1971 Round 20 Sunday 8th August Lidcombe Oval

St George 15   def.   Western Suburbs 13

Billy SMITH	*Fullback*	Tony FORD
Garry JENKINS	*Wing*	Don ROGERS
Ken BATTY	*Centre*	Derek BROUWER
Ken MADDISON	*Centre*	Tim MURPHY
Geoff CARR	*Wing*	Mick ALCHIN
Tony BRANSON	*Five-eighth*	Tom RAUDONIKIS (c)
Ross STRUDWICK	*Half*	Brian WINNEY
Graeme SAMS	*Lock*	Rod SMITH
Barry BEATH (c)	*Second Row*	John BAKER
Peter FITZGERALD	*Second Row*	Barry BRYANT
Keith MADDISON	*Front Row*	Tony ANTUNAC
Col RASMUSSEN	*Hooker*	Ken STONESTREET
Apisai TOGA	*Front Row*	Russell JOHNSTONE

Tries	Geoff CARR	Mick ALCHIN
	Garry JENKINS	

Goals	Billy SMITH (4) One field goal	Tony FORD (5)
	Ross STRUDWICK (1)	

Match Description

St George: Full-back: W Smith; three-quarters; G Jenkins, K Batty, K Maddison, G Carr; five-eighth: T Branson; half: R Strudwick; forwards: G Sams, B Beath, P Fitzgerald, A Toga, C Rasmussen, K Maddison

Western Suburbs: Full-back: A Ford; three-quarters: D Rogers, T Murphy, D Brouwer, M Alchin; five-eighth: T Raudonikis (c); half: B Winney; forwards: R Smith, B Bryant, J Baker, R Johnstone, K Stonestreet, A Antunac   **Referee: J Harris   (Rugby League Week 14th August 1971)**

They'll be talking for a long time about the try that never was yesterday at Lidcombe Oval when St George scraped home 15-13 in a heart-stopper against Wests. Saints' followers were cheering when Barry Beath crossed the line wide out and touched down. Even the man at the scoreboard was about to alter the figures in readiness for the kick at goal. Referee Jack Harris, however, hesitated, and as a linesman came in he called out Beath and Wests' lock, Rod Smith. He then awarded Wests a five-yard penalty. Everyone on the ground was amazed. Later Harris said, "Beath had clearly grounded the ball, but Smith, following on, brushed against Beath with his knees and fell to the ground. Then Beath chased Smith and came down on him with his knees. The rules say that as it all happened in the in-goal area, I was justified in awarding Wests the penalty." Officials of both sides were puzzled by the ruling and no-one could recall a similar incident. It was the subject of argument in both dressing-rooms. The match was a real nail-biter with Saints looking the winners when they led 12-4 early in the second half. But Tony Ford, Wests' full-back, was in grand kicking form and kept his side in touch with five goals. When Mick Alchin scored a try wide out it made the scores 13-all. Ford took the kick and a glorious effort hit a post and just failed to go over the bar. Right on full-time Billy Smith landed a winning penalty goal and Saints' fans breathed again.   **(The Sun 9th August 1971)**

Half-back Billy Smith kicked a last-minute goal to give St George a 15-13 win over Western Suburbs in a sensational Rugby League match at Lidcombe Oval yesterday. In an incident-packed match, referee Jack Harris: … *Sent off Ross Strudwick (St George) and Rod Smith (Wests) after the pair had been involved in an apparently harmless scuffle. Wests' front-rower Russell Johnstone finished the match with bite marks on his hand. … With Saints trailing 3-4 after 30 minutes, Smith sent a perfectly timed pass to Beath to send him over in the corner. Wests' lock Rod Smith, who had attempted to stop Beath, was rolling on the ground in the in-goal area when Beath jumped to feet and pounced on him. Referee Harris, who at that stage had not awarded a try, immediately awarded Wests a five-yard penalty, allowing full-back Tony Ford to relieve the pressure. Beath claimed later that he had been kneed after he had touched down. Harris sent off Smith and Strudwick four minutes from half-time. Both will appear before the League judiciary tonight charged with fighting. Strudwick has served a one-match suspension this season on a fighting charge. He was adamant after the match that he had not thrown a punch. Strudwick was a late replacement as half-back for the match following the withdrawal of captain and full-back Graeme Langlands. …. With Barry Bryant, John Baker, Tom Raudonikis, Brian Winney and Tim Murphy prominent, Wests never let up. They looked certain to secure a draw when winger Mick Alchin crossed for a try to make the score 13-all five minutes from the end. But a penalty against Wests for not standing back five yards gave Smith the chance to snatch victory. The ball flew straight between the posts. **(Daily Telegraph 9th August 1971)**

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Notes: Rod Smith and Ray Strudwick were both sent off following a mid-field scuffle. This was a very close match that should have been a draw; Tony Ford's conversion attempt of Alchin's try hit the post, while Billy Smith kicked a goal in the last minute of play. In Wests' best performance since Round 1, Tom Raudonikis was a standout. Notice that Billy Smith's field goal was only worth one point as per the rule change for 1971.