Catholic colleges dominated the Sutherland Shire district rugby league competition with Aquinas College, Menai, competing in the open and under-16 grand finals.

De La Salle, Caringbah, defeated Aquinas in the under-16s, but the Menai college evened the score by winning the open final over the favourites, De La Salle, Cronulla.

The Cronulla boys were favoured to win after performing well in the recent Combined Catholic Colleges gala day. And they dominated their pool in the knockout competition.

De La Salle’s opening match against Heathcote High was a tough and
bruising encounter, building their win on the back of strong defence.

De La Salle halfback Luke Chisholm broke a scoreless deadlock when he scurried over in a brilliant individual effort to put his side up 6-0.

He scored again after the bell from an intercept just when Heathcote looked like tying the result.

De La Salle then defeated old rival St Patrick’s, Sutherland, to set up a grand final showdown with Aquinas.

Aquinas withstood numerous attacks on its line before a beautiful backline movement sent it into the break with a 4-0 lead.

De La Salle crossed the line shortly after the resumption, but the try was disallowed after the linesman spotted a foot on the sideline.

Aquinas ran in another try to take the title 8-0.

De La Salle captain Zac Wedesweiller lamented his side’s inability to convert its field position into points.

“As we struggled to break them down, I think we panicked and played catch-up footy too early in the second half,” he said.

“To Aquinas’ credit they were patient and took their chances when they arose.

“Although the boys were disappointed, I think we can use the defeat as a valuable learning experience.

“We need to learn how to be patient in attack and not panic when things aren’t going our way.”