

All the news. Half the price. >

50% off for the first 12 weeks

Subscribe

Conditions apply

Cairns Post

The news in colour



ADVERTISEMENT

Unable to playback video

The video you're trying to watch is not supported by this device or browser

QLD keep series alive

Sport

State of Origin 2017: Queensland beats NSW 18-16 to send series to decider

Peter Badel, The Courier-Mail
4 minutes ago

JOHNATHAN Thurston. You are a genius ... even when you are busted.

Queensland's remarkable record-breaking dynasty is still alive after an injured Thurston defied 50 minutes of pain to stun the Blues 18-16 in an Origin epic last night at ANZ Stadium.

Before a crowd of 82,259, the Blues had one hand on the shield when they withstood a second-half Maroons onslaught to lead 16-12 entering the dying stages of Origin II.

But summoning every fibre of Queensland spirit, the Maroons conjured a great escape, with Dane Gagai sensationally crossing for his second try to level scores at 16-all two minutes from time.

With thousands of Blue and Maroon hearts beating beyond control, Thurston was the ice man, landing a booming sideline conversion to break NSW and save Queensland from a series defeat.

Incredible.

PLAYER RATINGS: [Who starred, who struggled in Origin II](#)

ROBERT CRADDOCK: [JT saving greatest Origin script](#)

Most viewed



Boy missing from Mooroolbup



Don't make this dumb CV mistake



Police capture Bamaga beauty



Murderer's appeal dismissed

More Sport



Early Blues call comes unstuck



Player ratings: Who starred, who struggled



Kev's rookie gamble pays dividends



How Maroons rookies fared in thriller

Featured stories



Supporters stake claims

SUPER SLATER: [Never doubt a great of the game](#)

ANALYSIS: [How State Origin II was won and lost](#)

MORE ANALYSIS: [How Maroons rookies fared](#)

DRAMA: [Dodgy shoulder threatens JT fairytale](#)



Fusion fire up at just right time for Roach



Hawks not resting on laurels



Age no barrier to Sue



Johnathan Thurston kicks the winning conversion for Queensland. Picture: Peter Wallis

The news in colour



ADVERTISEMENT



Johnathan Thurston celebrates after kicking the winning conversion.

This was not a win. This was another Maroon miracle. A victory for guts, grit and unyielding self-belief.

It was the type of performance that evoked images of Wally Lewis in his pomp. Thurston injured his shoulder in the 30th minute and it was limp for most of the match, but the Maroons talisman refused to surrender ... and his

Queensland cohorts rode his wave of inspiration.

But whether Thurston survives to preserve his own fairytale is the great unknown. The Houdini effort sets up a thrilling decider at Suncorp Stadium on July 12, leaving Thurston racing the clock to be fit for what would be his 38th and final game for Queensland.

The Blues led 16-6 at half-time and looked in control for much of the second stanza, but a Gagai double in the 52nd and 78th minutes underlined why this Queensland side never says die.

“He had nearly every joint in his body strapped up. He is a warrior,” Maroons skipper Cameron Smith said.



Valentine Holmes celebrates the opening try with his Maroons teammates. Picture: Peter Wallis

“Some of the things he has gone through and to play like that at this level is remarkable.

“I really don’t know how he gets up for these matches. It really is quite unbelievable. His body is not 100 per cent, there is no doubt, but he finds a way to make things happen.

“The play that got us the win was that goalkick. I don’t know how many other people could put that kick over.

“I just said to him before the kick, ‘You are the best. Go and kick it’.”

Asked if Thurston will be fit for Origin III, Queensland coach Kevin Walters said: “I’m not sure, our medical staff will have to have a look at him.”



From the opening minutes, this interstate clash wasn't about wrestle and niggle. It was whether NSW had the nerve to trump Queensland's desire.

Given NSW's dominance in Origin I, the Maroons needed to score first to renew confidence and it came after just nine minutes with a movement that vindicated Darius Boyd's selection at centre.

Attacking NSW's right edge, the ball was shifted quickly to Boyd, who showed superb hands to release debutant Valentine Holmes for his maiden Origin try and a crucial 6-0 lead.

It should have been the catalyst for a Maroons onslaught. Instead, the Blues, galvanised by greater belief, held their nerve.

Three tries in the space of 13 minutes to Jarryd Hayne (14th), Brett Morris (24th) and Mitchell Pearce (27th) rocked the Maroons and gave NSW the type of lead that wins Origin games.



📷 Gavin Cooper, Johnathan Thurston and Billy Slater celebrate Queensland's win.

But, typically, this magnificent Maroons side refused to wilt. Dynasties are not built or broken easily. As long as Thurston is around, Queensland are never six feet under.

“Even at half-time, we were quite positive,” Queensland coach Kevin Walters.

“I am happy for the players. They were put through the wringer during the week.

“This Queensland team has so many champions that you always think you are a chance no matter the scoreboard.”

QUEENSLAND 18 (D Gagai 2 V Holmes tries J Thurston 3 goals) bt NEW SOUTH WALES 16 (J Hayne B Morris M Pearce tries J Maloney 2 goals) at ANZ Stadium. Referee: Matt Cecchin, Gerard Sutton. Crowd: 82,259.













Originally published as [‘You are the best. Go and kick it’](#)

Comments

▼ Post Comment ▼

You may like

From around the web

	New push to change Australia Day date News		Andros Townsend has posted a one-word tweet after Sam Allardyce quits Palace GiveMeSport
	Tragic warning after breastfed baby dies Lifestyle		The most addictive game of the year! Forge Of Empires
	How does the Laguna hold up as a used buy? Carsguide.com.au		4 Misconceptions Over 62s Have About Equity Release Reader's Digest
	Should you rush in and buy one now? Carsguide.com.au		Disney Character Approaches Terminally Ill Girl, Then Dad Spots Employee Behind Him Scribol
	Job ads rise for all occupations The Geelong Advertiser		Steven Gerrard names the one player he 'would love' Liverpool to sign this summer GiveMeSport
	Jay's five budgets – how have they fared? The Geelong Advertiser		Luxury UK Eco-Retreats Draw Tourists Keen to Power Down The Times

RECOMMENDED BY 

50% OFF

UNRESTRICTED DIGITAL ACCESS for the first 12 weeks

Conditions apply [Subscribe](#)

Cairns Post 

Unbelievably big for surprisingly little




Click for legals


A NOTE ABOUT RELEVANT ADVERTISING: We collect information about the content (including ads) you use across this site and use it to make both advertising and content more relevant to you on our network and other sites. This is also known as Online Behavioural Advertising. You can " [find out more about our policy and your choices, including how to opt-out here](#)

Cairns Post

 MOBILE

 NEWSLETTER

 SEND PICS

 SEND STORIES

Follow Us



- [About Us](#)
- [Contact Us](#)
- [Digital Print Edition](#)
- [Letter to the Editor](#)
- [Place an Ad](#)
- [Advertise with Us](#)

News

- [Breaking News](#)
- [Cairns](#)
- [National](#)
- [World](#)
- [Photos](#)
- [Cyclone News](#)

Sport

- [Local Sport](#)
- [Real Estate](#)**
- [Business](#)**

Entertainment

- [Competitions](#)
- [Lifestyle](#)**
- [Travel](#)
- [Hipages](#)

Network Sites

- [The Australian](#)
- [The Daily Telegraph](#)
- [The Advertiser](#)
- [news.com.au](#)
- [The Mercury](#)
- [Townsville Bulletin](#)
- [The Courier-Mail](#)

News Corp Australia

- [Privacy Policy](#)
- [Relevant Ads Opt-out](#)
- [Cookie Policy](#)
- [Photo Sales](#)
- [Careers](#)
- [Terms of use](#)
- [Accessibility](#)

[Subscription Terms](#)

[Tributes](#)

[News Corp 2017 Copyright](#)

[Perth Now](#)

[NT News](#)

[Gold Coast Bulletin](#)

[Geelong Advertiser](#)

[Code of Conduct](#)