



Sir Peter Leitch Club

AT MT SMART STADIUM, HOME OF THE MIGHTY VODAFONE WARRIORS

7th December 2016

Newsletter #151

Pasifika Talent Targeted as Former Star Vanishes and the NRL Goes to War Over Money

By David Kemeys

Former Sunday Star-Times Editor, Former Editor-in-Chief Suburban Newspapers, Long Suffering Warriors Fan



IT BARELY created a ripple, let alone a storm, but the news the Vodafone Warriors have announced the introduction of a Pasifika Youth Cup, should be celebrated.

The competition will add a layer to our development programme, and an important one.

The tournament will feature under-16 and 18 teams and will be played in Auckland from January 25-28. Expect there to be any number of eagle-eyed talent spotters there to watch, particularly as the Aussies continue to feast on a pool of talent they regularly raid.

Lining up will be New Zealand Maori, Samoa, Tonga, Fiji NZ, Cook Islands and Auckland Niue, with all the teams being hosted by the New Zealand Maori Rugby League, in association with the Warriors.

Warriors recruitment and development manager Tony Iro said the cup, and the club's other initiatives, give a valuable pathway.

We all know the dominance of Pasifika players on the league front, with top players making their way into the NRL, and there is zero reason to believe that is going to be any different any time soon.

"If young players are serious about their goals then they need to think about off-season training and the Pasifika Youth Cup provides a carrot for them to push hard during the preseason," Iro said.

There is no doubt it will be a competition that offers development players good football and the chance to get noticed and selected for our NYC squad.

"We're excited to work with the organisations involved and see this as becoming an important fixture in the league calendar."

Iro has called on elite junior players to contact the teams they might be eligible to play for.

"This is a really exciting concept."

This is the bit I thought was really interesting. "We're aware Fiji, Cook Islands and Niue have fewer players on their databases so we encourage talented league or rugby players of Fijian, Cook Islands or Niuean extraction to register their interest."

Rugby players come on over, you'd be most welcome.

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And in what must be one of the oddest league stories of the year, former Eel and Rooster Chad Robinson has vanished, and not surprisingly, his family is beyond comfort.

Robinson vanished more than a week ago and his family is refusing to give up hope of finding the 36-year-old, who played 159 NRL matches between 2000 and 2008.

Robinson was a typical Aussie forward, uncompromising and as hard as nails.

But he left his home without his wallet, phone or shoes, and wearing only shorts and a T-shirt, and nothing has been heard of him since.

A Let's Find Chad page has been shared more than 10,000 times on social media.

I have never been a big fan of the Eels, but you would not wish ill on the bloke, who has two teenage daughters who must be beside themselves.

Let's hope for a nice Christmas story with a happy ending.

The other league story making the headlines, though I suspect most ordinary fans don't care much, is the ongoing stoush between some clubs and under fire NRL chairman John Grant.

Most of us probably thought, just another fight between suits, and didn't really get into it.

But Warriors boss Jim Doyle came out and tried to explain what it is all about.

He's refused to back Grant and the Aussie media is now reporting the 16 NRL clubs have written to the NRL Commission calling for a vote of no confidence.

It's all about money - most things are.

The NRL back-tracked on an agreed funding model, and Doyle says the clubs won't have a bar of it.

"We had a meeting and it is pretty well known all 16 clubs are disappointed that the NRL has changed tack," he said on Radio Sport.

About a year ago Grant and the clubs announced they had agreed a funding structure for the future.

That deal underlined what the clubs did as they went about planning for the future.

The NRL about face has left the clubs fuming, work wasted, and in the dark about possible funding.

Basically, and I am no expert, the deal that was reached split the money from the game evenly between clubs, players and grassroots footy.

So if you made twice as much, everyone got twice as much income.

With an extra \$100 million on the line for the 16 NRL clubs, you can understand why things are, shall we say, strained.

Don't expect everyone to kiss and make up on this one for a while yet.

Keep up with Sir Peter Leitch! Click the icons to follow him on:



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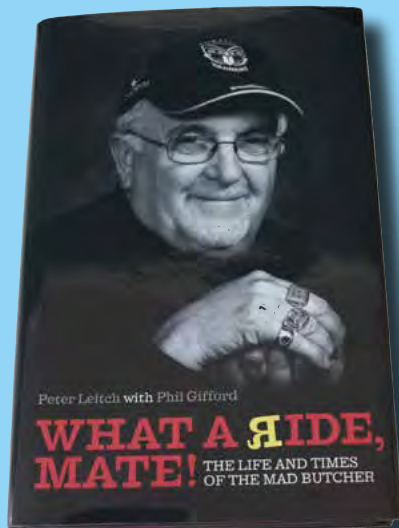
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Winner will be drawn on 14/12/16

South Island Kiwis Association Function

On Friday Night I had a great time at the South Island Kiwis Association annual function hosted at Gary Clarke's Museum in Christchurch. Below I have a few photos and three accounts of the evening by different writers. - Sir Peter Leitch



All the Ex Kiwis Players, Coaches and Managers:

Back row from right to left:

Bruce Towart, Phil Precsott, Frank Endacott, Jim Fisher, Rod Walker, Sir Peter Leitch, Ian Drayton, Eddie Kerrigan, Marty Crequer, David Field, Skippy O'Donnell, Ray Baxendale, Mocky Brereton and Gary Clarke.

Front row from right to left:

Garry Gibb, Neville Tiller, John Bond, Kevin Pearce, George Turner, Allan Amer, Angus Thompson, Jimmy Bond and Bill Whitehead.



Everyone who attended the function.



Ex Kiwis in Attendance:

Back Row from left: Jim Fisher, Rod Walker, Ian Drayton, Eddie Kerrigan, Marty Crequer, David Field, Skippy O'Donnell, Ray Baxendale, Mocky Brereton, Gary Clarke.

Front Row from left: Garry Gibb, Neville Tiller, John Bond, Kevin Pearce, George Turner, Allan Amer, Angus Thompson, Jimmy Bond.



Andrea Nelson, GM of NZ operations of the 2017 RLWC, talks to the gathering.



Bill Whitehead and Skippy O'Donnell.



Bill Whitehead, Jim O'Neil and Rod Roddock.



Bill Whitehead, Rugby League Bill to his mates, makes his grand appearance. Bill does so much to organise South Island Kiwis functions.



Bruce Everest, Greg Roberts and Mark Fuller.



David Field and Peter Ryan.



Subrina Kunz (CRL Board Member), Eddie Kerrigan, David Field and Shane Collins CEO CRL



Garry Clarke and Frank Endacott, Ex Kiwis, Warriors and Canterbury Coach (to name a few), who's nicknamed Happy Frank.



Garry Clarke, Andrea Nelson and Glenyse Clarke. Gary played for the Kiwis, Canterbury and the South Island plus coached Papanui, Sydenham and Canterbury.



Jim Fisher, Bruce Everest and Greg Roberts.



John Bond, John Flanagan and Kevin Pearce.



John Coffey, Colin MacKenzie and Jim Fisher in the right hand corner.



Mark Fuller, Gary Clarke, Ian Drayton.



Marty Crequer former Kiwi, Woody and Justin Wallace.



Mocky Brereton, Soss, Ray Baxendale, Angus Thompson.



Morrie Molloy, Ray Baxendale, Angus Thompson and Brian Evans.



Reon Edwards, NZRL Board Member, and Paul Costigan.



Rod Walker with Tony Drake.



Shane Collins, CEO of Canterbury Rugby League, and Bill Whitehead, Secretary-Manager South Island Kiwis Association.



Sir Peter Leitch and Liz Prescott.



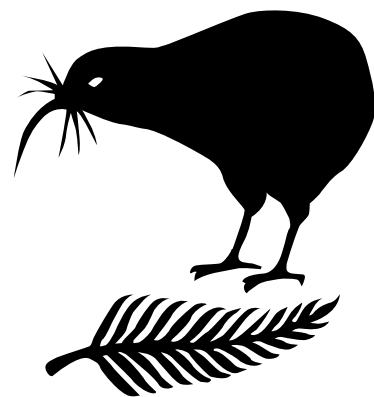
Sir Peter Leitch, Patron of League 4 Life, speaks to the crowd about the foundation.



Skippy O' Donnell, President of the South Island Kiwis Association, and Gary Clarke who hosted us all on the night.



Will Evans and Bill Whitehead.



**NEW ZEALAND
RUGBY LEAGUE™**

South Island Kiwis Association Function

By Bill Whitehead QSM

Secretary-Manager South Is Rugby League Kiwis Association

SOUTH ISLAND Rugby League Kiwis gathered for its annual Christmas gathering at Patron Gary Clarke's League Museum on 2nd December to reminisce with former Canterbury colleagues and friends, and test Harrington's products.

Guest of Honour was NZRL Ambassador Sir Peter Leitch who brought down Andrea Nelson, who is CEO of NZ for the Rugby League World Cup 2017

At the gathering Sir Peter announced the appointment of Gary Clarke and former NZRL coach Frank Endacott, as Ambassadors for the Rugby League World Cup 2017

Canterbury League CEO Shane Collins also spoke, assuring all that in spite of some adverse comments in various media, schoolboys League was still "alive and kicking" in Canterbury, although thought had been given to abandoning rep football below 12s.

It was emphasised to her that this is where our future Kiwi players come from, and they must be looked after.

Leitch's fellow Honorary Vice President John Harrington also spoke of his schoolboys career, when he played for Brunner with future Kiwis Jock Butterfield, Trevor Kilkelly and Colin McMaster.

Former Kiwi Coaches, Managers and Masseurs as well as Honorary Members reminisced about the good old days, while enjoying Gary and John's hospitality. Sir Peter gave all a souvenir plastic plate with all World Cup games listed including a match against Scotland on 4th November, 2017 and a quarter final on 18th November and he also ran a raffle and raised \$500 for the association. The West Coast's Tony Coll was confirmed as Vice Patron to replace the late George Menzies,

Bill Flavell was inducted as an Honorary Member in memory of his late club and rep mate, Mita Mohi, who died last month.. Members observed a moments silence in memory of Mohi, Menzies, Reese Griffiths and Arnold Green.

Bill Whitehead said he appreciated the guidance of his private mentor, Jim Fisher, who had led a Canterbury 15s in its first tournament win. Whitehead reminded him that he had two future Kiwis, Gary Clarke and Gary Blackler in his side. He also told Fisher who had been ordered off in its game against South Auckland the day before North-South match. Archie Stuart gave him a "stern warning" and told not to retaliate again, but escaped a suspension, mainly because he was required to lead South against North the next day..

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PALMERSTON NORTH CITY COUNCIL

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SPORT

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The South Island Kiwis Association Christmas Get-Together

By Will Evans

THE SOUTH Island Rugby League Kiwis Association's annual Christmas get-together had a distinct World Cup flavour, with 2017 RLWC New Zealand Operations Manager Andrea Nelson and chief ambassador Sir Peter Leitch travelling down from Auckland to address the gathering, while two Canterbury legends were unveiled as local ambassadors.

The meeting was held at the Association's headquarters – the rugby league museum at Gary Clarke Plastics in Woolston – last Friday, fittingly one year to the day out from the 2017 World Cup final at Brisbane's Suncorp Stadium.

After typically passionate and entertaining introductions from South Island Rugby League Kiwis Association President Mike O'Donnell (Kiwi #536) and Secretary Bill Whitehead, Nelson spoke of her enthusiasm about bringing the Kiwis v Scotland pool game and a quarter-final (likely to be Fiji v Samoa) to Christchurch's AMI Stadium next November.

"We all know the Kiwis don't play at home enough," Nelson said.

"We went to a massive effort to make sure we got games here – not just in Auckland, not just in Wellington – but all over the country in the North and South Island to give people the opportunity to see the Kiwis.

"Our second-highest selling game is New Zealand versus Scotland, so the Christchurch people are already getting behind the event."

Nelson also implored the throng of former Kiwis greats and Canterbury Rugby League identities to spread the World Cup message.

"You guys are rugby league, you're in your communities every day and we'd love for you to be talking to people about the World Cup," she said.

"Whatever environment you're in, tell people to come along."

Sir Peter Leitch echoed Nelson's sentiments, and issued a call to arms for what promises to be one of the most important seasons in New Zealand Rugby League history – and a bumper year for a Canterbury public traditionally starved of top-level rugby league.

"I'm humbled to be here in front of so many legends of the game, but next year, in my lifetime in rugby league, is going to be the biggest year," the impassioned, irreverent 'Butch' declared.

"We're going to really be on centre stage, and I think it's very important for us as league people to get out there and tell our friends (about the World Cup)."

Gary Clarke (Kiwi #451), the ever-generous host of the Association's event and a former New Zealand Test halfback, was named alongside Kiwis coaching icon Frank Endacott as the two Canterbury-based ambassadors for the World Cup.

Bill Flavell was also inducted as an Honorary Member of the South Island Rugby League Kiwis Association in memory of his late club and representative teammate, Mita Mohi (Kiwi #501), who passed away last month, and West Coast great Tony Coll (Kiwi #503) was confirmed as the Association's Vice Patron to replace the late George Menzies (Kiwi #326).

The gathering observed a moment's silence in memory of the four members who had passed away since the last meeting: long-serving Canterbury front-rower Mohi, New Zealand Team of the Century five-eighth Menzies, and fellow Coasters Reese Griffiths (Kiwi #372) and Arnold Green (Kiwi #374).

Equally importantly, it was a rare opportunity for old mates to catch up over a beer and share stories of glorious rugby league days past, and to honour some of the greatest servants the code has ever known.

The 2017 World Cup is an event arguably unprecedented in New Zealand Rugby League history in terms of size and exposure, but the tireless efforts of the legends who have nurtured the game in this country for almost 110 years have certainly not been forgotten.



Ex Kiwis at the Function

South Island Kiwis Association AGM

By Gordon Findlater – The Star

TWO CANTERBURY league legends were named as World Cup ambassadors at the South Island Rugby League Kiwis Association AGM last Friday night.

In attendance were Rugby League World Cup New Zealand operations manager Andrea Nelson and chief ambassador Sir Peter Leitch, who both travelled down for the meeting which was held exactly one year out from the 2017 World Cup final.

“The night was fantastic, the fact is that Gary Clarke has a beautiful rugby league museum which I've donated quite a bit to over the years. I just love being around league people, a lot of those blokes were the pioneers that put the game on the map in this country,” said Leitch.

On the night, Nelson spoke of the enthusiasm surrounding the upcoming tournament and the important role that Christchurch will play. Host of the evening and former Kiwi halfback Gary Clarke and former Kiwis coach Frank Endacott were named as the two Christchurch ambassadors for the World Cup.

“The role is to drum up interest for the tournament and spread the word. We want to make sure that we have a good turnout for the two games in Christchurch,” said Endicott.

The locals appear to be taking the message on board, the New Zealand v Scotland game on November 4 at AMI Stadium is New Zealand's second fastest selling match. Christchurch will also host a quarter final on November 18, predicted to be played between Fiji and Samoa.

“It's fantastic for Christchurch people and they showed that they support the game at the highest level with their turnout for the Penrith game last year,” said Endicott.

The AGM included Bill Flavell being inducted as an Honorary Member of the association in memory of his late club and representative teammate, Mita Mohi, who passed away last month. West Coast great Tony Coll was also confirmed as the association's Vice Patron to replace the late George Menzies.

Sir Peter Leitch kindly donated a collection of rugby league magazines and helped raise \$500 for the association through a raffle.

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THE SYDNEY Cricket Ground was the place to be last Sunday afternoon. The 22,500 plus crowd enjoyed a highly entertaining game of cricket in lovely summer weather. Both the New Zealand and Australian teams played positively and the game was in doubt until late in the proceedings. Australian captain, Steve Smith, was the star but Kiwi, Martin Guptill, was not far behind him. Smith's innings of 164 from 157 balls, including four sixes and 14 fours was the game winner for his team. It set a new record mark for a 50 over ODI match at the Sydney Cricket Ground, eclipsing the previous mark of 162 set by South African, AB de Villiers. As well as this, Smith pulled off an amazing left handed catch to dismiss BJ Watling. Smith has played 165 matches for Australia in all three forms of the game and scored 7,505 runs. This includes 47 Tests, 88 ODIs and 30 T20Is. He has 15 Test centuries and seven ODI hundreds, while his six count is 70 (31 in Tests, 28 in ODIs and 11 in T20Is). He has 129 international catches (58 in Tests, 53 in ODIs and 18 in T20Is).

Guptill's 114 in Sydney came from just 102 balls and included six towering sixes and 10 fours. While he was at the wicket, New Zealand were a definite chance of chasing down Australia's solid total of eight for 324. Now 30 years of age, Guptill has played 243 matches for New Zealand and scored 9,461 runs in all three forms of the game. This includes 47 Tests, 135 ODIs and 61 T20Is. He has three Test centuries, 11 ODI hundreds and one T20I three figure innings, for a total of 15 centuries for New Zealand. His total of 223 international sixes is another major stat. In Tests, he has 23, in ODIs 124 and T20Is 76. He is one of the many reasons I will be watching the telecasts of the remaining two games in this series. The two teams play at Canberra on Tuesday 6 December and Melbourne on 9 December.

Another one of my favourite Kiwi cricketers did well in Sydney. He is 27 year old Rotorua-born left arm quick, Trent Boult, who finished with two wickets for 51 from his 10 overs. He collected the scalps of Australia's two top scorers, Smith and Travis Head, who made 52. Bolt has taken 255 wickets in his 95 games for New Zealand in all three forms. In 47 Tests, he has 173 wickets, in 37 ODIs he has 67 and in 11 T20Is he has 15. This year in 10 ODI matches for New Zealand, he has collected 21 wickets at an average of 23.6.

While we have our refereeing problems in Rugby League, there are more in Rugby Union. The difference is in Rugby League, the whistle blowers come under plenty of criticism for their mistakes, while in the Rah Rahs the mistakes are publicly ignored by everybody, including most media, players, officials, the governing body and certainly the referees. The Wallabies received a serve from South African Jaco Peyper in their 37-21 loss to England on Saturday night and by the French referee the week before when they went down to Ireland. After a loss is not the time to whinge, but I was elated to see New Zealand-born Journalist, Paul Cully, in Monday's Sydney Morning Herald, write that the Wallabies had legitimate reasons to grumble about the referee. He mentioned that there were problems with three of the four English tries. The All Blacks were not too fussed about Peyper's performance when they defeated Ireland 21-9 on 19 November.

Most, if not all, of the Australian Rugby League teams are now back in training for the 2017 season. The Roosters worked out in Sydney's Moore Park area last Friday on a very hot Sydney day and then around 1pm, enjoyed a lunch together with their coaching staff at the Azure Cafe, in the Members area of the Sydney Cricket Ground. On a positive note, the NSW Country Rugby League has reported that their numbers have increased to more than 55,000 registered players from 53,778 in 2015. Of course, many of these are females because of the high participation in Womens League Tag outside Sydney.

Cronulla captain, Paul Gallen, has a charity fight this coming Friday night against Canberra Raider, Junior Paulo at Sydney's Horden Pavilion. Other Rugby League men will feature in this charity night including Todd Carney, Chris Sandow, Pauli Pauli and Peni Terepo.

If all is well for Gallen, after meeting Junior Paulo, he will face former MMA fighter, Ryan Carr, on 23 December at Southern Cross Group Stadium (Shark Park).

All Blacks Test Record Under Threat

By Ben Francis



IN OCTOBER we were celebrating the All Blacks claiming the world record for most consecutive wins by a tier one Test team after they beat Australia 37-10 at Eden Park. That was their 18th straight win, and yes I know technically Cyprus hold the overall word record with 24 straight Test wins but it really seems like nobody in New Zealand is bothered by that. But winning 24 Tests is impressive by any team.

But the All Blacks record of 18 straight wins is really under threat and the record could be with a new nation as early as March.

England who did not make the Rugby World Cup finals last year claimed their 14th straight win when they beat Australia 37-21 which also capped off an unbeaten season. If England can go through the Six Nations without losing they will take the record off the All Blacks. England start off next years Six Nations against France, followed by Wales, Italy, Scotland and then Ireland.

Ireland were the team to end the All Blacks winning streak so it will be interesting to see if Ireland will be the team to end England's dominant run. The record currently tied their own record for most consecutive wins.

Englands dominance does cap off an impressive year for Northern Hemisphere teams against Southern Hemisphere teams. Six Nations and Rugby Championship teams faced each other 27 times in 2016 and won overall 14-13 in head to head matchups. That is a massive turnaround considering since Rugby Championship teams won all games against Six Nations teams at last years Rugby World Cup 7-0.

2017 offers another great year of international rugby with the British and Irish Lions facing the All Blacks. Many people I have spoken to think the Lions can win at least one game in the three match Test series. Before all that, the draw for the Rugby World Cup will be confirmed in May.

Twelve of the 20 teams for the tournament, including host Japan, have already been decided, with the other eight coming through a global qualifying process. These 12 teams will be split into three bands based on their current world rankings, while the eight teams that come through the qualifiers will be divided in two more bands. The four pools will contain one randomly selected team from each band for a total of five teams in the group.

Vodafone Warriors in the Far North



Kaeo's No1 fans Ciano Rudolph & Hongi Hoey watch the boys exit the plane.



Ciano Rudolph & Hongi Hoey with Charlie Gubb.



Ciano Rudolph & Hongi Hoey with Simon Mannering.



Rudolph & Hongi Hoey with Stephen Kearney.

Don't Blame Kane Smith

Smith's Survival was the Flawed System's Fault

By John Deaker



AFTER THE first one-day international against Australia on Sunday many people were very critical of Kane Williamson for not using the DRS to review an LBW appeal from Trent Boult when Steve Smith was only on 14. History shows it was a key moment of the match because Smith went on to score 164.

History also shows that Williamson didn't have a great game as captain. However, criticism of his leadership should be directed more at the confusing use of his bowlers than his non-use of the DRS on Smith. The flawed DRS system is much more to blame than Williamson is for what transpired.

The technology used by the DRS continues to get better and better but the system the ICC uses doesn't get the best out of the technology. To only get one chance for an incorrect referral in one-dayers is ridiculous. It puts pressure on captains to be conservative about the use of their referrals which often leads to the review system not being used at critical times when it should be.

The problem tracks right back to the philosophy the ICC got obsessed with when it introduced the Decision Review System ; the intention of the DRS was supposedly to eliminate 'howler' decisions. The ICC's theory is that only giving teams one incorrect review in one-dayers prevents captains from stopping the game too often to review decisions.

The ICC's philosophy overlooks a key point: for LBW decisions batsman and bowlers (and umpires too!) often DON'T KNOW whether a decision is a howler or not because it all happens so quickly. Uncertainty whether the ball has pitched outside leg stump or not is a common occurrence. That's why technology has the ability to be so important when ruling on LBWs; To expect captains or batsman to decide in real time whether they are sure (and they should be SURE to confirm in their minds that the decision is a howler and worth risking their only appeal available) a ball is heading down leg side, has pitched outside leg stump, or received a bit of an inside edge is ridiculous.

Umpires would probably be the first people to defend Williamson for not using the DRS when Smith was on 14. They have the best seat in the house yet over the years they've given much worse decisions than Mick Martell's 'Not out' call on Sunday. Before the DRS was introduced captains often got the rub of the green, particularly when batting, and that seems to have remained the case during the DRS era. If there was any doubt (which there was because the ball was only clipping the top of the stumps on the predicted path that viewers were able to see at home) then Smith was always likely to get the benefit of the doubt.

The simplest answer to this problem would be for umpires to have an unlimited amount of their own reviews. You could also retain the one existing captain review under a revamped system but umpires could use the video replays whenever they felt there was significant doubt. If the ICC wanted they could solely make the umpire reviews applicable for LBW decisions. However, that seems an unnecessary restriction because there's some 'general' 50/50 calls (not howlers!) that they could definitely use help with, particularly edges down leg side and bat/pad decisions.

We've seen in the last few months India finally accepting the use of the DRS in their matches so it's utilization won't be going away in a hurry. The time has now come to tweak the WAY we use it.



A dejected NZ Captain Kane Williamson after being dismissed for 9.
New Zealand Black Caps v Australia. Photo www.photosport.nz

2017 RLWC Womens Draw

THE RUGBY League World Cup 2017 (RLWC2017) Organising Committee (OC) today announced the tournament draw for next year's Women's Rugby League World Cup.

With the support of the NSW Government, the Women's Rugby League World Cup 2017 (WRLWC2017) pool matches and semi-finals will be played at Southern Cross Group Stadium, the home of 2016 NRL Premiers the Cronulla-Sutherland Sharks. The WRLWC2017 final will be played as a double header with the men's final at Brisbane Stadium on 2 December 2017, through support from the Queensland Government.

Pool A features reigning World Cup winners, Australia, taking on England and the Cook Islands.

Pool B has New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and Canada vying for progression to the semi-finals.

The tournament draw will see the three pool rounds played as triple headers on Thursday 16 November, Sunday 19 November and Wednesday 22 November respectively, with the semi-finals to be contested as a double header on Sunday 26 November 2017.

RLWC2017 Chief Executive Officer, Andrew Hill, said the anticipation surrounding the WRLWC2017 reflects the growth of women's rugby league and the tournament draw supports what will be an exciting event.

"Interest in women's rugby league has never been greater and we want this tournament to provide a platform to showcase these world-class athletes and inspire others to follow in their footsteps.

"The two pools are evenly matched and lends itself perfectly to exciting rugby league. Having multiple games on the one day at Southern Cross Group Stadium will create a real festival of rugby league for teams and fans alike.

"We look forward to welcoming the six competing teams to Australia as they vie for the title of 2017 Women's Rugby League World Cup winners

Women's Rugby League World Cup 2017 – Tournament Pools

Pool A - Australia, England, Cook Islands

Pool B - New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Canada

Women's Rugby League World Cup 2017 – Tournament Draw

16/11/2017	Pool – Round 1	New Zealand vs Canada	Southern Cross Group Stadium, Cronulla
16/11/2017	Pool – Round 1	England vs PNG	Southern Cross Group Stadium, Cronulla
16/11/2017	Pool – Round 1	Australia vs Cook Islands	Southern Cross Group Stadium, Cronulla
19/11/2017	Pool – Round 2	PNG vs Canada	Southern Cross Group Stadium, Cronulla
19/11/2017	Pool – Round 2	New Zealand vs Cook Islands	Southern Cross Group Stadium, Cronulla
19/11/2017	Pool – Round 2	Australia vs England	Southern Cross Group Stadium, Cronulla
22/11/2017	Pool – Round 3	England vs Cook Islands	Southern Cross Group Stadium, Cronulla
22/11/2017	Pool – Round 3	Australia vs Canada	Southern Cross Group Stadium, Cronulla
22/11/2017	Pool – Round 3	New Zealand vs PNG	Southern Cross Group Stadium, Cronulla
26/11/2017	Semi-Final	1st Pool B vs 2nd Pool A	Southern Cross Group Stadium, Cronulla
26/11/2017	Semi-Final	1st Pool A vs 2nd Pool B	Southern Cross Group Stadium, Cronulla
2/12/2017	Final	Brisbane Stadium	

Ticket details for the Women's Rugby League World Cup 2017 matches in Sydney will be announced in due course.

Fans can now purchase tickets for Finals Day at Brisbane Stadium on 2 December 2017 from RLWC2017.com. See both the women's and men's World Cup winners crowned on same day with the one ticket.

Reader Mail

THANK YOU for my parcel Sir Mad Butcher. Well pleased with the jersey. Take care buddy and thanks again for your kind gift sent from NZ to the UK. Your a true gentleman and a legend.

- Butch Barker



WE WOULD like to say a massive thank you to you Peter Leitch for taking time out of your busy schedule to send these gifts all the way to the UK for Harry. Harry loves his gifts and the posters take pride of place in his bedroom. Watch this space as Harry wants to play in New Zealand when he is older and me and his dad intend on doing everything we can for him to get there. He is already playing for a local team and has just won player of the year. Thank you again what a nice man you are you made a little boy very happy leading up to Christmas.

Sorry his Ball is not in the picture he has left it at his grandmas

Him and his team mates are in the paper tomorrow

- Harry Pratt



Manu Scores a Double

Manu Vatuvei caught 2 good sized fish out on a fishing trip with a group including Bodene and Gubby

John Holloway





THE GREATEST WEEKEND!

SAT 4 & SUN 5 FEB 2017
EDEN PARK, AUCKLAND



WHO'S YOUR PICK TO TAKE OUT THE 2017 DOWNER NRL AUCKLAND NINES?

THE 2017 Downer NRL Auckland Nines are fast approaching and the TAB have already put out the odds for who will be crowned the 2017 champion!

As we head into the fourth edition of the tournament, the Warriors (\$4.50) are the red-hot favourites, as they've been since the tournaments inception. With live-wire players like Shaun Johnson, Roger Tuivasa-Sheck and Tuimoala Lolohea it's hard not to look past them. Drawn with two outside contenders, the St George Illawarra Dragons and Manly Sea Eagles (both \$19.00) along with last year's winners, the Parramatta Eels (\$9.00) the home team should make their way to the knockout rounds with relative ease.

The inaugural winners of the tournament and 2015 NRL Grand Final winners, the North Queensland Cowboys (\$6.00) will fancy their chances of claiming another Nines trophy with club captain Johnathan Thurston finally pulling on their jumper in this format of the game. No doubt his show-and-go will keep a lot of defences on their toes.

Since his return to the NRL, Jarryd Hayne has been in the headlines for all sorts of reasons, but his most recent, joining the Gold Coast Titans' (\$9.00) line-up in the Nines this year. Along with youngsters Kane Elgey and Ash Taylor, the Titans will be looking to go one game better than their 2016 semi-final defeat to the Warriors.

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Andy Hay Arrives as ARL's New Football Development Manager

AUCKLAND RUGBY League (ARL) are pleased to announce the appointment of former England international Andy Hay as the new football development manager.

Hay will work closely with the ARL management team responsible for the overall implementation and delivery of ARL's strategic plan, and will manage the football development team in delivering their programmes.

"Andy arrives at the ARL with a proven track record as a rugby league development professional," said Cameron McGregor, chairman of Auckland Rugby League.

"We see this appointment as critical to helping our clubs develop their pathways, and Auckland once again showing leadership and excellence in grass roots development.

"With over 15 years of playing experience at an elite level and 10 years coaching experience, we believe Andy will add tremendous value to the organisation."

Hay has been previously involved in both sport development and business management.

He was also an assistant coach with Salford, Hull FC and Castleford, leaving his position as head coach at Featherstone just last year.

"I would like to thank Cameron and the board at Auckland Rugby League for giving me this opportunity," said Hay.

"I am looking forward to the challenges the role presents and to work alongside the enthusiastic and dedicated team at the ARL."

"I am extremely passionate about the game at all levels and will strive to improve what we offer at the ARL so that the clubs and community can develop and deliver the players and coaches of the future."



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Great to catch up with Kieran Read the ALL BLACKS Captain over the weekend top man.



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