

# George Skeers

.... was "a big lump of a lad", standing at 6ft tall and weighing 16 stone. When the Wests Committee saw him play, he put in his usual good honest performance. He was described as fairly fast for a forward of his size and he distributed the ball well.

He was invited to trial with Wests in the 1971 pre-season competition and though he was "raw" for city football, he proved to be a willing worker. He could handle himself in the scrums and provided support for his hooker.

In the open he was described as "hard running" and would be dangerous once inside the opposition's 25 yard line where he could use his size and speed to advantage.

George played his first game with Wests in the second pre-season Cup game in February 1971. He did well and followed with appearances in the remaining two Cup games.

George Skeers made a good impression on his first appearance with Wests' firsts, against Cronulla at Lidcombe. He worked well, in and out of the scrum, and was going strongly over the concluding stages.

He has the size — and Wests had been looking for a prop of weight and strength.

RLN February 1971

He made his First Grade premierships debut in round three against Penrith. It was also the same match in which Neville Sinclair made his First Grade premierships debut.

This match was also famous for the Peter Flanders incident, where Peter was allowed to leave the match early so that he could catch a train home to Coffs Harbour. The fallout from the incident went on for some time.

1971 Round 3 Thursday 8th April Lidcombe Oval			
	<b>Penrith 16</b>	<b>def.</b>	<b>Western Suburbs 7</b>
	Mike LEARY	<i>Fullback</i>	Peter FLANDERS
	Reg HATTON	<i>Wing</i>	Don ROGERS
	David APPLEBEE	<i>Centre</i>	Roy FERGUSON (c)
	Grahame MORAN (c)	<i>Centre</i>	Dick TIMBS
	Larry PINKERTON	<i>Wing</i>	John ELFORD
	Ian McKECHNIE	<i>Five-eighth</i>	Tim MURPHY
	Noel SING	<i>Half</i>	Tom RAUDONIKIS
	Phil KLIENDIENST	<i>Lock</i>	Neville SINCLAIR
	Peter WRIGHT	<i>Second Row</i>	John BAKER
	Rod ELLIOTT	<i>Second Row</i>	Barry BRYANT
	Terry GEARY	<i>Front Row</i>	Tony ANTUNAC
	Ron WORKMAN	<i>Hooker</i>	Ken STONESTREET
	Bruce WARD	<i>Front Row</i>	George SKEERS
		<i>Replacement</i>	Russell MULLINS
		<i>Replacement</i>	John MAXWELL

George Skeer's First Grade Premierships Debut - Round Three 8 April 1971

George played ten First Grade premierships games in 1971 but it was not a great year for Wests. The disruption to the team with constant injuries and the reshuffling of the playing roster halted any

momentum that Wests might have had. Nevertheless it was a good opportunity for George Skeers to develop as a player in a tough competition.

Wests brought in some new forwards for the 1972 season including John Walker (Easts) and John O'Bryan (Manly). Steve Winter and Russ Johnstone also remained with Wests, so there was plenty of competition for a front row spot. With limited opportunities, George played five First Grade games in 1972.

The 1973 season was George Skeers last with Wests. He didn't play a First Grade premiership match but was a regular member of Wests Reserve Grade team.

During his three seasons at Wests, George Skeers played fourteen First Grade, forty three Reserve Grade, six Third Grade and three Pre Season Cup games. He scored fourteen tries in all grades for a total of forty two points.

Surname	Forename	Year	1 <sup>st</sup> Grade	2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	Pre-Season Cup	Tries	Goals	Field Goals	Total Points
Skeers	George	1971	9							
Skeers	George	1971		12			3			9
Skeers	George	1971			4		2			6
Skeers	George	1971				3	2			6
Skeers	George	1972	5				3			9
Skeers	George	1972		15			2			6
Skeers	George	1972			2		1			3
Skeers	George	1973		16			1			3
<b>Total</b>			<b>14</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>14</b>			<b>42</b>

George Skeers Playing Record at Wests

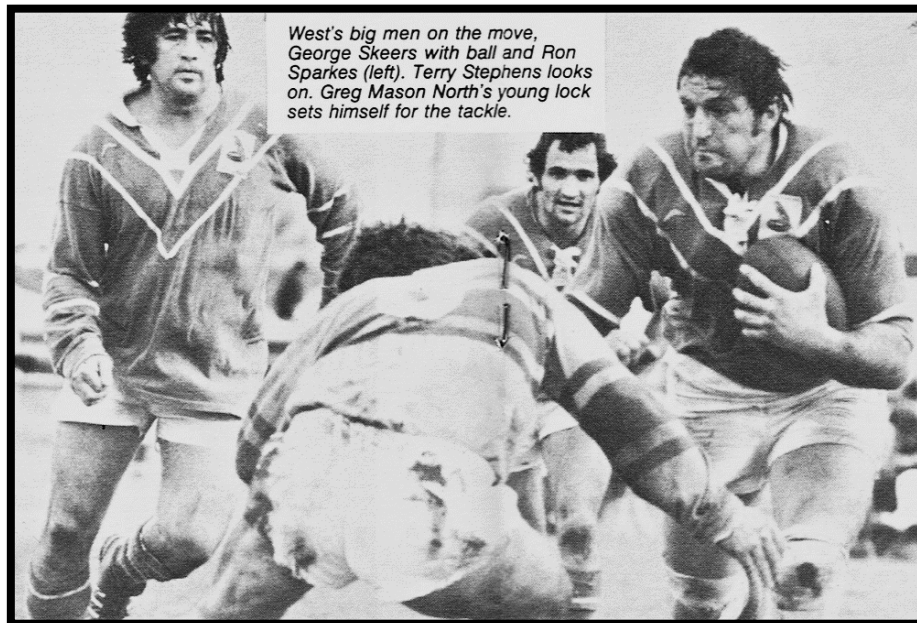
In 1974, George moved to Newcastle, NSW and joined up with the Newcastle Wests Rugby League club. His form was very good and he was selected to represent Newcastle against the touring Great Britain team. Newcastle always gave a good account against touring teams and although they eventually went down to the tourists 14-24 they gave Great Britain a contest.

LIONS TOUR 1974					
NEWCASTLE FIRSTS (AU)			14 – 24 LIONS		
TEAMS					
Keith HEMSWORTH	1	FB	2	David ECKERSLEY	
Warren SCOTMAN	2	W	27	Maurice RICHARDS	
Mark SCOBIE	3	C	5	David WILLICOMBE	
Kevin MYERS	4	C	3	John BEVAN	
Rod SNEESBY	5	W	7	Les DYL	
Robbie WISE	6	FE	4	John BUTLER	
Dennis WARD	7	HB	14	Alan BATES	
George SKEERS	8	FR	23	Jimmy THOMPSON	
Norm HENDERSON	9	HK	28	Bill RAMSEY	
David WHITE	10	FR	16	Jim MILLS	
Allan THOMSON (c)	11	2R	21	Colin DIXON	
Jeff ROACH	12	2R	19	Paul ROSE	
Peter HOWLETT	13	L	25	George NICHOLLS	
Greg OWENS	14	B	8	Chris HESKETH	
Roger MULLARD	15	B	18	Kevin ASHCROFT	
John RAPER		HC		Jim CHALLINOR	

Newcastle v Great Britain 13 July 1974 at Newcastle Sportsground

Newcastle Wests were one of the top teams in the local competition and have been Newcastle premiers on many occasions. The club has also produced a number of international players. George Skeers was recorded playing with Newcastle Wests for three seasons and on each occasion the First Grade team made the grand final only to be defeated in the big one.

George did have some success in 1976 when he played for Newcastle Wests in the 1976 Third Grade grand final. No further record has been found of George Skeers playing rugby league.



*West's big men on the move, George Skeers with ball and Ron Sparkes (left). Terry Stephens looks on. Greg Mason North's young lock sets himself for the tackle.*

George Skeers playing for Newcastle Wests 1976

<b>GRAND FINAL (3rd Grade)</b>			
SUNDAY, 12th SEPTEMBER, 1976 - 12.00 Noon		NEWCASTLE SPORTS GROUND	
<b>WEST (Rosellas)</b>		<b>NORTH (Bluebags)</b>	
<i>Red green &amp; white</i>		<i>Light &amp; dark blue</i>	
<i>Coach: Brian Warby</i>		<i>Coach: Dallas Davey</i>	
	<i>Age</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Wgt</i>
1. JOHN HULBERT.....	20	1. GARRY CASSIDY.....	21 12.4
2. NEV FRUEND.....	24 13.4	2. BOB TREVENA.....	23 12.5
3. ROB CHRISTIE.....	22 11.5	3. DAVID STEELE.....	24 13.7
4. W. KING.....	21 13.0	4. PHIL HOLMES.....	21 12.7*
5. VINCE CRONIN.....	25 11.7*	5. RON THOMAS.....	21 11.7
6. WAYNE EVANS.....	25 13.0	6. CRAIG EVANS.....	20 10.0
7. PAUL ANDERSON.....	27 11.6	7. DALLAS DAVEY (c).....	32 11.7
8. GEOFF GIDLEY.....	19 11.10	8. STEVE ALLANSON.....	20 13.0
9. JOHN O'DONOHUE.....	20 13.0*	9. KEL SWEETMAN.....	28 14.0
10. JOE BUDIN.....	22 13.2	10. TERRY NEWTON.....	20 13.7
11. KARL HUTCHINSON.....	28 14.2*	11. MIKE HURTZ.....	23 13.7*
12. DENNIS DUNCAN.....	25 12.5	12. DAVID CASSIDY.....	27 12.0
13. GEORGE SKEERS.....	28 15.3*	13. PAUL DANIEL.....	23 14.2*

Reserves: CHRIS NEWMAN, MARK DOBELL, DAVID NILLSON, TERRY DENT.

Newcastle Third Grade 1976 Grand Final Teams

George Skeers lived the remainder of his life in the Newcastle area and died at Glendale, NSW in December 2009.