

Brett Kenny

Brett Kenny (born 16 March 1961 in Gerringong, New South Wales) is an Australian former professional rugby league footballer of the 1980s and 90s. He was a five-eighth for the Australian national team, the New South Wales Blues representative side and the Parramatta Eels. He played in 17 Tests, won the 1986 Golden Boot for best player in the World, made 17 State of Origin appearances and won 4 premierships with Parramatta. He is considered one of the nation's finest footballers of the 20th century, making the ARLs top 100 list.

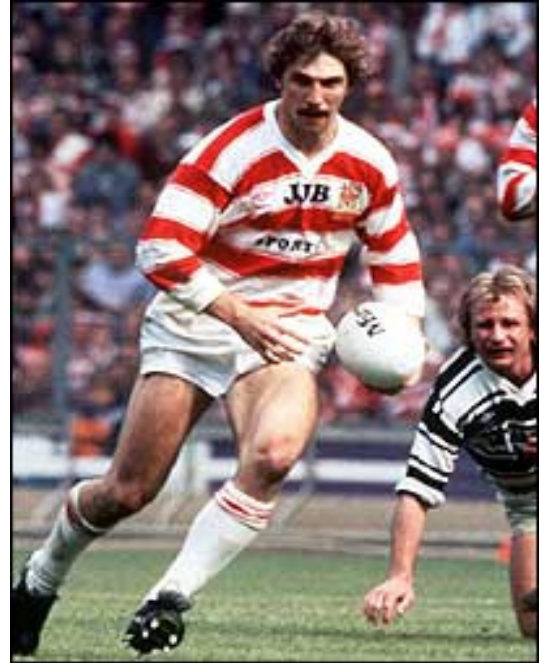
Bert was the pivot between the fearsome backline combination of Cronin, Ella and Eric Grothe and a tremendous scrum-base force of halfback, Peter Sterling and lock, Ray Price. These stars formed the nucleus of a side which dominated the New South Wales Rugby League premiership between 1981 and 1986 winning four premierships, once runners-up and once third.

Along with Wally Lewis, Kenny was selected to have his likeness adorn the newly-created state of Origin Shield. His superb performance in the 1982 Grand Final against Manly - scoring two tries and producing a wonderful step near the touchline to set up one for Eric Grothe - made him a certainty for that year's Kangaroo tour - the group later named the Invincibles.

His finest moment as a Wigan import was to come at Wembley as he led Wigan to their first Challenge Cup victory in 20 years. He caused controversy before a ball had been kicked by keeping his hands in his pockets during the National Anthem and the pre match ritual, looking disinterested. But all doubters were proved wrong as Kenny became the first Australian to be awarded the Lance Todd Trophy for his Man-of-the-Match performance in the 1985 Final, commonly regarded as the greatest final in Challenge Cup history. His solo try scored when Hull FC had full cover defence across the field was memorable but so too was his marshalling of the Wigan defence and his own tackle count contribution. Kenny in his one season became a club Immortal at Wigans' Central Park and found fans among many neutral supporters.

Brett Kenny dominated origin for NSW. While playing at five-eighth for New South Wales, Kenny outplayed his opponent Wally Lewis 8 times out of the 12 games they faced each other at 5-8.

NRL



Kenny was also a brilliant tackler, consistently able to bring down much bigger players like Wally Lewis, Mal Meninga and Gene Miles in State of Origin games during the 1980s. Kenny was in his early days capable of great acceleration, often aided by feigning to deceive a would-be tackler or a quite simple dummy. When Wally Lewis was at the height of his Origin dominance Kenny was one of the few NSW players with ability to match and possibly contain him.



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