



# 1961 Semi-Final Saturday 2nd September Cricket Ground



## St George 9

Brian GRAHAM  
Johnny KING  
Reg GASNIER  
Dave BROWN  
Eddie LUMSDEN  
Brian CLAY  
Bobby BUGDEN  
John RAPER  
Norm PROVAN  
Kevin RYAN  
Kevin BROWN  
Peter ARMSTRONG  
Bill WILSON (c)

def.

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

## Western Suburbs 4

Don PARISH  
Dave BARSLEY  
Bill MARTIN  
Fred NORDEN  
Peter DIMOND  
Keith HOLMAN  
Arthur SUMMONS  
Kevin SMYTH  
John HAYES  
Bill CARSON  
Denis MEANEY  
Noel KELLY  
Nev CHARLTON (c)



**Tries** Norm PROVAN

**Goals** Brian GRAHAM (3)

Don PARISH (2)

### Match Description

**St George:** Full-back: B Graham; three-quarters: E Lumsden, R Gasnier, D Brown, J King; five-eighth: B Clay; half; R Bugden; forwards: J Raper, N Provan, K Ryan, K Brown, P Armstrong, W Wilson (c)

**Western Suburbs:** Full-back: D Parish; three-quarters: D Barsley, W Martin, F Norden, P Dimond; five-eighth: K Holman; half: A Summons; forwards; K Smyth, J Hayes, W Carson, D Meaney, N Kelly, N Charlton (c) **Referee: D Lawler (The Sun 2nd September 1961)**

St George Rugby League team yesterday reached its sixth successive grand final – thanks to its powerful defence. St George defeated Western Suburbs 9-4 in a grim, hard-tackling semi-final at Sydney Cricket Ground. A crowd of 47,964 watched anxiously in rain, wondering whether the mighty Saints could win, though: \*Starved of the ball \*Weary from long periods of tackling in the second half. St George, after winning the scrums 9-6 in the first half, won only four of 15 in the second half. A pugnacious sortie by international second-rower Norm Provan 12 minutes from the end perhaps saved St George. Provan wrenched the ball from Wests' hooker Noel Kelly's arms in a stand-up tackle and relieved the telling strain that Wests had been mounting on the St George defence. .... West's inside backs surprisingly did not exploit an occasional kick to break up the St George defence. Five-eighth Keith Holman kicked once or twice and proved how effective it could be. St George, on the other hand, had little scope in attack because of the scarcity of the ball it received, particularly in the second half. Perhaps it would be somewhat unfair to load too much blame on to hooker Peter Armstrong for St George's failure to get the ball in the second half. Often the ball did not reach rival hookers Armstrong and Kelly. Wests got it off the prop-forwards' legs. ... When St George had the ball, its attacking powers contrasted greatly with Wests'. This was despite the fact that centre Gasnier had one of his leanest days. Wests lived up to its pre-match claims that the great Gasnier held no terrors. The ball did not reach Gasnier once from a set scrum. A blanket West threw over St George's inside attack "killed" Gasnier in that department. .... A tough, grim match was inevitable from the outset. Each team quickly left no doubt it would give no quarter. Only try of the match was scored 13 minutes after the start. St George second-rower Kevin Ryan tore from a loose ruck 30 yards from the line and headed a raid to the right corner. For the next minute St George forwards bombarded the line from the corner-post to goal-posts. The raid ended with Norm Provan forcing his way through Wests' packed defence and scoring near the goal-posts. He knocked out Wests' lock Kevin Smyth who tried desperately to block the big fellow. Full-back Brian Graham converted the try to give St George a 5-0 lead. St George went to a 7-0 lead six minutes later. Ryan again opened the play with a brilliant burst from a loose ruck in the midfield. Gasnier went with him and received the ball 30 yards from the line. Gasnier short-kicked to beat Wests' full-back Don Parish. Parish felled Gasnier with a late tackle. Referee Lawler rightly awarded St George a penalty when the ball landed 10 yards in front of the goal-posts. Graham kicked the goal. Parish's late tackle undoubtedly saved Wests three points. Gasnier surely would have scored between the posts. Wests did not open its score until 12 minutes before half-time. Parish landed a penalty goal to each side. Parish kicked the first of these 14 minutes after the resumption. Graham kicked the other one 11 minutes from the end. The match left these two impressions. \*St George's task of winning its sixth successive premiership will not be as easy as had been expected. \*St George will have to give serious consideration to recalling Ken Kearney for the Grand Final. Perhaps Wests missed its premiership chance yesterday. .... After yesterday's match West's captain, Nev Charlton revealed his team's will to win. Charlton said: "Today's match left one thing certain in my mind – Wests are going to win this competition. We needed only another 10 minutes today to put St George on the floor. The match left no doubt St George can crumble under sustained pressure." ... **(Sunday Telegraph 3rd September 1961)**

**Notes:** Harry Wells and Kel O'Shea were both out for this vital match. Bill Carson came in for O'Shea and played an outstanding game. Don Parish was also back and played solidly. This was a very tough forward clash from start to finish with Wests intent on bottling up the brilliant Gasnier. They succeeded in that task and went close to winning this rough match.