

Western Pioneers Newsletter, 12 June



As mentioned in the match report below, the Western Pioneers are still second despite losing to East Coast Bays. North Shore lead with 39 points, followed by Western 35, Massey 31, Takapuna and Silverdale 30 and Northcote 26.

There was a bumper crowd in the ECB clubrooms after the game, befitting the success their teams had on the day. Their **beer price** was a reasonable \$5.50; so all the thirsty patrons got good value for money.

Sponsor Profile

This week's sponsor is **Young's Dental Centre**.

Ed Young and his wife Caroline have had their dental business for a number of years, originally starting out in Titirangi and Lincoln Rd. They have since moved and in 2002 relocated to 21 St John's Rd in Meadowbank.

Their connection to the Pioneers is with manager Shane Scott's wife Lianne being an employee of the Young's, and Ed being a keen rugby supporter from the All Blacks to grass roots level.

Many of **Young's Dental Centre** clients are from the West. They practice general dentistry, doing all the basics from fillings to cosmetic and orthodontic work for children.

If you find you are seriously grinding your teeth as you nervously watch the Pioneers, then Ed and his team are the ones to visit. For a small increase in cost, he will add a bit of gold to give a spectacular finish!!

Young's Dental Centre can be contacted on 09 521 2115.

The Western Pioneers would like to thank them for their sponsorship this season.

The **Grand Hotel** has reopened in Helensville, with their impressive dining room open for breakfast, lunches and dinners. There are also ten bedrooms refurnished and ready for action and before too long the bar will be restored to its former glory and open for the public. Host is Didier Debae, who hails from Belgium, and his partner Terry van der Merwe. She comes from South Africa.

It is great to see this iconic Helensville building open again, and the restaurant, called Rosso, has a warm open fire and interesting menu.

Didier is only getting this publicity because he will be a sponsor next year, and we are giving him time to find his feet in Helensville.



Before he came to NZ he was heavily involved with the Formula One motor racing circuit, so all of you with an interest in that sport will enjoy talking to Didier.

After the Pioneers have dispatched North Shore on June 25, it could be a good place to go and have a meal and enjoy the "new" Grand Hotel's facilities.

Western Pioneers Match Report 12 June

On Saturday at the home ground of East Coast Bays, the Century 21 Burmester Realty Western Pioneers suffered a shock loss 17-11 to a team they had beaten comfortably at the start of the season. It was a flat, uninspiring performance from the Western boys, and the old demons of poor goal kicking and a lack of adherence to the game plan returned to haunt them.

Looking on the bright side, other results between the North Harbour club sides went the way of the Pioneers, and they still remain in second position on the point's table behind North Shore.

The Pioneers had all the early possession, but could not convert it into points despite going close. After an early penalty attempt missed, both sides were called back for forward passes when certain tries beckoned.

In their first brief foray into Pioneers territory, Bays got a free kick penalty close to the line. Back chat cost the Pioneers more metres, and Bays hooker Roger Dustow burroughed over as the defenders were slow to react to the penalty.

The Pioneers came back, and shortly after, from a lineout close to Bays line, a set move was worked and Tani Fuga, who had a good game, muscled his way over. Geraint Walsh, deputising as kicker again this week, missed a sitter and it was 5-5.

More good possession went the way of the Pioneers, but a combination of good defence and handling errors cost the visitors the chance to score more points. They also turned down the opportunity to kick for goal on several occasions, which appeared to deviate from their game plan that has worked so well for them throughout the season.

The Pioneers did eventually kick a penalty to lead 8-5, only for ECB to come back and take their penalty chances three times to lead 14-8 at halftime. Just prior to the break, lock Tom Page suffered a nasty knee injury that will rule him out for the rest of the season.

In the second half both teams tried to play the game in the opposition's territory, with Bays kicking downfield at every opportunity.

Walsh kicked a penalty to narrow the gap only for ECB to do the same and their 6-point advantage was restored. 17-11.



There was a lack of composure shown by the Pioneers, and as time ticked by, their handling errors increased. They did mount one strong challenge with several forward drives beneath the Bays posts, only for the ball to be lost and the golden opportunity squandered.

Fortunately Bays missed a penalty chance on fulltime, and despite the loss, the Pioneers picked up a bonus point. Their player of the day was Malukai Ravulo. Congratulations to East Coast Bays. They played to a simple but effective game plan and tackled resolutely all day. They will trouble some of the other top teams on their home track.

The Western Pioneers team and management must now regroup, and learn from this game. They are still in a good position to press on to the finals, and there will be no complacency as each of their next four games will be extremely tough encounters.

Next week's game is against last years champs Northcote at Stafford Park, who will be out to reverse their narrow first round loss to the Pioneers.

The following week, 25 June, will be a huge home game at Helensville against the competition favourites, North Shore. Pencil that date in your diaries now.

To make it a day of complete misery for the hardy Western supporters, the Senior Firsts were also well beaten 25-0 by a well-drilled ECB team. They will now be positioned around mid table.