



# 1952 Semi-Final Saturday 30th August Cricket Ground



## South Sydney 18

def.

## Western Suburbs 10

Don MURDOCH  
Johnny GRAVES  
Frank THRELFO  
Malcolm SPENCER  
Cliff SMAILES  
Norm SPILLANE  
Ken BROGAN  
Bernie PURCELL  
Jack RAYNER (c)  
Ken MACREADIE  
Denis DONOGHUE  
Ernie HAMMERTON  
Bryan ORROCK

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

George BAIN  
Bill CALLINAN  
Jack FITZGERALD  
Col RATCLIFF  
Keith CULLEN  
Gerry LOWE  
Leo TREVENA  
Peter McLEAN (c)  
Don SCHOFIELD  
Ron WATSON  
Kevin HANSEN  
Hec FARRELL  
Bill HORDER



**Tries** Johnny GRAVES (2)  
Ken MACREADIE (2)

**Goals** Bernie PURCELL (3)

George BAIN (5)

### Match Description

**Western Suburbs (Minor Premiers):** Full-back: G Bain; three-quarters: W Callinan, J Fitzgerald, C Ratcliffe, K Cullen; five-eighth: G Lowe; half: L Trevena; forwards: P McLean (c), D Schofield, R Watson, K Hansen, H Farrell, W Horder

**South Sydney:** Full-back: D Murdoch; three-quarters: J Graves, F Threlfo, M Spencer, C Smailes; five-eighth: N Spillane; half: K Brogan; forwards: B Purcell, J Rayner (c), K Macreadie, D Donoghue, E Hammerton, B Orrock **Referee: J O'Brien (Rugby League News 6th September 1952)**

Discarded international Rugby League winger Johnny Graves yesterday scored two brilliant and vital tries which paved the way for South Sydney to defeat Western Suburbs, 18-10, in the first premierships semi-final at Sydney Cricket Ground. Wests, which are minor premiers, failed to cross South's line. Its 10 points came from five penalty goals by fullback George Bain. Graves scored his first try a minute after the start - a wonderful early break for Souths. His second try, 13 minutes from the end, gave Souths a five-point lead (13-8), and sealed West's fate. In both tries Graves shook off a tackler, skirted the touchline, and scored inches in from the corner post. Spectators in the crowd of 34,181 hooted referee Jack O'Brien for awarding the tries. They claimed that Graves had hit the corner post before he scored the first and put his foot on the touchline before scoring the second. Graves said later: "It is fantastic to suggest I didn't score either try." In the first I didn't go within a yard of the corner post." It was Bain who, in trying to tackle me, knocked out the corner post." I was at least a foot clear of the touchline in the second try." Most Wests players agreed that Graves' tries were fair. The captain, Peter McLean, commented: "I was close by each time, and I had no doubt that Graves did not touch the corner-post or touch-line." His tries were beauties." I have no complaint." Souths played splendidly, and had every chance to do so. Souths won the ball at the rate of two to one — too great a handicap for Wests or any team." As lock-forward I reckon I ran 50 miles chasing Souths." Souths' captain, Jack Rayner, said that his team's four tries to none was proof to its superiority. Most experts agreed that Souths, on yesterday's form, had a bright chance to win its third successive premiership. Souths were so superior to Wests that if Graves had been in kicking form it would have topped 30 points. Graves failed with each of his six shots at goal. He said the new balls used in the match seemed light. Most of Graves' kicks were straight enough, but either dropped short or suddenly veered away. But Wests' full-back Bain had no trouble with his kicks. He landed five goals from six attempts. Bain, however, had practised solidly for a week with new footballs preparing for yesterday's match. His goals saved Wests from complete disgrace. Wests at no time looked like breaking through South's defence to score a try. South's forwards were magnificent in defence. It was a tough, gruelling match throughout. Referee Jack O'Brien often cautioned players of both teams for rough play. Although South won convincingly, its players took punishment from the heavier Wests men. .... Graves' first-minute try inspired South. It came from a brilliant reverse-move which second-rower Jack Rayner started in West's 25. Play was veering to the right wing, when Rayner scooped a rolling ball back in the opposite direction. Half-back Brogan got the pass from Rayner and, seeing West players caught out of position, raced towards Graves' left wing. Brogan gave the ball to centre Frank Threlfo, who drew West winger Bill Callinan and sent the ball to Graves. Graves shot for the corner and beat Bain with a change of pace. .... **(The Daily Telegraph 31st August 1952)**

**Notes:** Wests were upset in this first semi-final in a very rough and tough match, where there were a number of vicious second tackles after the ball had been passed. Macreadie played on with a broken jaw and Bernie Purcell limped with a sprained ankle but it was the scrum dominance of Ernie Hammerton (won 2-1 ratio) that was the deciding factor. Johnny Graves was able to shine on the wing while the Wests' forwards worked overtime, tackling themselves to a standstill. They now had the right of Challenge in the Grand Final.