

# Rookie stars for Broncos

## But Thurston almost spoils party

By WAYNE HEMING  
at Suncorp Stadium

EXCITING teenage rookie Corey Norman became an instant hit with Broncos fans before comeback winger Denan Kemp snatched a desperate 30-24 win for Brisbane over North Queensland at Suncorp Stadium last night.

Brisbane banked the two premier-ship points but not before Cowboys genius Johnathan Thurston threatened to inspire one of rugby league's great comebacks in front of almost 49,000 delirious fans kept on the edge of their seats for the last 20 minutes.

The night looked like it belonged to 18-year-old debutant Norman until Thurston inspired an amazing Cowboys onslaught that hauled them back from 24-0 down until fullback Ty Williams scored their first points in the 53rd minute.

But just when the Cowboys seemed likely to pull off a miracle win Brisbane skipper Darren Lockyer put Kemp away down the left touchline and he dived over the line for the match-winner.

In arguably one of the best debuts in Brisbane's proud 21-year history, Norman stopped three tries and gave the final pass for Brisbane's opening two four-pointers playing in the No.1 jumper vacated by another teenage prodigy Karmichael Hunt.

Man-of-the-match Norman saved three tries and gave the final pass

for Brisbane's opening two — and that was just in the first 22 minutes.

The youngster however showed he was human in the 53rd minute when he fumbled a Thurston inside grubber which fullback Ty Williams toed across the line to score the Cowboys first points.

The Cowboys launched a full throttle assault on Brisbane's line in the opening 20 minutes but Norman was magnificent.

After holding up a charging Scott Bolton who looked odds-on to score after steaming onto a short Thurston pass in the fifth minute, Norman cut down winger Michael Bani who reached over his head but came up centimetres short in the 15th minute.

Norman was on the spot yet again to knock over Cowboys lock Luke O'Donnell with a try begging.

Having done the job defensively, Norman served up the final pass to centre Israel Folau who crashed over for Brisbane's first try of 2010 in the 19th minute.

Better was to come from the young whiz kid when he flicked a ball out the back to winger Antonio Winterstein in the left corner and backed up on the inside to deliver skipper Darren Lockyer a try and Brisbane a 12-0 lead.

**BRISBANE 30** (I Folau M Gillett A Glenn D Kemp D Lockyer tries C Parker 5 goals) **d NORTH QUEENSLAND 24** (A Graham J Thurston W Tonga T Williams tries J Thurston 4 goals) at Suncorp Stadium. Referee: Jared Maxwell. Gerard Sutton. Crowd: 48,516.

Picture: GETTY IMAGES



**WHERE'S THE SUPPORT:** Alex Glenn of the Broncos gets a pass away during the round one NRL match between the Brisbane Broncos and the North Queensland Cowboys at Suncorp Stadium

## Dragons give NRL punters an early reminder

By STEVE JANCETIC  
in Sydney

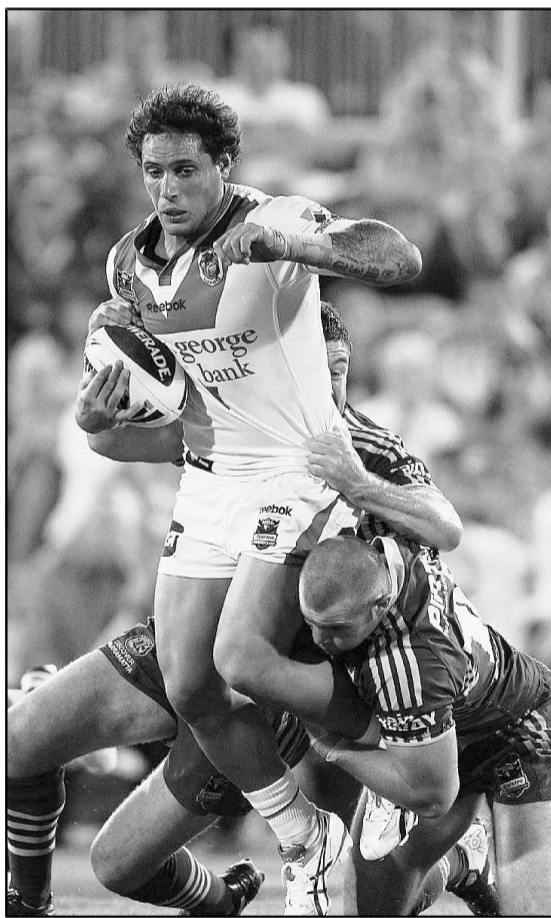
ST GEORGE Illawarra handed NRL premier-ship favourites Parramatta an early wake-up call as the Dragons prevailed 18-12 to commence the new season at Parramatta Stadium last night.

Up against the side that helped bundle them out of the 2009 finals, the Dragons were relentless as they clinically took care of an Eels side that failed to find the magic which propelled them to last year's grand final.

Leading by six at the break, the Dragons twice opted against pushing for a killer blow in the second period as they handed the ball to Jamie Soward to extend the lead to 16-6 via a pair of penalty goals.

The negativity looked like coming back to haunt the Dragons when reigning Dally M medallist Jarryd Hayne ignited the 18,293 pro-Eels crowd with a deft cut-out for Luke Burt to score out wide.

Burt's second sideline conversion of the game cut the margin to four with 17 minutes remaining, but Parramatta's momentum was destroyed minutes later when a thumping hit by



**NOWHERE TO GO:** Dragons' Jeremy Smith is gathered in by the Parramatta defence

Jarrold Saffy and Dan Hunt knocked the ball loose from Nathan Cayless's grasp from the kick-off.

The Dragons let that opportunity pass but they were again given a leg-up by the Eels five minutes from time, when Fuifui Moimoi was penalised for a strip on Michael Weyman, with Soward slotting his third penalty of the night from point blank range.

Both sides played the best part of half a game down one player, Shane Shackleton suffering a hamstring tear while

Dragons hooker Nathan Fien —who started the day celebrating the birth of his fourth child — was carried off with a suspected broken ankle.

The Dragons were deserved 12-6 leaders at the break, though they would have gone to the sheds ruing the fact they hadn't turned their positional dominance over the opening stanza into a greater advantage.

**ST GEORGE ILLAWARRA 18** (B Hornby J Smith tries J Soward 5 goals) **d PARRAMATTA 12** (L Burt E Grothe tries L Burt 2 goals) at Parramatta Stadium. Referee: Tony Archer. Gavin Badger. Crowd: 18,293.

# BASEBALL

## Darwin Baseball League

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**Reds**

### PALMERSTON & RURAL "REDS" BASEBALL CLUB

Contact: Jeff Goodworth Phone 08 89276022

Email: goodworth@bigpond.com

Sign up: 2.00 pm to 4.00 pm

Where: Archer Field - Elrundie Ave Palmerston, 0830

**Tigers**

### NIGHTCLIFF "TIGERS" BASEBALL CLUB

Contact: Marc Green Phone: 0412091257

Email: Marc@darwinmetal.com.au

Sign up: 1.00 pm to 3.00 pm

Where: Nightcliff Sports Club - Camphor Street, Nightcliff, 0810

**Pints**

### PINTS BASEBALL CLUB

Contact: Darren Pigram Phone: 0408 837913

Email: pints.baseball@hotmail.com

Sign up: 1.00 pm to 3.00 pm

Where: Pints Sports Club - Abala Rd, Marrara NT 0812

**Rebels**

### TRACY VILLAGE "REBELS" BASEBALL CLUB

Contact: Callum Hooley Phone: 0400719177

Email: tracyvillagebaseball@hotmail.com

Sign up: 1.00 pm to 3.00 pm

Where: Tracy Village Social & Sports Club- Tambling Tce Lyons, 0810

\*\*Wii Baseball competition @ signup day \*\* COME JOIN THE FUN!!!

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