



1961 Final Saturday 9th September Cricket Ground



Western Suburbs 7

def.

Balmain 5

Don PARISH
 Dave BARSLEY
 Bill MARTIN
 Bill BROWN
 Peter DIMOND
 Arthur SUMMONS
 Keith HOLMAN
 Kevin SMYTH
 John HAYES
 Kel O'SHEA
 Denis MEANEY
 Noel KELLY
 Nev CHARLTON (c)

Fullback
Wing
Centre
Centre
Wing
Five-eighth
Half
Lock
Second Row
Second Row
Front Row
Hooker
Front Row

Keith BARNES (c)
 Bob MARA
 Bill BISCHOFF (c)
 Gilbert McDOUGALL
 Ron MACK
 Alan MASON
 Laurie FAGAN
 Peter PROVAN
 Rex PERCY
 Bob BOLAND
 Harry RAVEN
 Bede GOFF
 Don AMOS

Tries

Kel O'SHEA

Gilbert McDOUGALL

Goals

Dave BARSLEY (1)
 Keith HOLMAN (1)

Keith BARNES (1)

Match Description

Balmain: Full-back: K Barnes (c); three-quarters: R Mack, W Bischoff, G McDougall, R Mara; five-eighth: A Mason; half: L Fagan; forwards; P Provan, R Boland, R Percy, D Amos, B Goff, H Raven

Western Suburbs: Full-back: D Parish; three-quarters: D Barsley, W Brown, W Martin, P Dimond; five-eighth: A Summons; half: K Holman; forwards: K Smyth, J Hayes, K O'Shea, D Meaney, N Kelly, N Charlton (c) **Referee: D Lawler (The Sun 9th September 1961)**

Western Suburbs yesterday qualified to meet St George in the Rugby League Grand Final, with a narrow 7-5 win against Balmain in the final at Sydney Cricket Ground. ... Wests were lucky to win yesterday. Balmain's fast-moving attack worried Wests in the first half. Wests did not gain a grip on the game until early in the second half, when Balmain had to reshuffle its team. Balmain half-back Laurie Fagan injured a shoulder and had to go to the wing. This move cost Balmain the snap to initiate moves from the scrum base. Wests provided a circus touch when the teams filed onto the field. The players circled the ground headed by a boy dressed as a magpie. They kicked black and white balls into the crowd and tossed away black and white umbrellas. But once the game started Wests quickly abandoned the vaudeville touch. Three minutes after the start, second-rower Kel O'Shea kicked high to the left corner. O'Shea and winger Dave Barsley dashed to the ball. The bounce appeared likely to beat them. But lanky O'Shea reached high and got the ball to score in the corner. The try, which full-back Parish failed to convert, gave Wests a 3-0 lead. Balmain moving the ball about blotted Wests' forwards out of the picture in a five minute sortie. Lock Provan did a terrific job running the ball away from the rucks. Balmain's good football brought a reward in the 23rd minute. Provan started a raid which ended in centre MacDougall getting around Wests' outer defence to score in the left corner. The try, which Barnes failed to convert, evened the scores at three all. Balmain, continuing with the policy that the pass beats the man, had a good grip on the game. Wests tried to blanket Balmain's minor attack. Its defence moved up quickly – sometimes too quickly – and brought penalties for off-side play. This well-groomed Balmain team had the correct answer to the blanket defence. Hooker Bede Goff's success in the scrums gave Balmain the advantages it needed for its attack. Goff out-hooked Wests' Noel Kelly 13-6 in the first half. The referee penalised Balmain in a scrum. Wests' captain Nev Charlton surprisingly called left-winger Barsley instead of full-back Parish to take the kick. Barsley landed a great goal from 45 yards out. A minute later Wests' front-rower Charlton caused a furore in the crowd. He lashed out with a boot in a midfield ruck and caught Balmain's little half-back Laurie Fagan. As Fagan lay writhing on the ground the crowd roared its disapproval. ... Meantime a thigh injury full-back Parish had suffered early in the match began to hamper him. Parish, an attacking full-back, lost his mobility. He kicked instead of running. Wests went to a 7-3 lead in the 15th minute of the second-half when Holman landed an easy penalty goal. ... Wests, getting a better share of the ball this half, had become an improved team. Its forwards began to fan out in attack. This caused Balmain a lot of trouble. Holman tried to seal a win for West eight minutes from the end. He took a difficult shot at goal from a penalty, but failed. Two minutes later a penalty for offside play took the pressure off Balmain. The kick put Balmain on the attack. Centre MacDougall revived Balmain's hopes with a sterling dash down the left flank. But Wests' full-back Parish grabbed the ball from him after a tackle. Referee Lawler penalised Parish for this, and Barnes landed a goal from the touchline, 30 yards out. The goal reduced Wests' lead to 7-5. Balmain, with a faint chance of victory, began to throw the ball about. Winger Mack headed a raid down the right wing. Wests' lock Smythe tackled after Mack had got rid of the ball. ... Meantime, a linesman had reported Smythe for a late tackle of Mack. Referee Lawler penalised Smythe. Barnes took the shot at goal from near touch on the 25-yard line. A goal would have brought a 7-all draw. Barnes' kick failed narrowly. **(Sunday Telegraph 10th September 1961)**

Notes: Kel O'Shea was back for this; Bill Carson was playing in the Reserve Final on the same day. Keith Barnes had a chance to level near full-time but narrowly missed the shot. Ex-Wests' hooker Bede Goff out-hooked Noel Kelly and the excess of possession kept Balmain in the game. Don Parish, with an injured thigh, was a passenger for most of the match.