

Marshall's dream return



soccer

STEVEN MAHER

WYOMING midfielder Ryan Marshall completed a fairytale return to his junior club in an epic Premier League One grand final on Sunday night.

Marshall blasted home the winning penalty in the Tigers' come-from-behind victory over East Gosford.

Scores were locked at 1-1 after extra time but Marshall and Wyoming goalkeeper Andrew Bull kept their nerve in a gripping season finale at Central Coast Express Advocate Stadium, Gosford.

The penalty shoot-out was neck-and-neck before Bull saved East Gosford's sixth penalty from Byron Girvan.

Marshall fired in the winner to the delight of the hundreds of Wyoming supporters.

It was the club's first win for many years and capped a dream return to the club for Marshall.

After playing throughout the juniors and making his first grade debut for Wyoming, Marshall spent five successful years at Ourimbah before leaving at the end of last year.

"I just felt it was time for a change and coming back to Wyoming was the right thing to do," he said after working hard in midfield through the grand final.

"I had no hard feelings with the people at Ourimbah - I've got good friends at the club - but I wanted a change and it's worked out brilliantly. I'm here to stay."

For most of the first half it looked as though East Gosford was going to be the team celebrating.

Veteran defender Brett Margin



Wyoming coach John McLafferty celebrates with Neil McAndrew.

fired the minor premiers in front late in the half with a well-struck volley.

Three minutes after half-time it could have been 2-0 when Derek Caisley had a shot pushed wide by Bull.

Then the game started to swing Wyoming's way. A long-range shot from Aaron Binskin set up the equaliser for former East Gosford player Brad Lewis.

For the rest of the second half and during extra time both sides had great chances to finish off the match but could not hit the target.

"We've played them four times this year and they've all ended up 1-1 after 90 minutes. They're a top side," Wyoming coach John McLafferty said.

"It's not a great way to win on penalties, but the players have put in so much work this year they deserve to win a title."

East Gosford coach Rick Sansom said he would return next year for another crack at the title.

"If anyone had to beat us I'm glad it was them, they've been with us at the top all year."



HERE TO STAY: Ryan Marshall fends off East Gosford's Brent Demery.

Pictures: RON HUTCHINGS

Disappointed Margin calls it quits after 10 years

EAST Gosford's Brett Margin celebrated his final game with a great goal and a clinical penalty but it was not enough to fire the Rams to victory in the grand final on Sunday night.

Margin announced his retirement after a successful first grade career spanning more than a decade.

The defender fired East Gosford in front with a volley late in the first half before Wyoming hit back to take the match.

The defeat was Margin's first loss in six first grade grand finals in the coast competition.

He was a member of the star-studded Gosford side that won three premierships in the 1990s.

Margin also played in title-winning sides with Wyong and East Gosford and represented the Central Coast in State League competitions.

"That's it for me," he said moments after full-time.

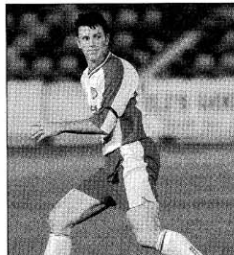
"I love playing but my hip is

stuffed, it takes me to Wednesday to recover."

While the defeat spelled the end for Margin another East Gosford veteran said he would play on next season.

Striker Derek Caisley, who was the club's leading scorer this year, will be back in 2005.

Caisley, also a grand final winner with Gosford, Wyong and East Gosford, was dangerous throughout the grand final.



Brett Margin on Sunday night.

Crossword solution

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