

Western Pioneers Newsletter

29 May 2011



Saturday's loss means the **Western Pioneers are now 2 points behind North Shore** and in equal second place with Silverdale. Shore play Northcote next week and must be favoured to beat last years champions and take first round honours. However a draw or loss by Shore could give the Pioneers the title as they will beat Mahurangi at Kumeu in a Country Cup defence.

A minutes silence prior to kick off was observed by both teams as a mark of respect to **Jim Cribb** who died during the week. Jim was the father to ex All Black and Massey player Ron, and Gary, who played for both Massey and Helensville.

What was up with the **nonsense in the match day programme** of bracketing players in seven positions? If it was to confuse Massey, it failed miserably. It probably confused our own Western players, and certainly would have made it impossible for new Western supporters to try and understand who was who.

Forget the childish antics and focus on preparing our team to win on the park.

The **beer price survey** took an interesting twist this week when it saw Massey jump into second place with their lager price of \$6 a 330ml bottle. A bit rich one would think for the Westies, but then they are building new bar and clubroom facilities and perhaps this will help fund it. Takapuna remain unchallenged at \$7.00.

After the Massey game we farewelled **Malukai Ravulo** who is off on Fiji RWC training, prior to linking up with North Harbour. We wish him a successful tournament, and he may well front up for Fiji against the ABs in their warm up game before the Tri Nations kicks off.

The **Senior Firsts enjoyed another win**, beating Massey 18-17. They are now attracting a solid core of players each week, and with Sa and Toops MacCarthy coaching them, there is no reason why they can't mount a serious challenge for the title.

Their captain is Ray Tuivaiti who fronts up each week. Mark Haldane is their light weight loose forward who is playing good rugby and full back Junior Waqavita is a dangerous runner on attack.

Junior scored a try in this latest win and Lofi Lofi scored twice.

It will be worth getting to Kumeu from 1pm next week to watch them play their Mahurangi opponents.

Sponsor of the Week

This week's sponsor is the local Helensville law firm **Sellars and Co.** Bruce Wyber, the principal, has run his office in Helensville since 2000 and he employs a staff of eight local people. This includes three solicitors and a consultant based in Wellsford. Originally situated in Rata Street, they now operate out of their very modern offices on Mill Rd.



Bruce also has **Sellars and Co** offices in Wellsford, where he initially set up his first practice before he filled the void that was left in Helensville when the previous law firm closed up and moved out of the town.

After graduating from Auckland University, Bruce first worked in the offices of Dail Jones (now that is a name from the past) in Huapai/Kumeu. He then moved into Auckland before branching out on his own in his home territory of Wellsford in the 1990s.

Sellars and Co are a general legal practice, dealing mainly in conveyancing, doing a lot of property work. They also deal in matrimonial issues, so if you think it is time to move your partner out and divvy up the assets, Bruce and his team are the ones to visit.

Unfortunately **Sellars and Co** do no criminal work, so don't expect Bruce to get you off any drink/driving or robbery charges!

Sellars and Co have supported the Helensville Rugby Club for the last 4 years as well as several other community groups and are delighted to now be involved with the Western Pioneers.

Many of us use **Sellars and Co** and can recommend them for your use. They can be contacted on (09) 420 9324.

We are now about **half way through the competition** and it has been an exciting ride following the Pioneers to date. With more hard work, good luck on the injury front and everyone involved pulling in the one direction, they are definite title contenders. See you at Kumeu next Saturday 4 June.

Western Pioneers Match Report 29 May

The **Century 21 Burmester Realty Western Pioneers** were brought down to earth with a thud on Saturday when they lost their local derby, and bragging rights, to Massey 21-16 at Moire Park. It was a hard fought, stirring contest, and with both teams desperate to win, no quarter was asked, and none given.

Played in perfect conditions in front of an exceptionally large crowd, many seasoned club rugby diehards described its quality and intensity as befitting a grand final, as both teams left the anticipated niggles at home and indulged in a fast paced, physical game.

Early indiscipline cost the Pioneers six points as Massey sharp shooter Richard Lobb was on target with two penalties.

Regan Oxenham, goal kicking like a champion last week, was to have a wretched day when it most counted. After missing an early opportunity, he redeemed himself with a fine half break that led to Phillip Tuigamala scoring in the corner. The conversion hit the upright, but not long after he was on song with a penalty from a ruck infringement and Western were in front 8-6.



Massey's reply was instant, if not a little fortuitous, when their loose forward Anthony Matato charged down Geraint Walsh's regulation clearing kick and strolled over under the posts to go ahead 13-8.

In between Oxenham missing two more penalty attempts, Lobb kicked one and Massey took a 16-8 half time lead despite the Pioneers probably having more possession and territorial advantage.

The second half began with Western going on the offensive, and after a short period they scored a try beside the posts to Ray Alo. Oxenham had made a fine break from a scrum around the 22 metre mark and he passed the ball to Alo who muscled over. Unbelievably for all Western supporters, he missed the "sitter", but the scores were now much closer at 16-13 to Massey.

Massey had better field position in this half, due in part to too many Western errors and poor kicking options. The mid field defence by both teams was virtually impenetrable, with the dangerous Massey backs kept under control throughout.

Western was caught napping when the Massey and Blue's halfback Chris Smylie took a quick tap penalty from some 40 metres out. They raced towards the goal line where Western were unable to control turnover ball and Larry Manu scored an unconverted try in the corner.

Oxenham did manage a penalty with 15 minutes to go, but sadly for their supporters there was to be no further scoring, and Massey won 21-16.

In the end, the Pioneers can blame no one but themselves for this loss. They had come off a huge win the week before, whilst Massey had gone down to North Shore. Perhaps they were over confident. Their lineout work was good but they never got on top of the Massey forward pack as they had expected to, and they dropped a lot of ball and didn't kick well. They can claim that their two tries were well constructed whilst Massey's were opportunistic. At the end of the day the score board told the story.

However they never let up, and will learn a lot from this gut wrenching defeat to their nearest neighbours.

Pioneer's player of the day was hard working prop Taione Ve'a. Mid field backs Ray Alo and Phillip Tuigamala both defended strongly and gave the Massey defence some headaches. Half back and captain Nalu Tuigamala was into everything as he tried to inspire his troops. Jim Tuivaiti ran hard all day and English lock Tom Paige added much needed impetus when he came on in the second half.

The loss means the Pioneers have now been overtaken by North Shore in the race for first round honours. All supporters are urged to pray this week for a Northcote win against Shore in the final round. The Pioneers play winless Mahurangi at Kumeu next Saturday in their first Country Cup defence.

North Harbours most experienced ref, Glenn Newman, was handed the job of controlling this game, which he did admirably. The speed of the game took its toll on Glenn. He was seen to be still sweating profusely long after he called full time, as he indulged in the obligatory lemonade at the bar during the after match festivities.

In the early game, the Western Senior First team won their derby match 18-17. By the jubilation shown afterwards, you would have thought they won the final! It was always a close contest with both teams scoring intercept tries in the final stages.

