



## 1958 Items

Hopes were high that the recent form which had seen two solid mid-table finishes could be maintained this year as Ponsonby tried to find the players necessary to mount a proper run at the Gallaher Shield. Club men felt they had a couple of likely lads to hand, but they were very young and needed a little time to make good. That proved to be a fair assessment, and eventually both Keith Nelson and Bryan Craies proved to be excellent club men over a prolonged period. Unfortunately, most of Craies' rugby was played at Waitemata and Nelson was lost to the club for five seasons as dentistry studies took him to Dunedin.

Another change to the competition structure delivered a format that was to last a couple of decades. One full round among 14 teams preceded the splits, into top six, next six and two to the promotion / relegation series. There were no finals, but everyone knew how it worked. The only drawback this season was that matches were still postponed when the rep team played, meaning the later part of the season dragged as it had in the 1930s and early 1950s. Some lessons took a long time to sink in.

However one looked at Ponsonby's 1958, there was nothing to feel good about. For the first time, the club had losses in double figures. The last time two-thirds of matches had been lost was 1915; the last time it had happened in a 'normal' season was 1901. That Victorian season was also the last time a points differential of -60 had been posted, and it was around then that the club president felt obliged to give the members a dressing down at the AGM, telling the assembled players it was time to get fingers out, hook in and give their loyal supporters the performances they deserved. The same message could have been delivered in the late 50s, because rows were a-brewing – an expression carefully chosen – that would threaten to split the club asunder.

It can be truly said that 1958 was a winter of discontent.

### **12 April Ponsonby 17 Northcote 5**

Vickery (2), McKenty, Puttick, Nelson tries; Nelson conversion

### **19 April Ponsonby 11 Grammar 14**

Pryor, McFadden, Hadfield tries; Campbell conversion

### **26 April Ponsonby 3 Marist 21**

Campbell penalty goal

### **3 May Ponsonby 17 Manukau 8**

Muru, Campbell tries; Nelson conversion; Campbell penalty goal; D Menzies, M Menzies dropped goals

**10 May Ponsonby 5 North Shore 8**

Craies try; Campbell conversion

**17 May Ponsonby 6 Grafton 14**

Hadfield try; Nelson penalty goal

**24 May Ponsonby 3 University 12**

Nelson penalty goal

Three players were ordered off in this game – Nepia and Nicholson, from University, in two separate incidents, and Keith Nelson from Ponsonby. The ordering-off was deemed sufficient penalty and all three were available for selection the next week.

**31 May Ponsonby 3 Takapuna 19**

M Menzies penalty goal

**7 June Ponsonby 14 Eden 5**

D Menzies, Boyd, Puttick tries; Nelson conversion; Nelson penalty goal

**14 June Ponsonby 9 Waitemata 17**

Nelson 3 penalty goals

**21 June Ponsonby 24 Suburbs 8 (Jubilee Trophy)**

No scorers given

**28 June Ponsonby 14 Navy 6**

Hadfield, Puttick tries; Nelson conversion; Nelson 2 penalty goals

**5 July Ponsonby 3 Otahuhu 6**

Puttick try

**12 July Ponsonby 6 Suburbs 19**

No scorers given

**19 July Ponsonby 8 Takapuna 0 (Jubilee Trophy)**

No scorers given

**26 July Ponsonby 8 North Shore 16**

No scorers given

**2 August Ponsonby 6 Marist 3 (Jubilee Trophy)**

No scorers given

**9 August Ponsonby 8 Grafton 6**

No scorers given

**16 August Ponsonby 9 Takapuna 14**

No scorers given

**23 August Ponsonby 24 Northcote 3 (Jubilee Trophy)**

No scorers given

**30 August Ponsonby 22 University 3 (Jubilee Trophy)**

No scorers given

**6 September Ponsonby 19 Navy 14**

No scorers given

**13 September Ponsonby 6 Marist 19**

No scorers given