Congratulations to the Polding Open Rugby League team who finished equal third in the NSW PSSA Carnival held at Hoxton Park.

Polding opened the carnival on the Tuesday morning and played their first game against Riverina. Combinations quickly fell into pace and Polding scored several entertaining tries, eventually winning 24-0. The next game wasn’t as smooth with Sydney South West playing a very physical game coming out winners 22-0. The Polding boys licked their wounds and came back strongly in their third game of the day and again played some entertaining football to beat Sydney North West 24-6. The following day Polding played a hard fought match against Sydney East, eventually winning 6-0. Their last game of the day against North Coast, was a local derby with Polding coming out winners, 24-6. This enabled Polding to finish second in their pool, setting up a semi-final playoff on the final day against the carnival favourites, MacKillop.

Despite a courageous display from Polding, with several players carrying and sustaining injuries, MacKillop ran out deserved winners, 16-6. Polding then played Hunter in the play-off for 3rd and 4th. Both teams played entertaining football and defended doggedly and the 6-6 draw was a fair result, with both teams being awarded equal 3rd place for the carnival. Congratulations to Sydney South West who beat McKillop 16-10 in the final.

All team members represented their schools and dioceses extremely well, displaying a high level of sportsmanship, skill and courage. The six Lismore representatives in the squad were all integral to the team’s success. The coaches asked a huge amount from these boys and they certainly delivered with consistent effort and a huge amount of skill. These boys were Liam Cusack, Ethan Simpson and Taj Mickley from St James’, Banora Point, Caleb Nicholls from St Anthony’s, Kingscliff, William Lockwood from St Joseph’s, Kempsey and Brock Kelly from St Francis Xavier, Ballina.

Congratulations to Brock Kelly (St Francis Xavier, Ballina) and Tom Eveleigh (St Mary’s Scone) who were selected to participate in the NSW 34 player train-on squad, travelling to Narrabeen over the school holidays, in preparation for the School Sport Australia Carnival in Mackay in August. Best wishes boys and we hope you go on to gain selection into the State team.

The coach (Paul Monahan, St Anthony’s Kingscliff) and manager (Pat Tierney, St Anthony’s Kingscliff) were extremely proud of all boys’ performances particularly against several much more fancied opponents. Most of the other teams in the tournament conduct trial matches and hold multiple training sessions in preparation. Due to our vast geographical area, the Polding squad holds a two hour training run on the afternoon before the carnival. Our first activity at this time is learning each other’s names!