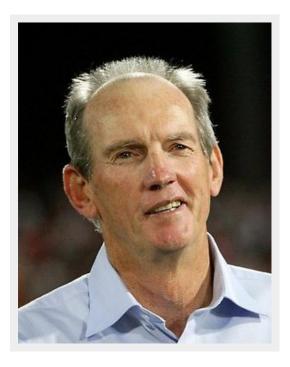


# Wayne Bennett

## Rugby League's Undisputed Super Coach

The grand old master who has achieved almost every possible honor in Rugby League. The talented goalkicking winger started his illustrious career with Collegians Warwick, played in England with Huddersfield, then All Whites Toowoomba, Ipswich and Souths Brisbane, as well as representing Brisbane, City (QRL), South Queensland, Queensland and Australia in two tour games.

Wayne Bennett started coaching in 1976, firstly with Ipswich, the following season he was captain-coach at Souths Brisbane. He then retired from playing at the end of 1977 but continued coaching Souths Brisbane



for the next two years. He retired from coaching after the birth of his three children, returning in 1983 as coach of minor grades. The following season he took over the head coaching role at Souths Brisbane for his second stint, taking them to the grand final, which they lost to Wynnum. The Old Fox sprinkled his magic dust over his Souths Brisbane team when they took revenge and won the premiership in 1984 against Wynnum, which included Australian captain Wally Lewis and Gene Miles in their side.

In 1986 he took over as coach of the Queensland State of Origin team, with the Maroons losing the series 3-0; however, Wayne was retained as the Maroons coach for the next two years.

His NRL coaching career took off in 1987 when he was appointed co-coach of the Canberra Raiders team alongside Australian team coach, Don Furner. The pair took Canberra to their very first grand final appearance in that year, which they lost to Manly by 18-8. The Maroons also won the Origin series 2-1 in 1987 under his coaching.

When the Brisbane Broncos were admitted into the newly expanded ARL premiership, Wayne was appointed as their inaugural coach where he would continue coaching them until 2008. The Broncos won six premierships during his first stint at the club, taking the title in 1992-93, 1997 Super League, 1998, 2000, and 2006.

He then signed a three-year deal to coach St. George Illawarra Dragons in 2009-11, winning the premiership in 2010. In 2012, Wayne commenced his four-year deal with the Newcastle Knights, but left the club at the end of 2014 after club ownership changes made him a free agent at the end of that season. In 2013 he took Newcastle one game away from the grand final when they were defeated by Sydney Roosters in the preliminary final by 40-14.

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He returned as Brisbane Broncos coach in 2015, and his side were beaten in Golden Point extratime by North Queensland Cowboys in the grand final by 17-16. The Cowboys scored a try at the death to equalize the score and take the game into extra-time, and from the kick-off in extra-time Broncos halfback, Ben Hunt, dropped the ball to give the Cowboys a chance of scoring that memorable winning field goal by Johnathan Thurston. Tension between club officials and Wayne grew from there, and on 2 December 2018, he was officially sacked as coach of Brisbane Broncos.

He then signed a three-year deal as coach of the mighty South Sydney Rabbitohs, taking them to two preliminary finals and one closely fought grand final appearance in 2021. For the record, Penrith won their third title after defeating the Rabbitohs by 14-12 in that memorable 2021 grand final. A Cody Walker pass was intercepted by Stephen Crichton which gave Penrith an unbeatable 14-8 lead. Rabbitohs record-breaking winger, Alex Johnston, scored a late try in the corner, which Adam Reynolds couldn't convert and take the game into extra-time.

Wayne coached the newly formed Dolphins outfit in 2023-24, before signing another three-year deal for his second stint at the Rabbitohs, citing 'unfinished business' at the club. The seven-times premiership winning coach is the longest serving coach in the game's history, having coached 962 games as of Round 10 of this season. In 2024 he was inducted into the NRL Hall of Fame, alongside Jack Gibson, becoming the first ever coaches to receive such an honor.

Not only is Wayne Bennett a super coach, he is a super speaker with audiences – sporting and non-sporting -hanging on his every word.

## **Testimonials**

Wayne provided more than we expected. His speech had the whole crowd to attention. You could have heard a pin drop. He covered off on the points we requested in our pre-brief. He stayed right to the end 10pm and constantly signed books by requesting staff. Feedback this morning has been exceptional.

### - National Australia Bank

Wayne Bennett was great at our event! He was received really well and I've had lots of people say they enjoyed his session. He took lots of questions and hung around after the event so people could chat to him etc.

### - Virgin Blue

- " Feed back from our Clients has been wonderful, they enjoyed every moment of his speech.
- E. Sime & Company Australia Pty Ltd



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<sup>44</sup> Our recent dealer conference at the Sheraton on the Park was an outstanding success, due primarily to the keynote address presented by Wayne Bennett. Wayne was able to identify the delegates' business environment and worked his entire address around that subject. He was interesting, humorous and really dug down to the grass roots of team leadership. He handled current Rugby League headlines with ease and was incredibly interesting and provocative. What I admired most is the personal time he spent after the talk, mixing with all delegates during coffee break. He specifically made sure that everyone had moved back to the conference room for the continuation of their session before he departed from the hotel. Wayne was a great asset to the conference and thank you for helping us to make it such a success.

#### - Incentive Action

" Wayne was very engaging and held the audience's attention all through his presentation.

- NightOwl Marketing Pty Ltd

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