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Looking at League

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NOW FOUR LEADERS

Last week's results really have thrown this 1988 premiership wide open. The gap between leaders and the eighth team on the table has widened to four points and this week's round could see one or more teams drop right out of contention for the semi-finals.

But four teams on top of the table together with the fifth team a point behind makes for tremendous interest in the coming weeks.

Two of the four clash in this round. Souths are at home to Cessnock in a twilight fixture. Souths have a busy day with their race meeting at the Newcastle Jockey Club and their game in the evening will keep their team equally as busy. Mick Schotield's boys have worked their way to the lead and are not going to give it up easily. However, the Lions have probably got different ideas and following their comfortable defeat of arch-rivals Lakes last bek should have developed the meets and the to take it from here.

Macquarie have a big one at Toronto against West. Full marks to the home side for their promotion, but they'll need to promote themselves on the field to hold out the Rosellas. A loss here could have Wests in trouble and the visitors will be more than anxious to grab the two points. Macquarie coasted last week and could probably afford to do so, but any complacency will have the Scorpions in bother.

Kurri at home to Lakes in a game which for both clubs is a do-or-die effort. For either side to lose it will probably mean elimination from the 1988 series. From that point the game holds plenty of interest, but in addition, both sides have plenty of young players with some experience to blend with them and lead them. This sets the stage for a really good game of football with probably plenty of good tries put on the board.

Central appear to have a comfortable game against Waratah. The Cheetahs haven't shown that early season promise on the field and sooner or later it could all come together. This week perhaps! But then the Butcher Boys are going well and with a change at the top certain this week, they will want to stay in the lead.

Maitland have a sure two points against North out at Connolly Park. The Bluebags continue to work hard and must be admired for their spirit and commitment.

Maitland Reserves and Thirds are giving a fine season also, both being undefeated and the Club has a comfortable lead in the Club Championship.

Junior Representative Football

Newcastle's S. G. Ball Cup (Under 17) and Jersey Flegg Cup (Under 19) teams have qualified for the semi-finals of their competitions.

This is a fine achievement in the first year of district football. The Ball Cup team will play Parramatta at 11.00 a.m. and the Jersey Flegg will play Canberra at 3.30 p.m. today (4th June), both matches being played at the Parramatta Stadium.

The Newcastle Rugby League and all its supporters wish the Junior Knights every success in their competitions.

Finals Series

The Grand Final of the 1988 Newcastle Premiership will be played at the International Sports Centre on Sunday, 21st August. All other games in the finals series will be played on the ground of the team that finished higher on the table.

2HD Player of the Year

The "Player of the Year" competition for the 1988 Premiership is being sponsored again by Radio 2HD. Points are awarded out of 10 for the performance of three players in each game.

Points awarded in last round.

South v Lakes:

P. Parr (S), T. Anderson (S) 8, P. Rees (S) 7.

Kurri Kurri v Waratah:

P. Williams (K) 8, R. Madden (K) 7, G. Shaw (WM) 6.

Macquarie v North:

M. Sullivan (Mac) 8, G. Sullivan (Mac) 7, A. Tyne (Mac) 7.

Central v West:

S. Fitzsimmons (CC) 9, W. Snowden (CC) 8, A. McDonell (CC) 7.

Maitland v Cessnock:

J. Hunter (Cess) 8, B. Aiken (Cess) 7, G. Winchester (M) 7.

Leaders in the competition:

J. Hunter (Cess) 35, T. Stevenson (Mac) 34, P. Williams (KK) 32, T. Price (WS) 30, M. Sullivan (Mac) 30, W. Snowden (CC) 23, B. Aiken (Cess) 22, T. Donaldson (SN) 21, M. Burrows (M) 21, C. Mathias (L) 19, M. Winkler (M) 19, G. Eager (M) 19, P. Atkins (WS) 17, T. Anderson (SN) 16, T. Vaughan (SN) 15, A. Watt (CC) 15.

CESSNOCK'S 'GOLDEN OLDIES'

A Golden Oldies touch football game will be played between the Reserve and First Grade games next Sunday at Cessnock. With players of the calibre of Don Schofield involved and refereed by Supporters Club President Jimmy Hayes, the game will provide plenty of interest and nostalgia particularly with the visit of the Great Britain side to Newcastle this week.

NEWCASTLE RUGBY LEAGUE PREMIERSHIP

Saturday, June 4—2.45 p.m.

North Newcastle

Connolly Park, Carrington

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Sunday: Spectacular NON-PROFIT RAFFLE. Tickets on sale from 5 p.m. Drawn 6.30 p.m. Top prizes including electrical goods, travel goods, manchester, etc.

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p.m., 6.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.

Darcy Restaurant open Wed. to Sun. for Dinner.

Bistro Bargains: \$3.75 All Meals Best catering value in Hunter Valley!

First Grade

MAITLAND 106 (C) Ballenden 4. P. Jones 3, B. Farrelly 3, G. Eager 2, G. Winchester 2, D. Michalski, M. Blundell, G. Brown, M. Burrows, M. Winkler, G. Codrington (tries, M. Winkler, 13 goals) (J. NORTH NEWCASTLE 4 (W. Lamb try).

CENTRAL CHARLESTOWN 30 (K. Barnier, S. Fitzsimmons, C. Nealon, A. McDonell, C. Croese tries, W. Snowden 5 goals) d WARATAH-MAYFIELD 6 (A. Lyddiard try, C. Hewlett goal).

LAKES UNITED 40 (P. Walsh 2, L. Bowro-D. Harrington, A. Swan, B. Burgess, Fowler tries, D. Butler 6 goals) d KUR, KURRI 22 (P. Hafey, P. Romaniuk, S. Nancarrow tries, P. Hafey 5 goals).

WESTERN SUBURBS 23 (M. Flanagan. G. Price, B. Loring tries, G. Price 5 goals) T. Price drop goal) d MACQUARIE UNIT-ED 18 (D. Hill 2, M. Sullivan tries, F. Lawler 3 goals).

SOUTH NEWCASTLE 24 (P. Sams 2. T. Vaughan, N. O'Brien, N. Sheather tries, P. Parr 2 goals) d CESSNOCK 22 (J. Garvie 2, M. Callaghan, J. Hunter tries, J. Hunter 3 goals).

Reserve Grade

Maitland 84 d North 2, Waratah 26 d Central 20, Lakes 42 d Kurri 8, West 30 d Macquarie 6, South 20 d Cessnock 14.

Third Grade

Maitland 94 d North 6. Central 16 d Waratah 2, Lakes 30 d Kurri 4, West 44 d Macquarie 0, Cessnock 24 d South 10.