

Penrith Panthers

2023 Grand Finalists

1. Dylan Edwards

Hoping to become the first non-retrospective player to win the Clive Churchill Medal in consecutive grand finals, Edwards has remained consistent as ever with the most running meters in the league.

NRL appearances: 130

Grand Final appearances: 3 (2020, 2021, 2022)

2. Sunia Turuva

Building on an impressive World Cup campaign with Fiji to become a mainstay for the Panthers during his first full season in the top grade, Turuva has made the left wing position his own after Taylan May suffered a season-ending knee injury in the World Club Challenge.

NRL appearances: 28

Grand Final appearances: N/A

3. Izack Tago

Making a timely return from injury to help the Panthers overcome the Storm last week, Tago has crossed for 10 tries and set up a further eight in 15 appearances this season.

NRL appearances: 47

Grand Final appearances: 1 (2022)

4. Stephen Crichton

Set to bring up 100 NRL games in his final appearance for the club before joining Canterbury next year, Crichton is a proven big game player with tries in each of the past three grand finals.

NRL appearances: 99

Grand Final appearances: 3 (2020, 2021, 2022)

5. Brian To'o

Helping the side to another premiership decider with a preliminary final hat-trick, To'o's impact with the ball in hand could see him become the first winger to be awarded the Clive Churchill Medal on grand final day.

NRL appearances: 92

Grand Final appearances: 3 (2020, 2021, 2022)

6. Jarome Luai

Returning from a shoulder injury that threatened to derail the Panthers hopes of reaching another grand final, Luai can expect plenty of attention in defence as the Broncos hope to exploit a potential weakness.

NRL appearances: 106

Grand Final appearances: 3 (2020, 2021, 2022)

7. Nathan Cleary (C)

Producing another stellar year at club level while rising even further during the finals, a strong showing from Cleary will go a long way towards getting the Panthers over the live.

NRL appearances: 158

Grand Final appearances: 3 (2020, 2021, 2022)

8. Moses Leota

Continuing to grow in stature as one of the league's premier front-rowers, Leota has been one of the underrated success stories of Penrith's ability to nurture talent into on-field results.

NRL appearances: 148

Grand Final appearances: 3 (2020, 2021, 2022)

9. Mitch Kenny

Taking over as the club's first-choice hooker in 2023, Kenny may not possess the flair of his predecessor but provides the Panthers with the reliability needed to maintain success.

NRL appearances: 82

Grand Final appearances: 1 (2022)

10. James Fisher-Harris

Getting his side on the front foot while striking fear into opposition players each week, Fisher-Harris has been integral in transforming the Panthers from regular finalists to grand final specialists in recent years.

NRL appearances: 179

Grand Final appearances: 3 (2020, 2021, 2022)

11. Scott Sorenson

Going from an unsung interchange player to an accomplished starting forward in the space of a season, Sorenson's career is a textbook example of the success that comes through tenacity and resilience.

NRL appearances: 104

Grand Final appearances: 2 (2021, 2022)

12. Liam Martin

Returning to his best after spending a large part of the season on the sidelines, Martin produced a match-clinching run to get the Panthers into a fourth consecutive grand final last Friday.

NRL appearances: 103

Grand Final appearances: 3 (2020, 2021, 2022)

13. IsaaH Yeo (C)

Joining exclusive company in bringing up 200 first grade games for Penrith this season, Yeo earned high praise from Phil Gould as the best player recruited to the Panthers throughout the storied career of recruitment officer Jim Jones.

NRL appearances: 219

Grand Final appearances: 3 (2020, 2021, 2022)

Interchange

14. Jack Cogger

Brought back to the NRL to provide cover in the halves following a stint in the English Super League, Cogger's first grade resurrection has seen him earn a long-term deal at Newcastle and potentially a grand final ring.

NRL appearances: 54

Grand Final appearances: N/A

15. Lindsay Smith

Working his way through the grades before cementing a place on the bench this season, Smith will be looking to finish the year with a new contact and a premiership.

NRL appearances: 26

Grand Final appearances: N/A

16. Spencer Leniu

Playing his final game for the Panthers ahead of a move to the Roosters in 2024, Leniu has emerged as one of the most impactful interchange players in the league.

NRL appearances: 82

Grand Final appearances: 2 (2021, 2022)

17. Luke Garner

Potentially going from a wooden spoon to premiership glory in one year, Garner's ability to play in the forwards and backline could prove invaluable in the event of injury on Sunday evening.

NRL appearances: 86

Grand Final appearances: N/A

Reserves

18. Tyrone Peachey

Recapturing the form that saw him reach the heights of Origin five years ago, Peachey has flourished in his return to Penrith with 10 tries in 15 appearances this season.

NRL appearances: 207

Grand Final appearances: N/A

19. Matthew Eisenhuth

Dependable to a fault, Eisenhuth has been a tremendous depth player for the Panthers over the past three seasons with his ability to fill in across the forward pack when called upon.

NRL appearances: 116

Grand Final appearances: N/A

20. Zac Hosking

Making the most of a long road to first grade following stints with Newcastle and a debut with Brisbane, Hosking has relished the opportunity to be part of a successful team in 21 appearances.

NRL appearances: 25

Grand Final appearances: N/A

21. Luke Sommerton

Going from a back-up reserve grader to earning a first grade debut over the course of a year, Sommerton will be hoping to see more time in the NRL with a development contract for 2024.

NRL appearances: 2

Grand Final appearances: N/A

22. Tom Jenkins

Scoring five tries in as many appearances this season, Jenkins has provided strong depth in the backline and will push for regular game time in the coming years.

NRL appearances: 6

Grand Final appearances: N/A

Coach. Ivan Cleary

Rising to become one of the great modern coaches of the league after qualifying for his fifth grand final in 17 seasons as a first grade coach, Cleary will be looking to do what no coach has done since Jack Gibson by leading a side to three consecutive premierships.

Road to Glory: Penrith

How the Panthers made their way to Accor Stadium this Sunday

Already creating history as only the second team in the NRL era to qualify for four consecutive grand finals, the Penrith Panthers will be aiming to become the first club in 40 years to record three straight premierships on Sunday evening.

Penrith Panthers' 2023 premiership campaign, including the grand final.

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Managing to recover with a dominant win in the final round to claim the minor premiership for the third time in four years, a clinical finals performance over New Zealand allowed Luai to recover in time to defeat Melbourne and secure a place in the premiership decider. Coming into the grand final as strong favourites off the back of current form and past deeds, victory will see the Panthers enter the rugby league pantheon as one of the greatest teams of all time.

GAMES: 26 | WINS: 20 | LOSSES: 6 | POINTS SCORED: 715 | POINTS CONCEDED: 322 | FINISHED: 1ST

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ROUND 1 - PANTHERS 12 v BRONCOS 13
Getting their premiership defence off to a fast start with first points of the night, a brace of tries to Herbie Farnworth and an Adam Reynolds' drop goal saw the Panthers go down at home in the opening round.

Panthers 12 (Crichton, Luke tries. Cleary 2/2 goals)

Broncos 13 (Farnworth 2 tries. Reynolds 2/2 goals.

Reynolds FG)

ROUND 2 - PANTHERS 16 v RABBITOHS 10

Establishing a 16-0 lead midway through the second half, the Panthers had their opponents measure, despite a late fightback, to open their 2023 account.

Panthers 16 (Crichton, Tago, To'o tries. Cleary 1/3, Crichton 1/1 goals)

Rabbitohs 10 (Johnston, Tass tries. Mitchell 1/2 goals)

Reynolds FG)

ROUND 4 - PANTHERS 16 v EELS 17

Nathan Cleary produced one of the moments of the season to nail a two-point field goal with second remaining to send the match into golden point, but it was Mitchell Moses who had the last laugh in a gripping grand final rematch.

Eels 17 (Cartwright, Hands tries. Moses 4/4 goals. Moses FG)

Panthers 16 (Edwards, Hosking tries. Cleary 3/3 goals. Cleary 2pt FG)

Reynolds FG)

ROUND 5 - PANTHERS 53 v RAIDERS 12

Isaah Yeo celebrated his 200th NRL game in style as the Panthers piled on 40 second half points; Jaeman Salmon, returning to Canberra for the first time since the infamous 'weak-gutted dog' barb, made his feelings known as the Panthers hit a half century on full-time.

Panthers 53 (Turuva 2, Tago 2, Cleary, Hosking, Peachey, Crichton, Salmon tries. Cleary 8/9 goals. Cleary FG)

Raiders 12 (Whitehead, Young tries. Fogarty 2/2 goals)

Reynolds FG)

ROUND 6 - PANTHERS 44 v SEA EAGLES 12

Dylan Edwards more than rose to the challenge in a much-anticipated battle of the fullbacks, finishing with four tries for the first time in his career, as the Panthers celebrated the Easter weekend with a victory at home.

Panthers 44 (Edwards 4, To'o, Sorenson, Cleary tries. Cleary 8/8 goals)

Sea Eagles 12 (Saah, T. Trbojevic tries. Cherry-Evans 2/2 goals)

Reynolds FG)

ROUND 7 - PANTHERS 16 v KNIGHTS 15

Silencing a vocal Newcastle crowd via a Nathan Cleary field goal in golden point, the Panthers were below their best but flexed their premiership credentials when it mattered most.

Panthers 16 (To'o, Salmon tries. Cleary 3/4 goals. Cleary 2 FG)

Knights 15 (Gamble, Frizell, Crossland tries. Miller 1/4 goals. Gamble FG)

Reynolds FG)

ROUND 8 - PANTHERS 18 v RABBITOHS 20

Stephen Crichton's hat-trick looked to be enough to get the Panthers home, however two tries in the final six minutes saw the Rabbitohs rally the ANZAC spirit to clinch victory.

Rabbitohs 20 (L. Mitchell 2, Cook, Tass tries. Mitchell 2/4 goals)

Panthers 18 (Crichton 3 tries. Crichton 3/4 goals)

Reynolds FG)

ROUND 9 - PANTHERS 8 v TIGERS 12

The Tigers claimed their first win and the biggest upset of the season to defeat the reigning premiers in the rain; Nathan Cleary had an opportunity to tie the game up only for Tigers rookie Jahream Bula to produce a match-defining tackle.

Tigers 12 (Wakeham, Nofalouma tries. Wakeham 2/4 goals)

Panthers 8 (Peachey try. Crichton 2/2 goals)

Reynolds FG)

Reynolds FG)

ROUND 10 - PANTHERS 18 v WARRIORS 6

Conceding an early try to the much-improved Warriors, coached by former Penrith assistant Andrew Webster, the Panthers secured a hard-fought win with a late four-pointer to interchange prop Spencer Leniu.

Panthers 18 (Edwards, To'o, Leniu tries. Cleary 3/4 goals)

Warriors 6 (Fonua-Blake try. Johnson 1/1 goal)

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ROUND 25 - PANTHERS 40 v TITANS 14

Exposing the gap in class between the premiership contenders and also-rans, the Panthers soared home with three late tries to turn a close contest into a one-way affair.

Panthers 40 (Edwards 2, Yeo, Peachey, Jenkins, Martin, Crichton tries. Cleary 6/7 goals)

Titans 14 (Haas, Khan-Pereira, D. Fiita tries. Campbell 1/3 goals)

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