

## ■ rugby league



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STARR ROLE: Panther Adam Starr puts in a run.

# Top omen for finals

By MATTHEW JOHNSTON

WESTS coach Craig Ingerbrigtsen has lauded Sunday's 34-16 win over Burleigh as a season-defining moment for his side as it embarks on an epic journey towards the finals.

The third-placed Panthers face competition leaders Redcliffe as well as Easts and Wynnum on the run home before a re-match with second-placed

Burleigh in the last round.

But if Ingerbrigtsen's side needed any indication they were prepared for finals football, their first half demolition of the Bears on Sunday was it.

"We worked so hard on them because they are quality, they are a top side - so I'm massively happy with the effort we put in," Ingerbrigtsen said.

"We have been playing sides below us for the past

five weeks, and I think today was really defining for our season.

"Firstly to see whether we are the real deal and secondly to see whether we can compete with the top sides and I think we answered our own question."

The Panthers dominated the opening stanza of Sunday's match and held a convincing lead at the break on the back of some superb attacking play.

Burleigh didn't give up and had the better of the early exchanges in the second half, but no one was going to deny the Panthers who returned the aggression at the ruck to claim the points.

Troy Rowbotham scored twice for the boys from Purtell Park while young gun Matt Zgrajewski, Shannon Fish, Damian Petrie and Robbie Congoo all crossed once.

"We stayed solid on one area of the field we wanted to play on. We got a lot of rewards on that side."

Wests face the Seagulls at Kougari Oval at 12.15pm on Sunday.

■ **Meanwhile Wests is hosting the Halfback's Lament sportsmans lunch at Broncos Leagues Club on July 31 with Greg Oliphant, Tommy Bishop and Barry Muir.**

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## ■ handball

## Kent soon to be keeping well in France

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FOR Cathy Kent, handball is more than a sport - it's her life.

The Australian goalkeeper and former Ashgrove resident recently signed a contract with French club Mios, which plays in the top women's league in the country.

"It's absolutely awesome - I head back to Paris where my old club was and then move down to the west coast of France for the 26th to start pre-season," she said.

"They used to say Denmark was the best place to go and play for women and to make money, but now France is almost the new Denmark.

"The good thing about the French league is almost all of the French national team play in it ... so every game will be like a world championship game."

Kent, who had previously played goalkeeper in indoor soccer, was first introduced to the sport during a come and try day while on a sports tour to the Australian Institute of Sport, before joining a club in Brisbane and making the Queensland team just two weeks later.

"I took a little time off for two years (while I finished school) and then they called me back two years later and said there was a tour to Hungary, so I went and then never came back," she said.

After a four-month stint in Hungary, Kent went on to play in Denmark and Sweden before moving to France, where she has been ever since.

"In Europe - the women's sports are pushed so much more than in Australia and it's quite sad for us because we have so many talented athletes (in Australia), but we've got no sponsorship and support," she said.



EUROPE BOUND: Handball player Cathy Kent says adios as she signs with French club Mios.

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## ■ rugby union

## Uni puts 13 on the trot

UNIVERSITY will be looking to extend its unbeaten run when it hosts Wests at St Lucia on Saturday.

Mick Heenan's Students, who have not been defeated since Round 1 of the 2010 season, continued their domination with a 39-15 win over Easts at Bottomley Park last weekend.

GPS were also among the Round 14 winners, with an upset win over second-placed Sunnybank.

The star-studded Sunnybank Dragons appeared to have the match in the bag when Matt Feunati crossed, but Gallopers winger Chris Nasiganivavi had other ideas, dashing down the flank to cross in the dying stages and hand the home side a much needed 24-22 victory.

Meanwhile Brothers put a dampener on Wests' celebrations with a 32-10 victory over the Bulldogs at the Kennel. With four rounds remaining, University are nine points clear of their rivals, Sunnybank, who are also finals certainties.

However, the remaining two positions in the Top 4 are creating the most excitement with Souths, Brothers, Easts, Sunshine Coast and GPS all vying for the slots.

■ **The match between Wests and Uni gets under way at 3pm at St Lucia, while GPS travel to Bottomley Park to face Easts.**



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UNBEATEN RUN: Wests' Richard Smith.