

Rasmussen said he has never been happy with the Naenae location because it is too far removed from the club's roots. He said the Lower Hutt City Council turned down the club's application to build new clubrooms on several other sites.

"It looks like we are destined to stay at Naenae. At least the facilities here are excellent — the best any league club has in the Wellington region," he said.

The Randwick Club was founded in the 1920's and today its membership is multi-racial in consisting of Maori, Cook Island, Tokelau, Western Samoan and European.

"Basically we are a happy club and we socialise very well. The support our premier side receives has been rated the best in New Zealand by Kiwi coach, Graham Lowe."

Since 1968, Randwick has won the major Wellington premier championship eight times including the last three seasons and ever since the Tusk Cup has been installed, Randwick has appeared in every final, four years in succession.

Brothers John, George, Finley and Rodney have all repped for the Wellington seniors in league. John and Rodney have captained Randwick and John and Finley have been the premier team's

coach, Finley for the last four years. John was the coach in 1968 and 1969 and was the main reason behind Randwick's resurgence to the top. Finley and Rodney have captained Wellington with Finley playing over 60 rep matches and Rodney over 40. As well, Rodney captained Central District sides including the international against Great Britain in 1984.

Rodney's greatest attributes have been to play and use his natural skills of anticipation and leadership. A determined and dedicated player with a good turn of speed, Rasmussen said he is disappointed he missed the New Zealand representation but he feels he wasn't given the breaks he deserved.

In 1984, Kiwi coach Lowe said Rasmussen was the most underrated player in NZ league. For a start he has been in and out of Wellington and Central District teams ever since he first played rep league in 1972.

"It's been the change of rep team coaches and selection policies, my own Randwick club making me unavailable and injuries which have affected my chances of playing higher.

"For example, in 1975 I played all eight games for Wellington and got player of the match twice. Yet from 1976 to 1979 under a new rep coach, I wasn't required. In 1980 I returned to the Wellington side and was made captain." Outspokenness has also affected his representative career.

In 1982 Wellington toured Australia led by Rasmussen and in the same season, Wellington's most potent team ever, inflicted a rare hiding on Canterbury in Christchurch to grab the Rugby League Cup, symbol of NZ provincial superiority.

"I spoke to the media (including this writer) at the end of 1982 in regard to the over prevalence of head-high tackles in Wellington club league and again in 1983 after some really vicious incidences. I also spoke out against the standard of refereeing in Wellington in letting these type of incidences go unchecked.

"The outcome was I was dropped from both the Wellington and Central Districts teams. Wellington got thrashed in several games in 1983 and I was only reinstated for the last rep match of the season. But I have no regrets in stating how things were. Since going public, the referees here have been taking a firmer line in regard to dirty play."

Rasmussen said Randwick should have won the first of the Tusk Cup finals.

"We were leading Petone (another Wellington club team) until the last 30 seconds when we gave away a penalty inside their 22 metres and Petone scored a try from it. We thought the 1985 final would be ours because the other finalist, Manukau of Auckland in six games had failed to defeat our 1984

Rodney Rasmussen about to be upended in a Randwick-St George premier grade clash back in 1976.

