

NEW SOUTH WALES

- Fullback: JARRYD HAYNE (Eels)**  
Age: 26, Origins 17  
The "Hayne Plane" has taken flight this year and could be the Blues' X-factor after demanding selection in his preferred position of fullback.
- Wing: BRETT MORRIS (Dragons)**  
Age: 27, Origins 9  
In combination with his brother Brett Morris will be dangerous down the right-hand edge, while providing stability in defence.
- Centre: JOSH MORRIS (Bulldogs)**  
Age: 27, Origins 8  
One of four Bulldogs in the squad who has the unenviable job of marking Queensland go-to man Greg Inglis but will be arm-in-arm with his twin.
- Centre: MICHAEL JENNINGS (Roosters)**  
Age: 26, Origins 10  
Recent injury concerns could not keep this game-breaker out of the side. The Roosters premiership winner will look to add an Origin win to his CV.
- Wing: DANIEL TUPOU (Roosters)**  
Age: 22, Origins 0  
Will be tested on debut but earned a call up based on his partnership with Roosters centre Michael Jennings and his ability to score remarkable tries.
- Five-eighth: JOSH REYNOLDS (Bulldogs)**  
Age: 25, Origins 2  
Aggressive player who got a taste of Origin last year. Rewarded with the No 6 jersey after helping guide the Bulldogs to the top of the NRL ladder.
- Halfback: TRENT HODKINSON (Bulldogs)**  
Age: 25, Origins 0  
Takes over the playmaker reigns from Mitchell Pearce to provide a ready-made halves pair with fellow Bulldog Josh Reynolds. Can also kick goals.
- Prop: AARON WOODS (Tigers)**  
Age: 23, Origins 2  
The pick of the prop crop during the early stages of 2014. The damaging ball runner will be better this time around, after a taste of Origin last year.
- Hooker: ROBBIE FARAH (Tigers)**  
Age: 30, Origins 8  
An elbow injury wouldn't keep this man down. The No 9 ensured he would be right for Origin after skipping NSW for the first time last year.
- Prop: JAMES TAMOU (Cowboys)**  
Age: 25, Origins 5  
Picked for his size and intimidation, the Blues will look to Tamou in the opening exchanges as the forward pack attempts to get on the front foot.
- Second-row: RYAN HOFFMAN (Storm)**  
Age: 31, Origins 8  
A consistent and proven performer at all levels of the game. He'll be an important cog in the Blues' forward wheel.
- Second-row: BEAU SCOTT (Knights)**  
Age: 30, Origins 5  
The shining light in a struggling Knights outfit. He was elevated to captain NSW Country earlier this year.
- Lock: PAUL GALLEN (Sharks)**  
Age: 32, Origins 16  
Beats blue and stinging from the pain of being close without tasting Origin success. The NSW skipper returns to his familiar spot at lock.

BLUES' INTERCHANGE

- TRENT MERRIN (Dragons)**  
Age: 25, Origins 7
- ANTHONY WATMOUGH (Sea Eagles)**  
Age: 30, Origins 12
- LUKE LEWIS (Sharks)**  
Age: 30, Origins 14
- TONY WILLIAMS (Bulldogs)**  
Age: 25, Origins 2

# Scott holds key to Blues' success

By BEN WALKER

For years football fans have heard of the Queensland spirit. The underdog mentality that drives those from north of the border every year.

When the going gets tough, the tough get going - and they are usually the ones wearing maroon jumpers. From Arthur Beetson to Wally Lewis, Allan Langer to Darren Lockyer, and Petero Civoniceva to Cameron Smith - it has always been there.

For just as long we have heard NSW players, officials and supporters counter by saying they have just as tough a spirit.

Who can forget Tommy Raudonikis' infamous "cattledog" call that was designed to spark his players' emotions and fire them up?

But now, with a record ninth straight series defeat staring them in the face, it is time for the Blues to finally show us they have it.

And what bigger stage to do it than in State of Origin's 100th match, against a group that has transformed into a dynasty, at the cauldron that is Suncorp Stadium?

NSW coach Laurie Daley has taken the first step towards potentially ending Queensland's reign by selecting a group of players noted for their discipline.

Mitchell Pearce's big night on the town cost him his spot, and it probably cost his Roosters halves partner James Maloney his as well.

Distractions in the lead-up to Origin don't do anyone any favours and Daley has done his best to avoid any by selecting a group of players who have made their names by showing the grit required at the ultimate level.

The likes of Beau Scott, Ryan Hoffman, Trent Hodkinson and Josh Reynolds won't go down as all-time greats of the game.

But just like so many Queenslanders written off over time as "nobodies", they may just fit the mould of what legendary Blues mentor Phil Gould describes as "Origin players".

In Scott and Hoffman you have two of the most professional players around and guys who will simply go out and do their job.

Daley will hope that mentality rubs off on his new halves, Reynolds and Hodkinson, who will be asked to do no more than what they have been doing on a weekly basis for the Bulldogs.

Scott, in particular, will hold a big key to Wednesday's game, and potentially the whole series.

If he succeeds, he will have done his job, and if that mentality rubs off on the rest of the NSW squad, the Blues will have the best chance of doing something that no primary school child in the "Premier State" has ever witnessed - win a series.



Queensland winger Brent Tate is swamped by the Blues' defence during the 2013 State of Origin series.

## BLUES V MAROONS

- GAME 1:**  
May 28: Suncorp Stadium, Brisbane
- GAME 2:**  
June 18: ANZ Stadium, Sydney
- GAME 3:**  
July 9: Suncorp Stadium, Brisbane

### THE ORIGIN STORY SO FAR

**TOTAL WINS** Qld 53, NSW 44, Drawn 2  
**SERIES WINS** Qld 18, NSW 12  
**TOTAL POINTS** Qld 1637, NSW 1550

**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 Civoniceva	Qld	33	2001-2012
Mal Meninga	Qld	32	1980-1994
Wally Lewis	Qld	31	1980-1991

#### LEADING POINTS SCORERS

Mal Meninga	Qld	161
Johnathan Thurston	Qld	158
Michael O'Connor	NSW	129
Andrew Johns	NSW	96
Darren Lockyer	Qld	82

#### LEADING TRY SCORERS

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

#### LEADING GOAL KICKERS

Mal Meninga	Qld	69
Johnathan Thurston	Qld	68
Michael O'Connor	NSW	42
Andrew Johns	NSW	38
Ryan Girdler	NSW	27



## New halves ready to take a chance

By JAMES MacSMITH

NSW coach Laurie Daley accepts throwing rookie halves combination Trent Hodkinson and Josh Reynolds into the State of Origin cauldron at Suncorp Stadium for game one of the series is a selection gamble.

Daley has dumped his 2013 halves pairing, Sydney Roosters duo Mitchell Pearce and James Maloney, for the 100th interstate clash in favour of Hodkinson, who will make his Blues debut, and Reynolds, who have been instrumental in Canterbury's charge to the top of the NRL ladder.

Hodkinson and Reynolds are in

career-best form and presented an irresistible case for selection according to Daley, against a Queensland side chasing an unprecedented ninth successive series win.

"I think in terms of a gamble, it is always a calculated gamble," Daley said. "I don't think you ever throw someone in without thinking through the whole puzzle."

"For us, while we all want short-term success, I think a part of my job is to create a team that is not only going to sustain pressure for the short term but to build success for the long term."

"That may take time but it is what we need to do."

Daley said Pearce's Kings Cross arrest and the Roosters' poor form cost the premierships-winning halves duo their NSW jerseys.

"It is always a tough decision to change halves but, in the best interest of the team, I thought it was necessary," Daley said.

"Trent Hodkinson and Josh Reynolds are playing extremely well. They are playing in a team that is leading the competition."

"I thought it was important that we had that combination there. It is exciting for Trent and Josh. I know they will grab it and go with it - they will feel comfortable by game time."

QUEENSLAND

- Fullback: BILLY SLATER (Storm)**  
Age: 30, Origins 22  
Bounced back from a lean spell with a sparkling display for Melbourne against Souths. Has haunted NSW for years and will be full of confidence.
- Wing: DARIUS BOYD (Knights)**  
Age: 26, Origins 17  
Has been out of form with the Knights but selectors have stuck solid to a player who has been crucial in Queensland's recent run of success.
- Centre: GREG INGLIS (Rabbitohs)**  
Age: 27, Origins 21  
Undoubtedly the player Laurie Daley and his men fear most. The crowd rises whenever he touches the ball, such is his freakish ability.
- Centre: JUSTIN HODGES (Broncos)**  
Age: 32, Origins 18  
Has battled injury throughout his career but is one of the great centres of the modern era. Capable of a match-turning piece of brilliance.
- Wing: BRENT TATE (Cowboys)**  
Age: 32, Origins 21  
Under-rated outside back who has been rejuvenated in 2014. His attacking partnership with Johnathon Thurston is a big bonus.
- Five-eighth: JOHNATHAN THURSTON (C'boys)**  
Age: 31, Origins 27  
The game's premier five-eighth and catalyst for many unlikely Queensland wins. If the Maroons win he will almost certainly be man of the match.
- Halfback: COOPER CRONK (Storm)**  
Age: 30, Origins 12  
The Melbourne halfback has cemented his place at the top when it comes to number sevens. His combination with Thurston provides stability.
- Prop: MATT SCOTT (Cowboys)**  
Age: 28, Origins 14  
Tough prop who will roll at the same gear in the first minute as he does in the 80th. In a team of superstars, he's a workaholic who does his job.
- Hooker: CAMERON SMITH (Storm)**  
Age: 30, Origins 30  
Veteran rake has arguably the finest football brain in the modern game. Consummate professional who rarely turns in a bad performance.
- Prop: NATE MYLES (Titans)**  
Age: 28, Origins 23  
Paul Gallen's personal punching bag gets under the Blues' skin more than any other player. If there are fireworks, expect Myles to be part of it.
- Second-row: CHRIS McQUEEN (Rabbitohs)**  
Age: 26, Origins 3  
Not the biggest name in the forward pack but a player who runs hard, tackles hard and will do whatever is asked as he tries to cement his spot.
- Second-row: MATT GILLETT (Broncos)**  
Age: 25, Origins 6  
Freakishly talented back-rower who combines size and strength with the footwork of an outside back. Will be studied at length by the Blues.
- Lock: COREY PARKER (Broncos)**  
Age: 32, Origins 11  
A tireless defender who has added a ball-playing dimension to his game. Would have been one of the first players picked by coach Mal Meninga.

MAROONS' INTERCHANGE

- DALY CHERRY-EVANS (Sea Eagles)**  
Age: 25, Origins 2
- BEN TE'O (Rabbitohs)**  
Age: 27, Origins 4
- JOSH PAPALII (Raiders)**  
Age: 22, Origins 2
- AIDAN GUERRA (Roosters)**  
Age: 26, Origins 0



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