

Jim Rutherford

..... came to the notice of the St George rugby league club and in early 1928 he was granted a clearance to play in Sydney.

The gold medal donated by Mr. P. J. Wright for most improved forward in 'A' grade, was won by Mr. Jim Rutherford, whilst Mr. Ray Avery was

Tweed Daily 13 October 1925

INDIVIDUAL SCORERS.

R. Flick easily heads the individual scoring list in club matches with a total of 85 points (5 tries and 35 goals). This total, plus his representative tally of 24, gives him a grand total of 109, which is a very fine record indeed. J. Rutherford with 48 (16 tries) comes next on the list. This also is a very creditable record, particularly as it comprises all tries. Other Pirate players who scored well for their side were: J. Maloney 24 (8 tries); C. Mitchell 16 (4 tries, 2 goals); C. Maloney 18 (6 tries); W. Yorke and G. Rutherford 15 each (5 tries).

Tweed Daily 3 October 1926

Gaps in local and district football that will be hard to fill may be left during the coming season, if Dame Rumour is correct. It is reported on reliable authority that J. Rutherford, the outstanding forward and Far Northern representative player, has been granted a clearance to join St. George (Sydney) club, and his ability should gain him interstate honours before long, but

Northern Star (Lismore) 11 February 1928

ST. GEORGE GAINS
Quite a batch of members of the crack Far North Coast combination have come to the city to seek greater football fame, and St. George has gained two of the best of them. These are Capelin, a nippy little half-back, whose grit makes up somewhat for his lack of weight, and Rutherford, a forward, whom good judges in the north say will be a State player if he is carefully handled.

Evening News 11 April 1928

The Lismore footballers, E. Capelin and J. Rutherford, have received permits from the Rugby League, Sydney, to play with St. George team this season, and A. B. Adams for the Western Suburbs team.

Tweed Daily 20 April 1928

Jim did trial with St George in 1928 and was selected in the Reserve Grade team to play against Newtown in St George's first game of the season. There is no record of Jim playing in that first match or in any other games that season. He appeared to have disappeared for a number of seasons as no record has been found of him playing any further rugby league until 1933.

RESERVE GRADE—2 p.m.	
NEWTOWN. —Full-back: F. Lind (21). Three-quarters: F. Hockey (22), H. Grice (26), B. Green (23), E. Mayne (24). Halves: R. McEnroe (14), C. Kell, Capt. (27). Forwards: C. Hill (32), J. Davis (31), L. Kable (30), W. Buckley (36), A. Folwell (15), L. Ogle (34). Reserves: R. Gartner (33), C. Mork (28), H. Young (42), A. McIntyre (7). Referee—J. Murray.	ST. GEORGE. —Full-back, J. McCormack (19). Three-quarters: A. Casey (20), P. Gabbe (21), C. Rice (22), W. Gray (23), E. McCormack (24). (One to be omitted.) Halves: A. Sadler (25), E. Tapellin (25). Forwards: P. Fairhall (27), T. Killiby (28), C. Whelan (29), E. Chambers (30), H. Flower (32), H. Hoey (33), J. Rutherford (34). One to be omitted. Touch Judges—R. Leonard and H. Millington.

Jim Rutherford selected for St George Reserve Grade round two 1928. There is no record of him playing in this match.
Rugby League News 25 April 1928

Jim married at Burwood in August 1928 and it is known that he lived in the St George district from the late 1920's until the late 1930's. Jim was a Fireman and his work schedule created conflict with his rugby league career. It is not known whether he played rugby league between 1928 and 1933. If he did it was most likely in the Business House competition or with the Fire Brigade.

It is evident that he did not play for St George during this period as when he played in the trials of 1933 he was referred to as a "new player" late of the Far North Coast rather than a St George lower Grade player.

ST. GEORGE DISTRICT CLUB.

The first of the official trial games starts to-morrow, when St. George meet Balmain at Drummoyne Oval. This is the first occasion that St. George have had to leave Earl Park in trial games, so they can't grumble. The form of the first team against Balmain on Sunday was a revelation and augurs well for the coming season. After being behind 18 to nil at the interval, ran out winners by 26 to 21. Prominent new players were Jim Rutherford, late of Far North; C. Reece, J. Henner-

St George Call 31 March 1933

1933 was a break out year for Jim Rutherford in Sydney premiersip rugby league. However it was not without its difficulties with reports at the start of the season and again during the final series that Jim maybe unavailable due to his work commitments with the Fire Brigade. The St George club appeared to be successful at least in part in having Jim released for most games throughout the season.

Jim Rutherford, a fireman from George Street, was the most outstanding player in the match. Rumor has it that the fire authorities will not let him off. This is a shame and will mean a lot to the Red and Whites.

Truth 5 April 1933

"Now comes word that H. Hinton, former Cootamundra crack, and Jim Rutherford, of whom we had high hopes, can't get leave from the Fire Brigade. Things couldn't be worse."

Truth 9 April 1933

Jim played First Grade in round one of the competition and then a further seven competition games. Despite some doubt about his availability for the finals, Jim played in both finals matches for St George.

NORTH SYDNEY OVAL—3.15 p.m. Tuesday, April 25, 1933
FIRST GRADE

ST. GEORGE v. NORTH SYDNEY

ST. GEORGE (Colors—Red and White)

13
FULL-BACK:
13—Stan. Robinson

THREE-QUARTERS:
12—H. Gardner 10—G. Ward B. Martin—11 S. Brain—9

HALVES:
7—H. Kadwell (Capt.) L. Brennan—8

FORWARDS:
6—C. Kemp 5—P. Fairall W. Greenland—4
2—J. Rutherford H. Pierce—3
15—C. Bray C. Rice—1
(One forward to be omitted)

RESERVE:
14—A. Tipping

Jim Rutherford's first game in First Grade 25 April 1933

It remained uncertain as to whether Jim Rutherford would play in the semi-final against Easts on 2nd September, but fortunately for St George he was able to take to the field and was able to score the winning try for the Dragons after the final bell had sounded. St George defeated Eastern Suburbs by 13-10 to go on and meet Newtown in the Final.

UP into Easts' firsts goes Jim Morrison against St. George on Saturday, and that's just about the only alteration in the sides that will battle out the second semi-final, though it's a wee bit doubtful whether Reg Fusedale can get Fireman Rutherford off from the fire fighting job for the afternoon.

Sydney Sportsman 2 September 1933

SAINTS' supporters are very grateful to the Fire Brigade Chiefs for extending leave to Jim Rutherford. He certainly added fame to that body with a capital exhibition of clean and clever football. His match winning try was an epic in itself that will live for years where footballers congregate.

RLN 9 September 1933

THAT AFTER-THE-BELL TRY.
WHEN the final bell rang the scores were 10-all. Then N. Tipping, the St. George three-quarter, on the right side of goal at the 25 tried to drop a goal and win the game. He missed, and the ball coming to a stop on the left wing in-goal it was rushed, and J. Rutherford, the forward, diving on it, was given the try by Mr. Fry. It looked quite off-side. When Killby kicked the forwards were in front of him, and he did not put them on side.

Referee 2 September 1933

After the match it was revealed that Jim Rutherford only knew that he had been granted leave from the Fire Brigade forty five minutes before the game commenced.

Almost as dramatic as the try itself was the last-minute rush to the ground to play of J. Rutherford, the man who scored it. It was not until 2.30, three-quarters of an hour before the game, that he was definitely certain that he had been granted leave from work.
A St. George supporter had a car waiting, and rushed him to the ground. Rutherford's presence meant much to his side.

Daily Telegraph 4 September 1933

St George met the minor premiers and favored Newtown team in the final but were no match going down 5-18 to hand Newtown their first premiership since 1910.

SYDNEY SPORTS GROUND—3.15 p.m.		SATURDAY, SEPT. 9, 1933	
FIRST GRADE—FINAL			
NEWTOWN v. ST. GEORGE			
NEWTOWN (Color—Royal Blue)			
FULL-BACK:			
13—T. ELLIS			
THREE-QUARTERS:			
25—J. GARTNER	11—A. GRIFFITHS	F. GILMORE—20	G. BRAYBROOK—21
ELVES:			
8—K. ELLIS (Cap.)		H. MORK—7	
FORWARDS:			
6—J. HORTON			
5—A. SMITH		L. BULL—28	
15—C. TUPPER	3—C. STEVENSON	H. PORTER—18	
RESERVE:			
50—W. SMITH	23—C. SING	G. OWEN—39	A. SPRING—36
44—A. ELLIS		T. THORNTON—46	
ST. GEORGE (Color—Red and White)			
FULL-BACK:			
13—ST. A. ROBINSON			
THREE-QUARTERS:			
(11) B. MARTIN	(13) M. HOLLINGSWORTH	(14) N. TIPPING	(8) L. BRENNAN
ELVES:			
7—H. KADWELL (Cap.)		R. DALY—34	
FORWARDS:			
20—V. KILLIBY			
31—A. WOODS		J. RUTHERFORD—2	
41—T. HAYWOOD	8—P. FAIRALL	A. SPROUSTER—43	
RESERVES:			
10—G. WARD	17—J. COLQUHOUN	C. RICE—1	L. KELLY—29

1933 Final – Newtown v St George - RLN 9 September 1933

The 1933 season ended with St George undertaking a playing tour of New Zealand. Harry Kadwell the regular captain of St George could not make the tour and Jim Rutherford ably filled the breach. After returning from the New Zealand tour, St George participated in the first rugby league night competition and performed admirably taking out the inaugural title. Jim Rutherford was one of St George's prominent players.

Jim Rutherford played with St George from 1933 until 1937. By 1936 he had left the Fire Brigade and commenced a new career as a Traveller. He had a successful final year with St George with the First Grade team being equal runners-up in the regular competition and making the semi-finals of the City Cup. During his five seasons with the Club he played forty seven First Grade games and scored twenty First Grade tries for a tally of sixty points.

Jim trialled with St George at the start 1938 season but before the start of the competition he took up a player/coach position with the Glen Innes club in northern NSW. This move by Jim did not go down well with St George as they lost a number of players to country areas at the start of the 1938 season.

St George refused to give Jim a clearance until he paid the Club one pound and ten shillings which St George claimed was the cost of providing pre-season training. The NSW Rugby League dismissed the claim by St George clearing the way for Jim Rutherford to play for Glen Innes.

St. George Club on Monday night notified the N.S. Wales Rugby League it would not grant a clearance to J. K. Rutherford to play at Glen Innes until he had paid £1/10/ for training facilities. The League decided it would not endorse St. George's action

Rutherford Replies.
 "They haven't got a leg to stand on," said J. K. Rutherford to-day, commenting on the refusal of St. George Club to grant him a clearance to play at Glen Innes until he had paid £1/10/ for training facilities. "The whole trouble is," he added, "four of us left at the same time and they didn't like it."

Glen Innes Examiner 5 May 1938

Jim Rutherford captain/coached the Glen Innes representative team in 1938. He also coached the town juniors that season. He was regularly reported as having a strong influence on the success of the Glen Innes team, and lead Glen Innes to win the Robinson Shield by season's end. Jim was also selected to represent Group 4 against the touring New Zealand team.

In 1939, Jim moved on to play with and coach the Young Rugby League team that played in the Group 9 competition. In Jim's first Maher Cup match against Temora, he scored a try in a 3-3 drawn result enabling Young to retain the Cup. Jim was sent off during this match and received a caution from the judiciary.

It was a successful year for both Jim Rutherford and the Young rugby league team. Young held the Maher cup for most of the season with only one defeat being recorded. Jim was a consistent point scorer for the Young team, sitting just behind Len Cooper from West Wyalong on the point scoring table.

But more importantly Young had great success on the field ensuring good attendances and gate receipts for the season which was very much the life blood of sustaining country football teams. At the end of the season five hundred and forty five pounds, a significant amount for the time, was distributed between a number of community organisations and the players who competed in Maher Cup and competition matches.

It is understood that Len Cooper, coach and Captain of the West Wyalong Rugby League team, has an excellent chance of winning the 2LF Radio Station (Young) Gold Cup for the player scoring the most points in first grade football this year. Cooper, it is stated, has already, scored nearly 120 points this season. Rutherford, the Young Captain, is well up in the points also.

West Wyalong Advocate 15 August 1939

As a result of a very successful football season, Young District Rugby League had £545 to disburse, the beneficiaries being the two hospitals, the Old People's Home, the ambulance, and the players who took part in Maher Cup and competition matches during the year. The four charitable institutions each received £54/5/, the

Cootamundra Herald 12 October 1939

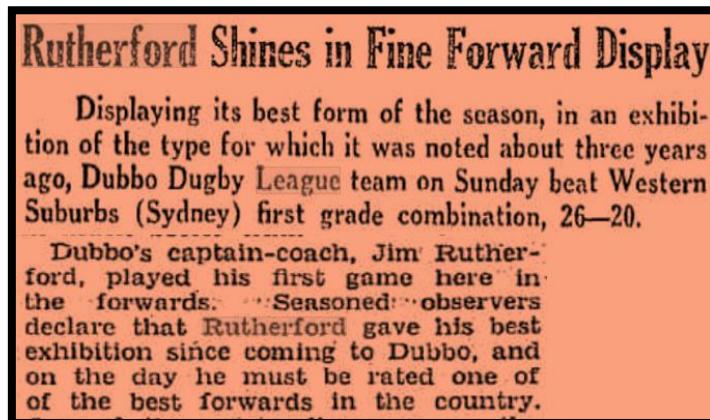
Jim did not remain at Young in 1940. He was an applicant for the position of player/coach but was not reappointed. West Wyalong was wanting to engage Jim for the coming season but he subsequently took up an offer as player/coach of the Dubbo representative rugby league team in 1940. His contract with the Dubbo rugby league was for a term of five months and he was remunerated in the amount of 120 pounds 17 shillings and eight pence.

COACH IMPRESSIVE
Most impressive player for Dubbo was the coach, Jim Rutherford, who proved that the reputation he won as coach and a member of the Young Maher Cup team last year was deserved. He made many openings, ran hard, straight and fearlessly and tackled with grim certainty.
On his display the new coach earned the confidence of his team and the public.

Dubbo Liberal 14 May 1940

The Dubbo team made a slow start to the season but gradually improved under Jim Rutherford's leadership. They won the Jack Hore Gold Cup during the season and finished as holders of the Johnnie Walker Cup, the pinnacle of the Group 11 competition.

However, the highlight of the season was the match played between Dubbo and Western Suburbs (Sydney). Dubbo was well behind at half time but lifted in the second half to take out a 26-20 win over the Sydneysiders. Jim Rutherford lead from the front and played one of his best games for Dubbo. He no doubt made an impression on the Wests officials as he was graded by Wests in 1941 and made captain of Wests First Grade team.



Dubbo Liberal 20 August 1940

It was reported in February 1941 that Wests had formally approached Jim Rutherford to play for the Club and also sounded him out about the possibility of two other Dubbo players joining him at Wests. One of those players was Eric Bennett who also played with Wests in 1941 and for a number of seasons beyond. Eric had enlisted for service in World War 2 and was in camp at Narellan.

In 1941 former Wests player Les Mead returned to the Club and during the pre-season trials there was speculation as to whether Les Mead or Jim Rutherford would be appointed as captain/coach of Wests First Grade team. The Wests officials did something quite odd in that they appointed Les Mead as a playing coach while Jim Rutherford was appointed as captain of the First Grade team.

Wests lost three of its first four competition games and neither Les Mead nor Jim Rutherford were playing well. The issue came to a head after a 13-35 loss to St George in round four. The Daily Telegraph reported on the folly of the divided leadership in the team.



Daily Telegraph 11 May 1941

The reaction by the Selectors was to drop both Les Mead and Jim Rutherford to Reserve Grade. Both men then announced their retirement and never played another game for Wests, although Les Mead was retained as the First Grade coach for the remainder of the 1941 season.

Both men probably had more to give on the playing field although Jim Rutherford was thirty three years old and Les Mead was approaching thirty two years of age. Jim when interviewed indicated that his work commitments were taking a toll on his standard of play but he also had personal issues at the time which may have added to his situation.

Wests dropped J. Rutherford (captain), L. Mead (coach), W. Keato, and B. Brown.
Rutherford and Mead later announced their retirement.
"I've never played in reserve grade, and I'll get out," Rutherford said.
"I have not been able to do myself justice this season."
"I start work at 5 a.m. on Saturday morning, and finish at 1.45. I am tired before I put on a football boot."

Daily Telegraph 14 May 1941

Jim Rutherford played a total of four First Grade games for Wests, all in First Grade. There is no further record of Jim Rutherford playing premiersip rugby league after he announced his retirement.

In January 1942 Jim enlisted with the AIF for service in the Second World War. He inexplicably gave his birth date as 7 January 1911 which made him three years younger than he actually was. This was subsequently corrected on his military file. Jim was posted to the 1st Training Battalion at Dubbo, NSW in February 1942 and remained there until August of that year before embarking for overseas duty.

Jim was familiar with the town of Dubbo where he coached the local rugby league team in 1940. It was therefore no surprise that he appeared in an Army rugby league match at Dubbo in May 1942. The Training Battalion, of which Jim was a member, soundly defeated an Army Commando Unit

Army Footballers Play Match on Oval
Two Army teams played football at the Dubbo oval on Sunday. It was the first Sunday football match at the ground for some years. During the past decade council has strongly opposed Sunday football on the oval. The scores of the match were 20 points to nil. Among the players taking part was Jim Rutherford, former Dubbo coach and captain, who is well known as a St. George representative player.

Daily Liberal 5 May 1942

In August 1942, Jim embarked for the Middle East and served there with the 2/13 Battalion until March 1943. After a brief stay in Sydney, Jim was posted to New Guinea, arriving at Milne Bay in July 1943. It was here that he was wounded in action, receiving a gun shot wound to the base of his thumb on his right hand.

Jim served in New Guinea until February 1944, when he returned to Australia. He spent the remainder of 1944 and early 1945 training in Australia and qualified in setting and defusing mines and booby traps.

By May 1945 he once more embarked for overseas service this time at Morotai and Borneo where he remained until after the Japanese surrender. Jim was discharged from the Army in January 1946.

Jim Rutherford lived in Sydney's Eastern Suburbs after the war, and died at Kingsford, NSW in October, 1982. His memorial is at the Eastern Suburbs Memorial Park, Matraville, NSW.

RUTHERFORD, James Keith
(Judge). — October 8, 1982.
of Kingsford (Sgt. 2nd 13th
Battalion), beloved husband of
Maureen, dearly loved father
and father-in-law of Allan and
Myra, Gloria and Charles, and
loved grandfather of their family.

Remembered for his services
to the St. George Rugby League
Club.