

Tom Brock Scholarship

REPORT for 2002

1. Introduction

This year has been spent reviewing the research conducted into the "two rugbies" – rugby league and rugby union. Particular emphasis has been given to those factors which the author believes have influenced the play of the game, its appeal to a mass media audience and the effect this has had on the culture which supports the game.

Significant events have been identified in the post WW2 era and these put in the context of the support of the fans, the competitive nature of the football entertainment industry and more recently the relationship with the code of rugby union.

2. Outcomes

Influences on the game of rugby league can best be identified as being:

2.1 **Internal** – those which have occurred from decisions made by the central administrators (NSWRL, QRL, ARL, NRL) of the game.

- Law changes
- Salary cap
- Player transfers
- Commercialism
- The Winfield factor
- "State of Origin" game
- Globalisation
- Competition structure
- Location of competition teams

2.2 **External**- those which have been made by a party external to the game's administration.

- Legalisation of poker machines
- Introduction of television
- Extended opening hours of licensed premises
- The Super League "War"
- Recruitment of Rugby Union players
- Professionalism in Rugby Union
- The Bulldogs saga

3. Post Scholarship Activity

3.1 ASSH Biennial Conference

Data collected will allow the following to be incorporated into a paper for submitting to the Sporting Traditions XIV in Sydney, July 2003:

- Explain the impact events are perceived to have had on trends in the game of Rugby League since WW2.
- Postulate the likely scenario for Rugby League in the year of its Australian Centenary, 2008.

An Abstract is to be prepared and submitted before 28th February 2003.

3.2 Serial columns

A series of columns will be prepared for submission to a sporting publication to enable the subject to be more widely read.

3.3 Website development

An enhancement will be made to the website at www.rollomanning.com with links to the subject of the "two rugbies" which will acknowledge the assistance from the Tom Brock Scholarship Fund.

3.4 Publication

Work is continuing on a major publication on the subject of the "two rugbies" and a special section of this will be devoted to the work done as part of the Tom Brock Scholarship award.

The above activity will be completed before December 2003.

4. Acknowledgements

In particular (the late) Jack Pollard, Marian Furner and Ian Heads were expansive in their willingness to provide support and guidance. Interviews were held with the following and I acknowledge their support:

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Rollo Manning

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