



1958 Grand Final Saturday 13th September Cricket Ground



St George 20

Brian GRAHAM
 Eddie LUMSDEN
 Geoff WEEKES
 Ray SMITH
 Brian MESSITER
 Brian CLAY
 Bobby BUGDEN
 Peter PROVAN
 Norm PROVAN
 Monty PORTER
 Harry BATH
 Ken KEARNEY (c)
 Billy WILSON

def.

Western Suburbs 9

Darcy RUSSELL
 Don MALONE
 Harry WELLS (c)
 Darcy HENRY
 Bernie KELLY
 Peter DIMOND
 Keith HOLMAN
 Doug JONES
 Bill CARSON
 Jack BOWMAN
 Mark PATCH
 Bede GOFF
 Nev CHARLTON



Tries Norm PROVAN (2)
 Bobby BUGDEN
 Eddie LUMSDEN

Darcy RUSSELL

Goals Harry BATH (4)

Darcy RUSSELL (3)

Match Description

St George: Full-back: B Graham; three-quarters: E Lumsden, R Smith, G Weekes, B Messiter; five-eighth: B Clay; half: B Bugden; forwards: P Provan, N Provan, M Porter, H Bath, K Kearney (c), W Wilson

Western Suburbs: Full-back: D Russell; three-quarters: B Kelly, H Wells (c), P Dimond, D Malone; five-eighth: D Henry; half: K Holman; forwards: D Jones, J Bowman, W Carson, N Charlton, B Goff, M Patch **Referee: D Lawler (as per program Rugby League News 13th September 1958 + changes as per The Sun 13th September 1958)**

The Dragons of St George yesterday snorted their way to their third successive Rugby League premiership, defeating Western Suburbs 20-9 in the Grand Final, before the biggest club crowd of the season (63,282) at the SCG. St George made full atonement for their washout in the semi-final when Wests ran them into the ground 34-10. It was not a great game, either from a spectacular or a football point of view. St George were merely stronger – not better. They played the man rather than the ball, and indulged in a display of power-plus, bash-barge gridiron football designed to weaken their opponents by maiming them. Wests faced a battering-ram from kick-off to final bell. They stood up in a jungle of head-high tackling of two-men-to-one in almost every movement. After the softening-up process had told its tale, the Western players began to wilt. For the greater part of the second half, they dragged their legs as though they were in a swamp. But, despite the bash-barge of St George, it was still anybody's game until 12 minutes before the final bell. At that stage St George held the slender lead of 10-9. Then Bugden scored a snap try from an intercept, racing from half-way to an open field to touch down between the posts. The quality of their football yesterday was a hollow mockery of their English-like tactics of a couple of months ago. Then they thrilled the crowds with their backing-up in penetration and clever switching of play. It was obvious from the kick-off yesterday that St George intended to bash their way to victory. They didn't tackle. They savaged their opponents with brute strength. Head men of the savage hunt in the St George team were Clay, Bath, Porter, Norm and Peter Provan, Bill Wilson and Ken Kearney. Clay crashed both arms at Holman's head in every tackle and the crowd laughed in derision when he missed the target. Provan and Bath lifted opponents head-high, upside down and dumped them heavily to the ground. This is not football. It is foot-brawl.....The man-handling of Holman and Dimond was perhaps the worst feature of the excessive virility of the St George players..... **(Truth 14th September 1958)**

....Last night this season's Australian team manager Norman Robinson disapproved of the style of football St George used to win: "Something's got to be done to stop them getting away with this tough-guy stuff season after season," Robinson said. Until he broke up a scrum and issued a general warning against rough-house tactics to both sides, many experts thought Lawler was lenient. Punches in the open, kicks at the head and body, and wildly swung forearms entering tackles were frequent. One savage round-arm from St George captain Ken Kearney, which narrowly missed a Wests' player, almost swung Kearney off his feet..... **(Sunday Telegraph 14th September 1958)**

Notes: This was one of the roughest Grand Finals ever played. St George came out with a plan to bash Wests and it succeeded. Holman and Dimond copped a number of head-high tackles and Wests ended up with a long injury list. Bernie Kelly played on, heavily concussed, after a vicious head-high tackle, while Charlton and Carson both hobbled with leg injuries. Charlton "corked" a thigh while Carson tore knee ligaments after 30 minutes. Kel O'Shea had failed a morning fitness test and Buddy Bowman took his place. Even with all the injuries, Wests were still in the match with Darcy Russell being brilliant at full-back. Then Bobby Bugden grabbed an intercept and raced 50 yards to score. That was with only 12 minutes to go and St George leading 10-9. It completely turned the match. Wests had earlier won the Third Grade Grand Final 12-11 over St George with a young Dave Barsley to the fore.