



Our 9th Championship

1890

The 1890 season was quite a long one – three rounds were played once North Shore dropped out – but unlike 1889 it was at least organised and played out in a timely manner. As there was only one rep match it proceeded more or less uninterrupted, with a short break for trials just before Taranaki came to town.

After Ponsonby beat Grafton first up they were freely tipped for the championship, especially as the defending champion Gordon was nothing like as strong as 12 months earlier. The big defeat early in the second round from Grafton put paid to any complacency but an equally decisive win in the third meeting all but ensured the championship was Ponsonby's again, as proved to be the case.

A number of the better junior clubs were also based in and around Ponsonby; the Second XV won the Junior Cup while their closest rivals, Native Rose, also featured several players who would don blue and black. Athletic, another strong Junior outfit, was also part of the Ponsonby production line and names soon to be familiar were popping up in several of the smaller clubs.

Ponsonby scored heavily this season even if several of the big names had moved on; 42 tries in 12 matches, ten of which were won, was an indicator that the system carried on even with a lot of new blood in the team.

The difference in ability between the strong and the rest was growing more pronounced – a number of junior clubs could have taken on Auckland or Selwyn with a fair chance of success – so the ground was being prepared for the introduction of District football in 1891.