These 18 players were chosen on the basis of their performances during the AAMI Country Rugby League Under 18s Regional Championships, and will go on to play the Queensland Maroons squad in Bundaberg in July. We hope that they are proud of their selection and look forward to welcoming them into camp in July.

Squad (in alphabetical order):

Matthew Allwood (Oxley Pioneers)
Daley Boney (Central Hunter Power)
Ben Bradley (Newcastle)
Mitchell Cullen (Newcastle)
James Elias (Newcastle)
Jordan Hay (Western Rams)
Brendan Hickey (Central Hunter Power)
Matt Ireland (Newcastle)
Matt Langby (Western)
Andrew Mendes (Western Rams)
Thomas Morton (Newcastle)
Ryan Pooley (Oxley Pioneers)
Sam Power (Oxley Pioneers)
Kirk Roberts (Western Rams)
Thomas Rouse (Newcastle)
Jason Savin (Newcastle)
Felise Taavfaao (Newcastle)
Joshua Thew (Central Hunter Power)



2009 Country Under 18's Team

RUSTY STEELERS

"The Last Stand"

This year's Rusty Steelers reunion will be held at the Dragons vs Raiders match at WIN Stadium- Sunday, 23 May. This will be the last game at WIN Stadium before the Western Grandstand is demolished.

A feature of the day will be drinks in the "Tile Bar" under the Western Grandstand immediately after the game, which was the original watering hole where the post game presentations were held before the Steelers Club was built. The format of the day includes:

#	1.00pm	Drinks & Food at the Steelers Club
#	3.00pm	At the game in "Critics Corner" (Nth Western Terrace)
#	4.30pm	In the "Tile Bar" under Western Grandstand
#	6.30pm	Back to the Steelers Club

The cost is \$20 per person (includes drinks and food at Steelers Club) and all former players, staff and sponsors are encouraged to attend.

Please RSVP to rustysteelers@hotmail.com or phone Nikki at the Steelers Club on 02 4227 2255.

Rusty Steelers is also available on Facebook - so log-in and join now.



MEN OF LEAGUE RIVERINA CHAPTER

The Men of League Riverina Chapter will be conducting its first official function at the Tumut Bowling Club on Saturday 15th May, which will be combined with a Maher Cup Reunion from all clubs. There are large contingents of high profile ex internationals from around the area who will be there on the day, to enjoy a bowl and beer or two and share some past stories. The day will kick off from 11am, with a luncheon to be served from 1pm. Memberships to Men Of League will be available on the day at a cost of \$20 for life which serves the great work that the charity does for people fallen on hard times. All are most welcome on the day, any further enquiries to Ray Carr on mobile 0417471947 or email doscar1@bigpond.com.au.

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www.sportingpulse.com/club_info.cgi?c=0-2184-22436-0-0



In 2010 the AAMI CRL Player of the Week and Club of the Week Competition will once again deliver important support for the game of rugby league throughout country NSW.

To nominate a young star taking part in the Country Rugby League - Simply log onto www.CRLNSW.com.au and tell us about a special player that deserves recognition for their contribution to their Club.

At the end of each week of the CRL season, a player deemed most deserving will receive a \$250 Harvey Norman gift voucher and furthermore, a \$1,000 grant for their Club - courtesy of those big supporters of the CRL.

Imagine what your local club could do with \$1000!

The weekly winner of the AAMI CRL Player and Club of the Week competition is announced on the Continuous Call Team on 2GB each week, so make sure you log on to www.CRLNSW.com.au and get your entries in!

Congratulations to the winners so far: -
Week 1- Ian Reichel Aberdeen RLFC
Week 2- Chris Bagley Leeton RLFC
Week 3- Treigh Coe Condobolin RLFC
Winner 4- Trent Smith Tathra RLFC