

2014

Successive Unbeaten Premierships for Tullibigeal in League's 90th Year

The Northern Riverina League celebrated ninety years since the competition began in 1924. In that time the League has seen many highs and lows but continued to produce a great avenue for our younger generation to advance their football skills.

The League's executive remained the same with all three continuing in their positions with Peter McFadyen as President, Ian Aubrey as Secretary and Keith Rees as Treasurer.

2014 recognized for the first time in League history the remarkable feat of a father and daughter elected as Presidents of the Northern Riverina Football League and Northern Riverina Netball League in Peter McFadyen and his daughter Fiona Bryant.

The competition consisted of the same seven teams - Tullibigeal, Borellan, Lake Cargelligo, West Wyalong Girral, Ungarie, Cobar and Hillston.

New leaders for the season included Simon Clarke at West Wyalong Girral, Shane Russell who moved from West Wyalong to take on the leadership at Lake Cargelligo, Jayden Boehm, who had previously played at Mildura in the Sunraysia League, took on the coaching role at Borellan as did Jono Williams at Cobar. Jack Bell was appointed Ungarie's new coach but unfortunately a broken leg had ruled him out for most of the season. James Nancarrow, who played in Hillston's 2007 premiership team, returned to Hillston after spending the last five seasons at Griffith, Queanbeyan and Surfers Paradise Football clubs with Nathan Sanson remaining at Tullibigeal for his second year.

Evans Memorial Trophy

The Evans Memorial Trophy for the best and fairest player voted by the umpires was won by Tullibigeal's Sonney Bartholomew for his outstanding season, polling twenty seven votes. Twenty one year old Bartholomew started his career at Lake Cargelligo, which included premiership victories as a young teenager in 2008 and 2010, before transferring to Tullibigeal in 2011. Lake Cargelligo's Aaron Hart was runner-up with twenty one votes with West Wyalong Girral coach Simon Clarke and Hillston's Josh Smith third with sixteen votes.

Sanson Trophy

With sixty seven goals in the home and away season, Tullibigeal's Brenton Browne won the League's leading goal kicker to claim the Sanson Trophy. Predominantly a backman throughout his career, Brenton led Tullibigeal's forward line from full-forward in his club's unbeaten season. On three occasions he booted ten or more goals in a game - Round 2 - thirteen goals against Borellan, Round 6 - ten goals against Ungarie and Round 12 - ten goals against West Wyalong Girral. Two five goal hauls in the second semi final and grand final respectively brought his season's tally to seventy seven goals. Lake Cargelligo's Rhys Ward was runner up with thirty six goals.

Presentation Night

The Presentation night was held at Ungarie with awards for football and netball competitions. Guest speaker at the presentation was ex Ungarie junior Anthony Daniher who played 233 VFL/AFL games (115 with Sydney Swans and 118 with Essendon) and is one of the four Daniher brothers from Ungarie who all played VFL/AFL football at the highest level. Award winners for football included the League Best and Fairest won by Sonney Bartholomew, Coach of the Year went to James Nancarrow from Hillston, Goalkicker of the Year was Brenton Browne and Rising

Star awarded to Mitchell Conlan from Barellan. The AFL NSW/ACT Volunteer of the year was awarded to Simon Irons from Barellan with an AFL Merit Award for his long involvement and services in the League. West Wyalong Girral's Keith and Paula Rees were both awarded life membership of the Northern Riverina Football League.

Season Summary

Tullibigeal won successive undefeated premierships with their victory over Lake Cargelligo in the 2014 grand final. It was only the fourth time a team had won successive undefeated premierships in the League's history after Tullibigeal (1946-47), Ungarie (1978-79) and Ungarie (1985-86) had accomplished the feat.

The Grasshoppers established themselves as flag favourites early in the season but only after just scrapping home by one point over Lake Cargelligo in Round 1.

The Lake Tigers, who had strengthened considerably with an aggressive recruitment drive, were considered Tullibigeal's main challengers and lost only two games for the season which were both to Tullibigeal. With the Tigers loss to Tullibigeal in Round 8 by sixty one points, it certainly appeared Tullibigeal were unbackable for the flag.

West Wyalong Girral started the season strongly and vied with Lake Cargelligo for second spot on the ladder but suffered four straight losses from Round 9 to Round 13. The Bulldogs' loss to Lake Cargelligo and Hillston's victory over Barellan in Round 13 saw the Swans jump into third spot and the Bulldogs drop back into fourth spot in the ladder;.

Hillston's appointment of a new coach renewed interest in the club and they improved considerably as the season progressed. Ungarie and Cobar battled out for fifth position all season and both finished equal on points from three wins each but Ungarie finished in fifth spot on percentages.

The previous season's grand finalists Barellan experienced a mass exodus of players and were severely weakened and with a young side could only manage a single victory for the season. The finals produced several close and exciting matches with the Hillston Swans pushing Lake Cargelligo in both their semifinal encounters and the 1st Semi final producing a cliff hanger with Hillston coming from behind to defeat West Wyalong Girral by a single point on the siren.

After a slow start in the grand final, Tullibigeal asserted their supremacy after quarter time to claim successive unbeaten premierships.

2014 Ladder – 14 rounds

		P	W	L	B	Pts	Perc
1.	Tullibigeal	12	12	0	2	48	
2.	Lake Cargelligo	12	10	2	2	40	
3.	Hillston	12	7	5	2	28	
4.	West Wyalong Girral	12	6	6	2	24	
5.	Ungarie	12	3	9	2	12	59%
6.	Cobar	12	3	9	2	12	55%
7.	Barellan	12	1	11	2	4	

Semi Finals

Elimination Final at Tullibigeal

West Wyalong Girral	4-1,	9-8,	9-9,	12-14-86	defeated
Ungarie	1-1,	1-1,	5-4,	8-5-53	by 33 points

Goals West Wyalong Girral – Brendon Kirkup 3, Simon Clarke 2, James Turner 2, Bailey Anderson-Lynch 2, Jesse Dixon 1, Peter Turner 1, Jeremy Venosta 1.

Goals Ungarie – Jarrod Brown 3, Jayden Erwin 2, Cameron Brown 1, Murphy Payne 1,

Ryan McClintock 1.

Best West Wyalong Girral – Carl Zacher, Peter Turner, Jeremy Venosta, Beau Widdison, Matt Carroll, Simon Clarke.

Best Ungarie – Josh Ward, Jed Keatley, Jarrod Brown, Chris Bussenschutt, Lance Haworth, Cameron Brown.

West Wyalong Girral secured a comfortable win over Ungarie in the Elimination final by thirty three points. The Bulldogs dominated the first half of the game with a nine goal to one goal first half to take a hefty fifty five points half time lead. The Magpies fought back in the third quarter and with the aid of a breeze landed four goals and kept the Bulldogs goalless to cut their deficit to twenty nine points. The Bulldogs lead was cut to eighteen points during the last quarter when Ungarie's Jarrod Brown booted two successive goals, however Bulldog coach Simon Clarke and James Turner, with late goals, sealed victory for West Wyalong Girral.

Qualifying Final at Tullibigeal

Lake Cargelligo	3-2,	8-6,	9-10,	14-14-98	defeated
Hillston	4-4,	6-4,	7-10,	7-11-53	by 45 points

Goals Lake Cargelligo – Andrew Hill 3, Lachlan Robertson 2, Col Fisher 2, Luke Robertson 2, Phil Aubrey 1, Rhys Ward 1, Wade Riley 1, Aaron Hart 1, Mitchell Hart 1.

Goals Hillston – John Nolan 3, Josh Smith 1, Nathan Calliss 1, James Nancarrow 1, Nic Goodman 1.

Best Lake Cargelligo – Lachlan Robertson, Mitchell Hart, Shane Russell, Michael Ireland, Russell Thorpe, Greg McFadyen.

Best Hillston – Jarrod Cahill, James Rathmell, Tim Henderson, Nathan Calliss, Kaleb Fitzgerald, James Nancarrow.

Lake Cargelligo were made to fight all the way to defeat a gallant Hillston in the Qualifying final. Although the final margin was forty five points the Tigers led by only twelve points at three quarter time. A breeze dictated play and Hillston's third quarter, with the aid of the wind, when they could only add one goal six behinds proved to be costly. The Tigers took control in the last quarter when they added five goals four behinds to Hillston's single behind to eventually record a hard fought victory.

1st Semi-Final at Barellan

Hillston	6-6,	10-8,	13-12,	17-15-117	defeated
West Wyalong-Girral	5-0,	7-5,	13-7,	18-8-116	by 1 point

Goals Hillston – Josh Smith 5, Ben Wesley 3, James Nancarrow 3, Brett McIntosh 2, Josh Cahill 2, Dylan Butler 1.

Goals West Wyalong Girral – Jeremy Venosta 4, Brendon Kirkup 3, Bailey Anderson-Lynch 2, Peter Turner 2, James Turner 2, Simon Clarke 2, Dave Proebstel 1, Beau Widdison 1, Matt Carroll 1.

Best Hillston – James Nancarrow, Jarrod Cahill, Nathan Morris, Nathan Calliss, Josh Smith, Josh Cahill.

Best West Wyalong Girral – Beau Widdison, Carl Zacher, Jeremy Venosta, Matt Carroll, Brett Davies, Scott Higgins.

Hillston snatched victory over West Wyalong Girral by just one point when their coach James Nancarrow snapped a goal with just ten seconds left on the clock to end a thrilling encounter between two evenly matched teams. It was a game of shifting momentum as both teams looked dominant during periods before the other side wrestled the game back. After trailing by twenty one points at half time, the Bulldogs with a six goal third term, set up a riveting last quarter when they reduced Hillston's lead to just five points at the last changeover. The Bulldogs looked to have the game in their keeping when they stretched their lead to eleven points with only five minutes

remaining, however Nancarrow stepped up with two goals for his club to pinch a spectacular victory.

2nd Semi-Final at Barellan

Tullibigeal	5-6,	10-9,	11-13,	17-16-118	defeated
Lake Cargelligo	2-1,	7-3,	9-6	12-9-81	by 37 points

Goals Tullibigeal – Brenton Browne 5, Neil Ireland 3, Dean Fair 2, Sonney Bartholomew 2, Jared Caruthers 1, Josh Hanlon 1, Corey Loftus 1, Broden Imrie 1, Dan Bendall 1.

Goals Lake Cargelligo – Andrew Hill 5, Aaron Hart 3, Wade Riley 1, Luke Robertson 1, Mitchell Johnson 1, Rhys Ward 1.

Best Tullibigeal – Dean Fair, Jared Caruthers, Kieran Fair, Dan Bendall, Ben Killen, Luke Tyack.

Best Lake Cargelligo – Dean Hague, Roland Finch, Aaron Hart, Shane Russell, Luke Robertson, Michael Mann.

Tullibigeal continued their unbeaten run for the season when they defeated the Lake Tigers by thirty seven points to qualify for the grand final. The Grasshoppers set up their win with a outstanding first quarter jumping out to a twenty three points lead. Following two even quarters the Tigers reduced the three quarter time lead to nineteen points but the Grasshoppers kicked away with a six goal to three goal last quarter to finish the match convincingly with Dean Fair putting in a standout best on ground performance.

Preliminary Final at Ungarie

Lake Cargelligo	2-7,	6-11,	6-18,	7-22-64	defeated
Hillston	2-3,	4-6,	6-6,	7-10-52	by 12 points

Goals Lake Cargelligo – Lachlan Robertson 2, Aaron Hart 1, Andrew Hill 1, Luke Robertson 1, Wade Riley 1, Josh Smith 1.

Goals Hillston – Ben Wesley 2, David Shields 2, Nathan Morris 1, Josh Smith 1, Tyrone Johnstone 1.

Best Lake Cargelligo – Col Fisher, Michael Mann, Tony Aubrey, Lachlan Robertson, Dean Hague, Aaron Hart.

Best Hillston – James Rathmell, Dylan Lately, James Nancarrow, Jarrod Cahill, Shane Rock, Tyrone Johnstone.

Despite terrible inaccuracy in front of goal the Lake Tigers defeated Hillston by twelve points. Although being the better side on the day the Tigers struggled in the wet conditions booting only seven goals from twenty nine scoring shots. Seventeen points in front at half time the Tigers could only manage seven behinds in the third quarter with the Swans adding two straight goals to get within striking distance at the last change. Both sides could only manage one goal four behinds in the last quarter as the Tigers held on to qualify for the grand final.

Grand Final at West Wyalong

Tullibigeal	1-3,	7-4,	10-6,	13-9-87	defeated
Lake Cargelligo	4-1,	4-1,	5-4,	6-6-42	by 45 points

Goals Tullibigeal – Brenton Browne 5, Corey Loftus 3, Josh Hanlon 3, Sonney Bartholomew 1, Neil Ireland 1.

Goals Lake Cargelligo – Wade Riley 1, Col Fisher 1, Aaron Hart 1, Andrew Hill 1, Lachlan Robertson 1, David Aubrey 1.

Best Tullibigeal – Luke Tyack, Kieran Fair, Dan Bendall, Sonney Bartholomew, Corey Loftus, Dean Fair.

Best Lake Cargelligo – Lachlan Robertson, Tony Aubrey, David Aubrey, Michael Mann, Russell Thorpe, Mitchell Johnson.

Tullibigeal won successive unbeaten grand finals when they turned around a slow start to finally triumph by forty five points. The Lake Tigers started the game full of running with four first quarter goals to have the hot favourites under early pressure to lead by sixteen points at quarter time. However after quarter time the Grasshoppers took control of the game to completely outclass the Tigers who were kept to just two goals after quarter time. A six goal second quarter by Tullibigeal shot them out to a twenty one points half time lead to completely turn the game on its head. Lanky ruckman Luke Tyack, who won 'best on ground' honours, gave his small on-ballers plenty of ball after quarter time in a dominant display.

Local Umpires Mark Daniher, Steve Henley and Rod Daniher controlled the grand final.

Tullibigeal's 2014 premiership team was –

B	Michael Fisher	Mitchell Glasgow	Ben Killen
HB	Jarrod Fair	Gerard Haase	Nathan Saison (c)
C	Kieran Fair	Dean Fair	Codan Frankel
HF	Broden Imrie	Neil Ireland	Jared Carruthers
F	Josh Hanlon	Brenton Browne	Corey Loftus
Ruck	Luke Tyack	Dan Bendall	
Rover	Sonney Bartholomew		
Interchange	James Fyfe, Adam Curtis, Jayden Tyack, Nathan Imrie		
Reserve	Danny Browne		

Representative Football

The Northern Riverina League played the Central West League at Orange on May 10 in their annual representative game. Northern Riverina League 11-13-79 defeated Central West League 9-14-68. NRL goalkickers were James Nancarrow 4, Greg McFadyen 2, Jeremy Venosta 1, Kieran Fair 1, Broden Imrie 1, Gerard Haase 1 and Wade Potter 1 with best players Jayden Boehm (NRL best player), Mitchell Hart, Cameron Stokes, James Nancarrow, Wade Potter, Broden Imrie, Dean Fair and Greg McFadyen.

The Northern Riverina League 2014 representative team with Shane Russell (captain-coach) for the third successive year was -

B	Cam Stokes (WWG)	Gerard Haase (Tulli)	Tony Aubrey (LC)
HB	Jarrod Fair (Tulli)	Shane Russell (c) (LC)	Mitchell Hart (LC)
C	Wade Potter (Cobar)	Jayden Boehm (Bar)	Dean Fair (Tulli)
HF	Broden Imrie (Tulli)	Luke Robertson (LC)	Nathan Cahill (Hill)
F	Cameron Brown (Ung)	Jeremy Venosta (WWG)	Kieran Fair (Tulli)
Ruck	Greg McFadyen (LC)	James Nancarrow (Hill)	
Rover	Greg Halden (Bar)		

Interchange – David Aubrey (LC), Slade Neale (Cobar), Scott Higgins (WWG), Mitch Seymour (Bar).

In the Under 18's Northern Riverina League 15-7-97 defeated Central West League 11-11-77, in the Under 15's CWL defeated NRL and in the Under 12's Central West League easily defeated Northern Riverina League.

Junior Football

The Under 17's age group reverted back to Under 16s and was won by Lake Cargelligo 11-8-74 defeating West Wyalong Girral 7-6-48. The Under 13s age group also changed from Under 14s with Barellan 3-4-22 defeating Hillston 1-3-9. West Wyalong Girral 6-2-38 defeated Hillston 3-7-25 in the Under 11s.

The junior best and fairest awards were won by Steven Hart from Lake Cargelligo in Under 16s, Cody Collins also from Lake Cargelligo in the Under 13s and Tom Roscarel from Ungarie in Under 11s.

Life Memberships

Local identities Keith and Paula Rees have been involved with the West Wyalong Girral Bulldogs and the Northern Riverina Football and Netball League for a long time. Their involvement and countless hours of officiating in various capacities over the years was honoured during the NRFNL presentation night when they were recognised with Life Membership. Both have been integral stalwarts of the League.

Keith has been a player, coach, umpire, administrator, spectator and parent. He has been the League treasurer since 2006, a job he retains even in 2014 with the help of Paula. In fact Keith's involvement with the NRFNL started back in 1979 as a player and coach, having spent his earlier football career in the Barellan, South West, Riverina and Sydney Leagues. When he ditched the boots he took up the whistle in 1991 and prior to retiring from umpiring in 2004, Keith officiated at 250 senior games, including nine senior grand final plus numerous junior grand finals. And for some, like Keith, old habits are hard to give up so even now it is not unusual to see him take control of the centre bounce when needed, including during the 2014 final's series. Keith is also the NRFL judiciary officer and along with Paula are tireless workers for the League and AFL in general. Their interest in the code and bush football took on a new height in 2014 with the launch of the 90-year Northern Riverina Football League history book, researched over many years. Described by the League president Peter McFadyen as a 'terrific undertaking', the book had already generated much discussion around the League.

As for Paula, everyone knows there is usually a good woman behind a good man and while Keith's name may be attached to the title of treasurer, Paula herself is never far away assisting at every game. Paula was secretary of the West Wyalong Girral Bulldogs for five years and while no longer an 'official', continues to undertake their game day duties, helps organise presentation night, trophies, club membership and sponsorship, raffle selling evenings and the list goes on. It is this behind the scenes jobs Paula continues to assist the League with as the couple base their life throughout every winter around football. Accepting the honour of Life Membership Keith spoke about some of the early experiences in the NRFNL. He said both he and Paula were humbled by the honour with their long association due mainly to the immense enjoyment that get from being involved.