

Big Artie Beetson

Arthur Beetson born in Roma, Queensland, 'in 45
Grew up in League, a centre, he could bring the crowd alive.
At 19 went to Redcliffe big & young, and strong & raw,
In time the best front rower many of us ever saw.

In '66 at 21 he came down Balmain way
And when pulled their colours on, he showed 'em he could play.
He made his mark so quickly he was in the test that year
At club & international level his was a name to fear.

For his craft was creating gaps for other blokes to score
With bruising runs and 'offloads' that the purists all adored
'68 the World Cup & then when the season ended
A stint with Hull K.R in England...broke his leg...it mended.

In '71 to Eastern suburbs...he became the rock
Upon which that club built a team that nobody could stop.
World Cup campaigns and 14 tests he played in green & gold
He stood astride the league scene as the '70's did unfold.

Captain coaching Easts...two final years at Parramatta
Ended the decade...ending a 15-year career that mattered.

One of his finest hours, ironically, was near the end.
They said "The origin won't work with teams made up of
friends!"
But Queensland's Senator Ron McAuliffe pulled a master stroke
He said "To lead our Queensland's side there's really just one
bloke".

And that first night in 1980 up there at Lang Park
History was made, and Arthur Beetson was the spark,
Wally Lewis swears he's never heard a sound so loud
Then when Arthur Beetson ran out & was welcomed by the
crowd.

He played a season captain-coaching Redcliffe '81
And since has coached Australian teams and Queensland's
favourite sons.
In origin series...treasuring the '89 'whitewash'
In latter years the battling Cronulla...nothing posh.

And that's the way 'Big Artie' is...a shy bloke not a 'mouth'
A legend in the game revered in Queensland and the South
A player with God-Given skills to get that ball away
A bloke the best defensive patterns never could outplay.

An original composition by Lindsay Young 1993



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- Born in Roma, QLD
- 220+ senior games for Balmain, Eastern Suburbs and Parramatta
- Captain of Eastern Suburbs premiership sides of 1974 and 1975
- 17 games for NSW and 3 for QLD
- QLD and Australian Prop forward
- First QLD State of Origin Captain in 1980
- 29 Tests and World Cup caps
- 1975 NSW Sports Star of the year
- 1975 and 1977 World Cup captain, captain for 2 Tests in 1973 and 1974
- Previous coach and selector for QLD State of origin
- Retired Kangaroos selector
- 2003 Entered Australian Rugby League Hall of Fame
- 2004 named 1 of 7 Rugby League immortals
- The First Aboriginal to captain his country in any sport
- Awarded an OAM in 1987
- ARL's Greatest 100 players
- ARL Team of the Century
- QLD Team of the Century
- Indigenous Team of the Century