

NEW SOUTH WALES

- Fullback: JARRYD HAYNE (Eels)**
Age: 26, Origins 19
Heavily targeted by the Maroons in game two and will probably be in for more of the same at Suncorp. In red-hot form for the Eels.
- Wing: JAMES McMANUS (Knights)**
Age: 28, Origins 2
Surprise selection given his age, lack of serious Origin credentials and strong competition from a raft of in-form wingers.
- Centre: JOSH DUGAN (Dragons)**
Age: 24, Origins 4
Did a good job in keeping Greg Inglis quiet in game two but had little chance to show his attacking skills against a willing Maroons defence.
- Centre: JOSH MORRIS (Bulldogs)**
Age: 27, Origins 9
Missed game two through injury after playing a leading role in the series opener. Will add some spark to the Blues backline.
- Wing: DANIEL TUPOU (Roosters)**
Age: 22, Origins 2
Confined to kick returns and dummy-half runs in game two but will rise to the occasion if game three is all about attack.
- Five-eighth: JOSH REYNOLDS (Bulldogs)**
Age: 25, Origins 4
Looks set for a long Blues career after two strong performances in this series. Playing alongside his club halfback is a real bonus.
- Halfback: TRENT HODKINSON (Bulldogs)**
Age: 25, Origins 2
Solid as a rock at ANZ and produced a solo effort to score the match-winning try, breaking Maroons hearts in the process.
- Lock: PAUL GALLEN (Sharks)**
Age: 32, Origins 18
Continues his hate-hate relationship with Maroons fans. The sight of Gallen holding the Origin shield aloft should empty Suncorp real quick.
- Hooker: ROBBIE FARAH (Tigers)**
Age: 30, Origins 10
Lifted the Blues at ANZ with several big hits and a near-faultless kicking game. Has played a massive role in the Blues' series win.
- Prop: AARON WOODS (Tigers)**
Age: 23, Origins 4
Surprisingly left on the bench for a long period in game two after making a strong start. Looks set for a long Blues career.
- Second-row: RYAN HOFFMAN (Storm)**
Age: 31, Origins 10
Playing the best Origin football of his career. Patrolled the left-hand edge in game two as though his life depended on it.
- Second-row: BEAU SCOTT (Knights)**
Age: 30, Origins 7
Game two wasn't the place for razzle-dazzle attack which suited the tough Knights second-rower just fine.
- Lock: GREG BIRD (Titans)**
Age: 29, Origins 15
Revelled in the niggles at ANZ after missing the opener through suspension. Will do his best to put the Maroons off their game.

BLUES' INTERCHANGE

- TRENT MERRIN (Dragons)**
Age: 25, Origins 9
- JAMES TAMOU (Cowboys)**
Age: 25, Origins 7
- LUKE LEWIS (Sharks)**
Age: 30, Origins 16
- BOYD CORDNER (Roosters)**
Age: 22, Origins 1

Hot Blues aim for whitewash

By NICK GUTHRIE

AFTER eight years of heartache the NSW Blues have finally won back the State of Origin title and now aim to reaffirm their status as the dominant State by recording a series clean sweep.

The Blues have gone through four different coaches and an incredible 86 players since their last series win in 2006 but Laurie Daley finally found the winning formula and the Queensland dynasty has come to an end.

It's been one of the most enthralling series since Origin's inception and while it hasn't been filled with the most attacking play we've become accustomed to the competitiveness and physical battering the two sides have put themselves through has got to be admired.

The sides return to Suncorp in Game Three and despite it being a dead rubber there is still plenty to play for.

Mal Meninga's side will be determined to give their parochial fans something to cheer about as they look to build momentum towards 2015 and what they plan to be a swift return to Origin glory while the Blues are fully focused on recording a whitewash.

Both sides have again undergone personnel changes with Cooper Cronk making a Lazarus-like recovery from a broken arm suffered in Game One to return while Will Chambers and Corey Parker are also in.

James McManus and Boyd Cordner are called into the Blues side along with the returning Josh Morris.

The most telling factor in this match could be the absence of prop Matt Scott from the Queensland side. The type of forward every side dreams of having, the injured Scott's power and workrate will be hugely missed and something the Blues will definitely look to make the most of.

Cronk's return will add some much needed direction and a sense of calm to the Maroons side while he will also markedly improve their kicking game.

With the series lost and Cronk returning the Maroons are going to play a more attacking and freeflowing style of play so NSW defence will have to be on its game. Hayne can expect plenty of work at the back and if the Eels' number one can avoid giving away many line dropouts then the Blues will go a long way to cancelling out the pressure the Maroons love to create.

The Blues are riding high at the moment and the belief and steely focus Daley has instilled in them is a big part of their winning performances. The Queensland dynasty is over. The Blues are back and they'll want to truly prove that on Wednesday night.



BLUES
v
MAROONS

GAME 1:
NSW 12 d. Queensland 8

GAME 2:
NSW 6 d. Queensland 4

GAME 3:
July 9: Suncorp Stadium, Brisbane

THE ORIGIN STORY SO FAR

LEADING POINTS SCORERS	
Johnathan Thurston	Qld 162
Mal Meninga	Qld 161
Michael O'Connor	NSW 129
Andrew Johns	NSW 96
Darren Lockyer	Qld 82

LEADING TRY SCORERS	
Greg Inglis	Qld 15
Darius Boyd	Qld 14
Dale Shearer	Qld 12
Billy Slater	Qld 11
Michael O'Connor	NSW 11

LEADING GOAL KICKERS	
Johnathan Thurston	Qld 70
Mal Meninga	Qld 69
Michael O'Connor	NSW 42
Andrew Johns	NSW 38
Ryan Girdler	NSW 27

TOTAL WINS	
Qld 53, NSW 46, Drawn 2	

SERIES WINS	
Qld 18, NSW 13	

TOTAL POINTS	
Qld 1649, NSW 1568	

1980 GAME 1 - Lang Park, July 8
Queensland 20 (Kerry Boustead, Chris Close tries, Mal Meninga 7 goals).

NSW 10 (Greg Brentnall, Tom Raudonikis tries, Michael Cronin 2 goals).

Man of the match: Chris Close

MOST APPEARANCES

Darren Lockyer	Qld 36	1998-2011
Allan Langer	Qld 34	1987-2002
Petero Ciconiceva	Qld 33	2001-2012
Mal Meninga	Qld 32	1980-1994
Cameron Smith	Qld 32	2003-



Andrew Johns

Mal points to Cronk for inspiration

Mal Meninga wants Queensland to take a leaf out of Cooper Cronk's book after stressing the Maroons must cope better with adversity to prevent a State of Origin clean sweep.

Cronk will make a near-miracle comeback in Wednesday's dead rubber, just six weeks after breaking his forearm in the series opener.

The Melbourne Storm halfback revealed he vowed at fulltime to make it back for game three, and has since left no stone unturned to play at Suncorp Stadium.

Five days after Craig Bellamy rubbished suggestions his Storm playmaker would be fit, the Melbourne

coach admitted he'd been using "potions and lotions" and altering his diet to ensure his fracture would knit.

Queensland coach Meninga has no fears about his "ultimate professional" playmaker, who was sorely missed for the last 70 minutes of game one plus all of game two.

Meninga predicted they would be a more cohesive unit for game three with Cronk back and all troops training after a number were rested for preparations to the two preceding losses.

But what he mostly wanted was his team to roll with the punches better, like losing the No.7 in game one and Matt Scott (cheekbone) and Brent Tate (knee)

in the 6-4 game two loss.

"We haven't been able to handle that adversity when we have been confronted with it," Meninga said. "In the past we have been able to handle it but NSW are playing a lot better than they were seven, six, five years ago."

Cronk's return has seen Daly Cherry-Evans relegated to the bench, while Jacob Lillyman will take Scott's place in the front-row.

Meninga said the return of Corey Parker (eye socket) adds to the stocks in the middle. Parker returns to the back-row with Chris McQueen (ankle) ruled out, while Will Chambers will make his debut on the wing after replacing Tate.

QUEENSLAND

- Fullback: BILLY SLATER (Storm)**
Age: 31, Origins 24
Hasn't been at his explosive best in this series due to niggling injuries. Will be hoping for a free-flowing game to showcase his attacking skills.
- Wing: DARIUS BOYD (Knights)**
Age: 26, Origins 19
Starved of opportunity at ANZ which robbed him of an obligatory Origin try. Man-of-the-match in the Knights win over the Eels.
- Centre: GREG INGLIS (Rabbitohs)**
Age: 27, Origins 23
Tried hard at ANZ to get the Maroons attack rolling but had little room to move. Due for a blockbuster effort at Origin level.
- Centre: JUSTIN HODGES (Broncos)**
Age: 32, Origins 20
Queensland's most dangerous player in attack in game two, especially from dummy half. Home ground will have him fired up.
- Centre: WILL CHAMBERS (Storm)**
Age: 25, Origins 0
Makes his Origin debut following injury to Brent Tate. Has quick turn of pace and high work rate in defence.
- Five-eighth: JOHNATHAN THURSTON (C'boys)**
Age: 31, Origins 29
Been below his best in both games in this series and might revert to his natural style now that the pressure to retain the trophy is off.
- Halfback: COOPER CRONK (Storm)**
Age: 30, Origins 13
Makes a surprise return after breaking his arm in the opening minutes of game one. Lack of match fitness will be a major concern.
- Prop: JACOB LILLYMAN (Warriors)**
Age: 30, Origins 7
Provided punch off the bench in game two and justified his selection after a three-year absence from Origin.
- Hooker: CAMERON SMITH (Storm)**
Age: 31, Origins 32
Replaced the great Wally Lewis on the list of the most number of Origin appearances. Like Lewis, Smith is a Maroons warrior to the core.
- Prop: NATE MYLES (Titans)**
Age: 29, Origins 25
Lionhearted effort in game two with nearly 50 tackles and over 120 metres. His running battle with Bird and Gallen should be a ripper.
- Second-row: AIDAN GUERRA (Rabbitohs)**
Age: 26, Origins 2
Still a work-in-progress at Origin level but will be given plenty of time to prove he is the real deal in the Maroons pack.
- Second-row: SAM THAIDAY (Broncos)**
Age: 29, Origins 21
Made a big difference in game two after missing the series opener through injury. Hard to stop close to the line.
- Lock: COREY PARKER (Broncos)**
Age: 32, Origins 12
A facial injury kept him out of game two and he was a big loss for the Maroons. His off-loads in broken play add another dimension to the attack.

MAROONS' INTERCHANGE

- MATT GILLET (Broncos)**
Age: 25, Origins 8
- DALY CHERRY-EVANS (Sea Eagles)**
Age: 25, Origins 4
- DAVE TAYLOR (Titans)**
Age: 25, Origins 7
- BEN TE'O (Rabbitohs)**
Age: 27, Origins 6

SUPER SATURDAY
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NSW
vs
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