

Parting shot

19 Historic league silverware

Remember this once venerated rugby league trophy? It's the Ashes Cup - currently held by guess who...

Although the term 'Ashes' is borrowed from cricket, clashes between deadly rivals England (later Great Britain) and Australia were as vital to rugby league's international health from 1908 to 2003.

However it took until 1928 before an official 'Ashes Cup', *right*, was donated to the victors of the three-match series by the City Tattersalls Club in Sydney. Those winners were England's 'Lions' - enjoying a dominant 30-year run wherein the code's originators (aka GB or the Northern Union) won ten consecutive series before a surprise home triumph for Australia in 1950.

After the 1933-34 series, when England retained the Cup for a third time, the trophy went AWOL and was only found in the UK in October 1945. During that period the all-conquering Lions had won every series, so the disappearance went widely unnoticed.

Despite Australia's unshakeable modern



Gold ribbon: The Ashes Cup - first presented in 1928 to the winners of a feisty three-match series - underwent renovation in 2008. Calls grow louder for the concept (and the trophy's) return
ActionPhotographics

day grip on the Ashes - currently they haven't lost a series since 1970 - Ashes tours, in both directions, were once hugely popular affairs and a hunger for their return and continuation refuses to go away.

Controversially, the Ashes Cup - then on display in Canberra - almost made a 2009 comeback as the prize for a one-off Four Nations game until wiser counsel prevailed.

Tony Hannan



ZAK AND JOSH



Well let's see how your next training session goes shall we!

AT THE DW...

We're winning the Grand Final this year

Ah, ready for training, just need my boots

Ballet shoes??!!

Ay up Josh, what are you doing with them?

How did you find out that ballet classes are the key to the Tomkins side step!

Ruddy Zak.. I'm glad I gave him washing powder now instead of protein shake!

Ah that's another workout in the bag...

...time for protein shake

It doesn't taste the best, but it does freshen me up!