

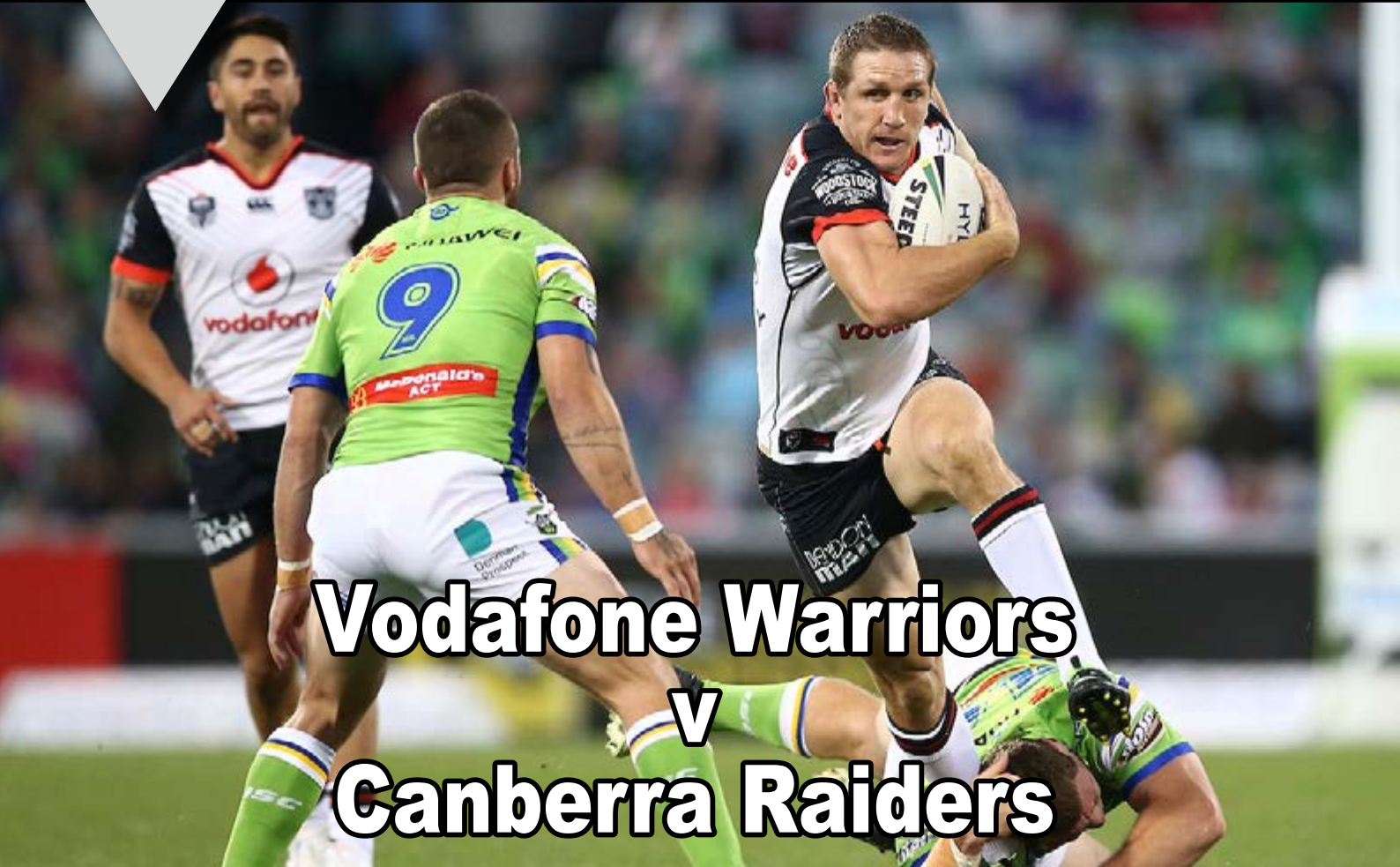


Sir Peter Leitch Club

AT MT SMART STADIUM, HOME OF THE MIGHTY VODAFONE WARRIORS

19th April 2017

Newsletter #166



Vodafone Warriors v Canberra Raiders

Ryan Hoffman evades a tackle.



Roger Tuivasa-Sheck gets tackled.



Shaun Johnson in action.

Photos courtesy of www.photosport.nz



Matulino Named on Bench

by Richard Becht

BEN MATULINO'S comeback moves a step closer with his inclusion in the extended 21-man squad for the Vodafone Warriors' traditional Anzac Day NRL clash against the Storm at AAMI Park in Melbourne next Tuesday (7.00pm kick-off local time; 9.00pm NZT).

While the match is still a week away, the Vodafone Warriors are required to submit their squad as usual to-day.

In doing so, head coach Stephen Kearney has included the 28-year-old Matulino in his line-up of eight interchange contenders.

The senior prop, four games short of becoming just the club's fourth 200-game player, has been sidelined following knee surgery.

"Ben's getting closer," said Kearney.

"He has been making good progress since returning to full training and should be ready to play soon."

When he does make his comeback, Matulino will join the handful of players who have appeared across 10 NRL seasons for the Vodafone Warriors – Stacey Jones, Awen Guttenbeil, Lance Hohaia, Jerome Ropati, Manu Vatuvei, Simon Mannering and Sam Rapira.

Matulino's inclusion on the bench is the only change from the 21-man squad initially named for last Saturday's clash against Canberra. He joins Nathaniel Roache, Charlie Gubb, Ligi Sao, Sam Lisone, Bunty Afoa, Ata Hingano and Mason Lino on the extended bench.

Next Tuesday's encounter will be the eighth Anzac Day match between the Storm and the Vodafone Warriors since the fixture was first introduced in 2009. On that occasion, the match finished in a 14-14 draw after golden point extra time. Current assistant coach Stacey Jones lined up for the Vodafone Warriors that day; of this year's squad, veteran back rower Simon Mannering, front rowers Jacob Lillyman and Matulino plus wing Manu Vatuvei played for the Vodafone Warriors while Ryan Hoffman was in the Storm's line-up.

The Vodafone Warriors will head to Melbourne with a 3-4 win-loss record after their seventh-round 8-20 reverse against the Raiders in Canberra on Saturday.



VODAFONE WARRIORS

v

MELBOURNE STORM

AAMI Park, Melbourne

7.00pm, Tuesday, April 25

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 Roger Tuivasa-Sheck c | 12 Ryan Hoffman |
| 2 Blake Ayshford | 13 Simon Mannering |
| 3 David Fusitu'a | Interchange: |
| 4 Solomone Kata | 14 Nathaniel Roache |
| 5 Ken Maumalo | 15 Charlie Gubb |
| 6 Kieran Foran | 16 Ligi Sao |
| 7 Shaun Johnson | 17 Sam Lisone |
| 8 James Gavet | 18 Ben Matulino |
| 9 Issac Luke | 20 Bunty Afoa |
| 10 Jacob Lillyman | 21 Mafoa'aeata Hingano |
| 11 Bodene Thompson | 22 Mason Lino |

More Easter Misery

By David Kemeys

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



HOW IS that when you don't really expect to win, and you don't, you still feel really disappointed? For 40 minutes it was like watching men possessed, we had all the ball, made all the running, just did not score all the points.

Then for the second 40 minutes we had none of the ball, made none of the running and conceded all of the points.

Apparently though, we are still working to "develop a clinical mindset and eradicate basic errors". I know this because I read it in the paper, and tell you what, it makes me feel a whole heap better.

A more cynical man might have thought we would have got around to that kind of thinking a bit sooner, but good to know someone has realised it is a bit of an issue.

The Raiders beat us 20-8 and they will do the same to plenty of others, especially if they get the leg-up from the crowd and the hometown decisions that come with it.

We can whinge that we got the brown end of the stick more than once from the men with the whistles, but our error rate in that second 40 was horrible, especially when you consider we made only four mistakes in the first half.

All credit to the Raiders, they played much better and forced a lot of pressure, but 13 errors and no second half points, is not going to send any Warriors fan off to their bed happy.

That is the thing with our lot, give us a bit of hope with wins over the Titans and Eels then bring us back down to earth with a thump.

"Every week, I feel we're taking a step to where we want to go," coach Stephen Kearney said.

Let's not forget just how awful we have been, so if we are just inconsistent now, that's actually progress. It might be frustrating, but there you go.

And no, I can't do it, I can not get through without mentioning five penalties to none in the second half, two disallowed tries, an incorrect play the ball, and a blatant strip.

On the other hand I also can not get through without mentioning Bodene Thompson, who I have defended many times and who I continue to rate as a fine player. But what the hell was that cheap shot over the top about?

He quite rightly copped a dangerous contact charge after going on report for his forearm to the head of Aidan Sezer. Frankly I would have applauded if he had just kicked his arse, annoying little shit that he is, but it was indicative of the frustration that had crept in by that time, and it cost us two points off the boot of Canberra captain Jarrod Croker, who we should employ immediately if only to teach our centres how to tackle.

At least Thompson avoids suspension with his early guilty plea, which means he will be free to play against Melbourne, though hands up anyone who thinks we will win that one.

Thought not.

Thompson was in the papers at the weekend talking about his future, which is up in the air given he is off-contract and we have already signed Tohu Harris.

Even his biggest supporter, which is to say me, would have to admit he can be brilliant one week and disappointing the next, so he has a big job ahead of him.

Continued on next page...

It's also easy to forget that the man rated as one of the best buys of the 2015 season, when he was on fire, had to play hooker in round one and in the centres in rounds two and three.

Don't let me hear anyone questioning his commitment, but he must love being in the back row.

I will go out on a limb here and tell you I expect him to be named in the Kiwis after being a non-playing member in the 2014 Four Nations tournament.

But at the end of a miserable Easter I had to spend in my sick-bed, and at which I did not receive one single measly egg, it is yet another dismal trip to Canberra, just as Sir Pete tipped.

That is what 12 losses in our last 15 visits.

At least we get to come home to Auckland, their poor fans actually have to live in the place

Foran Sage Drags On Another Week

I wish I had a dollar for every centimetre of newspaper space taken up on Kieran Foran's future, because I'd be a wealthy man.

The latest into the fray is the Storm's Billy Slater, who has tipped Foran as Cooper Cronk's replacement.

On The Sunday Footy Show he had this to say: "I think he would suit the style of play down in Melbourne. Just the directness that he plays with would certainly suit our style of football."

Let's face it, the Storm have a strong Kiwi presence, and a little thing like the salary cap is not going to be something they worry about.

To be fair to Melbourne, though why you would want to be when they never cared about being fair to anyone else is beyond me, they will have Cronk's cheque, and maybe even Slater's, if he pulls the plug.

Meanwhile you can not deny that we are flat out waiting for Shaun Johnson and Foran to decide their futures.

It's not like good halves grow on trees, let alone grow on trees and want to come to Auckland. But the problem is, the longer it goes on, the harder it will make it to replace them if they go.

And most of us will have already recognised a good forward or two would not go amiss, but who knows what we have to spend until the pair make their

decisions.

It is getting perilously close to the club having to decide their futures for them.

It is blindingly obvious that the squad needs improving. It can not be only about signing the halves combination.

All of which makes it all the more surprising Foran's new manager Sam Ayoub won't rule out Foran staying, and denies a return to Oz is a formality.

"He hasn't got me involved to get him out of New Zealand. To help him through that process I've got to understand his priorities and his family circumstances. At this stage, anything you see written is pissing in the wind."

Game Of The Week

Take a bow the Intrust Super Premiership team. What a game that was, 30-30 and all the way to the final whistle.

Bit of a bugger it was the Mounties who went in with 90 seconds to go, but that's life, and it still leaves Ricky Henry's men undefeated after seven rounds.

Talk about ebb and flow.

In the first 10 minutes the Mounties had the ball once – once!

During that time halfback Mason Lino sent Albert Vete over in the third minute, and five-eighth Sam Cook strolled over in the sixth.

Full credit to the Mounties, they fought back and scored wide out after quarter of an hour, before Ofa-hiki Ogden and winger Junior Pauga crossed to give us a 22-4 lead after 26 minutes.

The Mounties crossed again to make it 22-8 at the break and the comeback was on when they scored again minutes into the second half, and again soon after to make it 22-18.

Matt Allwood scored to give us breathing space but Mounties fullback Zac Santo replied.

Lino landed a penalty with nine minutes left to take it out to 30-24.

But Santo to scored his second try with 90 seconds left and former Warrior Isaac John converted to level the scores for the first time in the match.

Hell of a game!



The biggest moment of the Warriors clash with the Raiders at Canberra came in the 64th minute. At that stage the home team were leading 12-8 and the Warriors were still very much in the game. Around 45 metres out from their tryline, a Warriors player was ruled by referee Adam Gee to have lost possession at the play the ball and so a scrum went down with the Raiders feed. A few tackles later the Raiders scored and from then on the game was over. A replay of the play the ball suggested a strip and as Fox TV commentator Steve Roach pointed out, the assistant referee Gavin Reynolds had called strip. But referee Gee over ruled him and the Raiders were gifted possession. As Roach said soon after the incident, “ Why have a pocket referee, if you dont listen to him. “ WHY INDEED!

I know the old saying that bad refereeing decisions even up over a season and I believe this. But when one referee over-rules his mate when the second referee is there for that job, there is a problem. Even though the Warriors made more errors than the locals, they were well in the contest to that time. In fact I believe the Warrior forwards played as well as the much praised home pack. The defence by all the 17 man Warrior squad was good. Despite the visitors having more ball than the locals in the first half, the Raiders finished the game with 54 percent of possession. This resulted in them running for 1,823 metres to the Warriors 1,474 metres and forcing the Warriors to make 343 tackles compared to the Raiders 280. The penalty count of 9-4 against them also did not help the New Zealanders. Several of these penalties were blown by the men in white after constant pressure from the home town fans. But there is no point in whinging about this, as the same thing happens to visiting teams at Mt.Smart. But some grounds are worse than others for home town decisions. Roger Tuivasa-Sheck ran for 200 metres and this was the most by any player from either side. Simon Mannering was the game's top tackler with 46. Simon is eighth on the top tacklers list with 237, behind leader Andrew McCullough from the Broncos with 333. Roger is 16th on the running metres list with 904 metres behind leader, Tom Trbojevis from Manly with 1,167 metres. There are four fullbacks on this best 20 running metres list. As well as Roger and Tom Trbojevic, there are the Tigers James Tedesco, who is third with 1,098 and the Raiders Jack Wrighton who is 19th with 881 metres.

The Sharks were impressive in their 28-2 demolition of the Panthers at Penrith. All 17 men in the Sharks squad played strongly with Wade Graham the standout. Graham ran for 121 metres and made 35 tackles. Many of these were powerful hits which stopped the ball runner in his tracks. Eight Sharks players ran for more than 100 metres with another two in the 90s. These were Valentine Holmes 216 metres, Chris Heighington 137, Kurt Capewell 123, Wade Graham 121, Ricky Leutele 119, Sosaia Feki 110, Andrew Fifita 107, Paul Gallen 107, Jayson Bukuya 94 and Jeremy Latimore 91. Heighington only played for 36 minutes while the others to log less than 80 minutes were Fifita (54 minutes), Gallen (46 minutes), Bukuya (38 minutes) and Latimore (30 minutes). Sharks coach, Shane Flanagan said after the match that he and the team used as motivation Penrith supremo Gus Gould's statement that the Sharks had won a soft Premiership last season.

The winning result would have completed a pleasing day for coach Flanagan. Before his team took the field, he watched the Sharks under 20 team played a 30-all draw with competition leaders Penrith. In this match, coach Flanagan's son, Kyle Flanagan, kicked five goals. Kyle is leading point scorer in the Holden Cup with 92 (four tries, 38 goals) from his seven games.

While the Dragons let the Cowboys back into the game in the second half at Wollongong on Saturday night, they won 28-22 and that is all that will matter in September. After leading 28-4 at halftime, the Dragons probably thought they had the game won as they walked to the dressing room. While they shouldn't, teams often ease off after a big half time lead. Coach Paul McGregor was not all pleased with the Dragons second 40 minutes, but he will move on quickly and have his team well prepared for the game against the Roosters on Anzac Day at Allianz Stadium. That is a nine day turnaround for the Dragons and 10 days for the Roosters after their 24-6 victory over the Knights in Newcastle on Good Friday.

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The Toronto Wolfpack continued on their winning way with an 80-0 thrashing of the Northern Crusaders on Friday 14 April. Captain and centre, Craig Hall, finished with 36 points from three tries and 12 goals from 14 attempts. Five eighth, Gary Wheeler, collected two tries as did fullback, Quentin Laulu-Togagaë. Coming off the bench, Fui Fui Moi Moi crossed for one try. The Wolfpack are equal leaders on the Kingstone Press League One table with the Barrow Raiders, who have also won their five games. These two leading teams meet in Toronto on Saturday 20 May. The Wolfpack meet the Salford Reds this coming Saturday in a round five Challenge Cup match at Salford. This will be a tough encounter and a good test for the Wolfpack, as Salford currently sit in second position on the Super League table which is the top competition in English Rugby League.

Rugby League Legend Celebrates His 78th

JOHN RAPER MBE celebrated his 78th birthday on Wednesday 12 April. He enjoyed a pleasant lunch with family, friends and former team-mates at the Prince Hotel, Kirrawee in Sydney's south. Among the footballers present were John's fellow Immortal and Team of the Century member, Graeme Langlands MBE (45 Tests, 227 games with St. George), as well as Tony Brown (10 Tests, 121 games with Newtown), John Riley (1 Test, 53 games with St. George), Kevin Considine (138 games with Newtown) and Peter Ryan (120 games with Newtown). The occasion was arranged by John's wife Carol, who recently completed a successful chemo treatment. - Barry Ross



Barry Ross, John Raper and Graeme Langlands.

John Raper, MBE is an Australian former professional rugby league footballer and coach. He was a lock-forward for the Australia national team. He had a record 33 test caps between 1959 and 1968 and played in 6 World Cup games between 1960 and 1968.

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By John Coffey QSM

Author of ten rugby league books, Christchurch Press sports writer (44 years), NZ correspondent for Rugby League Week (Australia) and Open Rugby (England)

Lancaster Park: Pride Or Prejudice?

A general view of Lancaster Park during the International cricket match between New Zealand and England, 1997. Photo www.photosport.nz

IT HAS taken six years but the Christchurch City Council has finally decided on the future of post-earthquake Lancaster Park. What was once the marquee sports ground actually has no future and will be demolished. While it was a lengthy process, the decision was absolutely rapid compared with the on-going wrangling about the fate of the Anglican Cathedral in the central city. The way is now open for a new stadium to be built, probably costing at least half a billion dollars to the city's rate payers and the nation's tax payers – good luck if you happen to qualify on both counts!

Having been a sports writer in Christchurch for 44 years, Lancaster Park played a significant role in my working life. I even had the pleasure of playing three cricket matches there. The first was a senior game when I opened the batting for St Albans and a young firebrand named Richard Hadlee opened the bowling for the home team. Sharing in a 99-run partnership with Canterbury representative John Ruston made the first innings memorable. But Hadlee did not take long to shatter my stumps in the second. My other two appearances on the oval were years later in the President's grade and were very enjoyable experiences.

Lancaster Park was originally a cricket field when transformed from a rough paddock in 1881. In the early days it was the venue for such diverse sports as Australasian swimming championships, Davis Cup tennis, ballooning, international cycling and harness racing. Peter Snell set world 880 yards and 800 metres records on the grass track, and Test soccer and hockey, softball, baseball, marching and Australian Rules were all played there. There were circuses, visits by Pope John Paul II, evangelist Billy Graham and Queen Elizabeth II and performances by Tina Turner, Dire Straits, Billy Joel, Meat Loaf and B B King.

All of the above were cause for most Christchurch's citizens to look upon Lancaster Park with pride. But to rugby league followers it was a symbol of prejudice because our sport was barred for 75 years until 1996. During the First World War the park was planted in potatoes to assist the war effort, before being reopened in 1920 by Mayor Dr Henry Thacker, who just happened to also be president of the Canterbury Rugby League. Thacker had no inkling of what lay ahead when he said Lancaster Park, with its new war memorial gates, was to benefit all sportsmen.

After the 1920 England rugby league team played Canterbury and New Zealand at Lancaster Park all future applications to play there were vetoed by the Canterbury Rugby Union delegates on the ruling Victory Park Board. There were protests. The biggest occurred during the 1946 British rugby league tour, in the aftermath of another world war, when many of the city leaders tried but failed to sway the stonewalling union officials. They did not care that servicemen and women who supported both codes had died in the two world wars and had helped raise finance to restore Lancaster Park as a memorial project back in 1920.

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The union justified its attitude by claiming visiting rugby league teams were comprised of professional players. Never mind the even more highly paid cricketers from Australia and England who were welcomed with open arms. Former broadcaster Gordon Nuttall told me the managers of the 1961 Kangaroos asked him to take them to see the park “where we are not allowed to play”. When they got there Gordon enquired why the NSWRL allowed rugby union Tests to be staged at the Sydney Cricket Ground. “No problem with that,” he was told, “the All Blacks are the best advertisement we have for rugby league.”

I saw only four live union matches while I was at The Press from 1963 to 2007. Some of my old Greymouth school mates came over for Tests against England in 1963 and South Africa in 1965. I watched Canterbury draw a 1971 Ranfurly Shield game against Wellington. In 1985 I went with a work-mate to see North Harbour freeze to defeat in blizzard conditions. But I virtually lived at Lancaster Park in the summers, covering cricket, including the best of the Hadlee era. Over the years the increasing rugby union influence changed the shape of the ground and from 2006 it was deemed unsuitable for Test cricket.

My favourite Lancaster Park memory actually involves wall paper! Russ Thomas, a NZRU chairman, All Blacks manager and cricket watcher, always referred to his sport as “amateur rugby” when I was around. During a cricket tea break he excitedly greeted me in the lounge. “Look at our new wall paper John, imported at great expense from England,” said Russ. The pattern showed a grandstand, flood lights and players in blue jerseys with gold hoops. I recognised them immediately. “Russ,” I asked, “do you know who they are?” I then told him it was Headingley, home of the Leeds Rugby League Club. Poor Russ was gobsmacked. By the next season that wall paper had gone. Now the entire park is going. No regrets.



A promotional poster for a rugby league match. The background is a fiery, orange and red sky. In the center, the ARL Fox Memorial Shield logo is prominently displayed, featuring a shield with a lion and the text 'ARL™' and 'FOX MEMORIAL SHIELD'. To the left of the logo is a player in a white and maroon jersey with 'strescrete' and 'HARVEYS' visible. To the right is a player in a blue and yellow striped jersey with 'BLK' and 'DON WALKER BUILDING' visible. Below the logo, the text reads: 'GAME OF THE ROUND #3', 'PAPAKURA V MT ALBERT', '2:30PM PRINCE EDWARD PARK', and '22 APRIL 2017'.



By John Coffey QSM

Author of ten rugby league books, Christchurch Press sports writer (44 years), NZ correspondent for Rugby League Week (Australia) and Open Rugby (England)

My Favourite Thurston Stories

Johnathan Thurston during the Ladbrokes Four Nations Final Preview on 19/11/2016. Photo www.photosport.nz

SEVERAL VOLUMES could be written recording the on-field exploits of Johnathan Thurston for the Cowboys, Queensland, Australia and, briefly, the Bulldogs in one of the most illustrious of all professional rugby league careers. This spindly, shaggy haired, often battered but seldom bowed half back turns 34 on Anzac Day but his influence belies his size and his powers have hardly been diminished by age. They have just been put in temporary abeyance because of a calf injury and fans from two nations are nervously waiting to see if he plays in the trans-Tasman Test at Canberra on May 5.

But the best Thurston stories do not have a lot to do with the number of Dally M, Golden Boot and other awards he has earned during a career which spans 298 NRL matches, 37 Tests and 36 consecutive State of Origin games over the last Queensland-dominated decade. My initial interest in him stemmed from the fact his father, Graham, hailed from my home town of Greymouth. I recall hearing his grandmother ringing Radio Sport talkback from the West Coast predicting Johnathan would be a star. Thurston's mother is a Gungarri (Indigenous Australian).

My favourite Thurston stories are:

He's too small: The Thurston family moved from Brisbane to Toowoomba when Johnathan was a youngster. He became a stand-out player for St Mary's College and the All Whites club. But manager Sam Ayoub could not find him an NRL club. Thurston's size (or lack of it) counted against him. Ayoub was reduced to offering his 18-year-old client for no fee. Dragons coach Nathan Brown was first to respond at that price. The Bulldogs followed. Because Ayoub had promised Thurston's mother he would keep an eye on Johnathan, he chose the Bulldogs because their Belmore headquarters were closer to his home. Thurston's first contract in 2001 stipulated "nil playing fee". Now he's a true million-dollar man.

Fellowship of the rings: Over the next four seasons an uncouth Thurston never established himself at the Bulldogs. But he displayed unexpected maturity when injury prevented club captain Steve Price playing in the 2004 Grand Final. Thurston was his replacement. Wearing number 18, he came off the bench and shared in a 16-13 victory. After the game he quietly passed his premiership ring to Price, saying he deserved it more. Unbeknown to Thurston and Price, the Bulldogs had arranged for an extra ring to be crafted for Price should they win the Grand Final. Price in turn presented that ring to Thurston. They took different paths after that day, Price to Auckland and Thurston to Townsville, but were forever linked by those rings.

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2015 Grand Final: The Cowboys' memorable 2015 golden point Grand Final victory over the Broncos might eventually be stamped as Thurston's finest achievement, no matter how many plaudits he earns for Australia and Queensland. It rivals the 1989 extra time battle between Canberra and Balmain as the greatest Grand Final of all time. The Broncos were seconds from another title when Cowboys wing Karl Feldt spectacularly scored in the corner to tie the game. Thurston's conversion rebounded off an upright. Undeterred, he rallied his troops and in the 82nd minute kicked the field goal which clinched a fairy tale maiden title for North Queensland. During his tenure the Cowboys had risen from easy beats to champions.

King of the kids: Just as he had handed Steve Price his precious premiership ring all those years ago, Thurston sought no fanfare when he began demonstrating respect for his team's ball boys. Instead of leaving them to scramble for the kicking tee among opposing players jogging back to halfway after shots at goal, Thurston retrieves his tees and hands them over. It also became Thurston's custom to gift his headgear to kids in the crowd as he left the field at fulltime. They are priceless souvenirs to adorn young fans' bedrooms. After the Cowboys brought the NRL trophy home to Townsville, Thurston advocated for a new stadium so that future generations of Cowboys will have a more splendid stage upon which to perform.

It was appropriate Thurston should be born on Anzac Day, considering he is half Kiwi and half Aussie. The NZRL enquired about his allegiance at the time he was struggling to make his name with the Bulldogs. But Thurston has always regarded himself as not just a proud Australian but an even prouder Indigenous Australian and has embraced his mother's culture. One can only guess how the international scene might evolved over the last decade had his New Zealand side been dominant. Thurston plans to retire from representative football after the World Cup later this year and to play exclusively for the Cowboys in 2018.

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**4PM SUNDAY APRIL 30
MT SMART STADIUM**



By Miles Davis

Kevin Iro

*Kevin Iro scores the winning try. Kiwis v Australia, 1998.
Photo www.photosport.nz*

BEFORE THERE was Jonah and Julian ‘The Bus’ Savea there was The Beast – Kevin Iro (he passed the name on to Manu Vatuvei). Born in Auckland of Cook Island descent Iro played his junior rugby league for the Glen Innes Falcons. He played his Premier league with Mt Albert and from there was picked for Auckland as a 19 year old in 1987 and also made his debut for the Kiwis that year.

A block-busting centre he caught the attention of former Kiwi coach Graham Lowe who lured him over to England to join his Wigan revolution (word has it that one condition of Kevin signing was the Lowe also had to sign his older brother Tony. Not the worst bit of forced business Lowie ever had to do.)

He was to taste immediate success with Wigan winning the Challenge Cup in 1988. In front of a crowd of over 94,000 at Wembley The Beast scored 2 tries in a 32-12 win over Halifax (big brother Tony also got on the score-sheet). He was back at Wembley again in 1989, once again bagging 2 tries in a 27-0 demolition of arch-rivals St Helens.

He was obvious getting a taste for the Wembley turf and its try-line as 1990 saw him return for the 3rd consecutive year and once again score 2 tries as Wigan made it 3 in a row with a 36-14 win over Warrington. 1991 was Iro’s last season with Wigan and what better way to finish his stint than a 4th consecutive Challenge Cup victory, this time a 13-8 win over St Helens. This time however he didn’t manage to Beast his way over the line (Wigan went on to win the next 4 Challenge Cup finals to make it an incredible 8 in a row.)

In his time at Wigan he also won two Championships (1990 and 1991) and 2 League Cups (1989,1990) and as well as his brother played alongside other Kiwis including Dean Bell and Frano Botica.

He then re-joined his old boss Graham Lowe at Manly and played there for 2 seasons with the highlight being a semi-final appearance in 1991. In 1992 he headed back to England this time to the other side of the Pennines to join Leeds where he played 124 games scoring 64 tries over the next 4 seasons. In 1997 he returned down under for a season with the ill-fated Hunter Mariners before returning to Auckland for the 1998 season with the Vodafone Warriors.

In 1999 it was back to England and a contract with Wigan’s bitter rival St Helens. The old magic was back as the Saints won the Super League grand final that year with Iro scoring the only try in an 8-6 win over Bradford. They backed up the feat the next year with a 29-16 win over Wigan in the final, this time held at Twickenham. 2001 was his final season with the Saints and he started and finished in style. Firstly with a World Club Challenge victory, 20-18 over Brisbane Broncos and ending with yet another Challenge Cup medal as his side beat Bradford 13-6, once again at Twickenham.

Continued on next page...

In his glittering career Iro also played 34 tests for the Kiwis (16 tries) and 3 for the Cook Islands. In 2009 he laced up the boots once more and represented the Cook Islands at the Wellington Sevens.

After his career ended Kevin moved with his wife and 6 children to the Cook Islands he became a founder of the Cook Islands Marine Park.

A frequent visitor to the Cook Islands all his life, Iro had noticed a deterioration in the marine environment. "I could really see something needed to be done. With a friend of mine who owns a resort over here, we looked into the idea of setting up some marine protected areas" says Iro "Long story short we lobbied government and they quickly went for it. The next thing you know we are declaring some of the biggest marine protected areas in the world."

An amazing journey, the Beast has gone from destroyer of rugby league defences to protector of Island marine life. Good luck Kevin.

1988 Challenge Cup Final Wigan v Halifax <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h1CWjholgkw>

1989 Challenge Cup Final Wigan v St Helens <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iQOV5yIETtw>

1990 Challenge Cup Final Wigan v Warrington <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ln6ZlysQGMU>

1991 Challenge Cup Final Wigan v St Helens https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d9XdaH8_aSM

Kevin Iro Cook Islands Marine Park <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QTW6POwGtXs>

Kevin Iro gets shaved in Movember Cook Islands style <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pzTsFQR5Zv8>



James Gavet of the Warriors is tackled



Kieran Foran warms up



Roger Tuivasa-Sheck of the Warriors tries to offload



Ryan Hoffman of the Warriors celebrates scoring a try



By Shane Hurndell
Hawke's Bay Today
Sports Reporter

Time for Warriors Game in Bay

*BAY NEXT? RTS and his Warriors teammates will give the code a major boost in Hawke's Bay by playing on Napier's McLean Park.
Photo www.photosport.nz*

CRIKEY HAWKE'S Bay sports fans have had a hectic past six weeks in terms of top quality national and international events.

The Bay has hosted the national and world Flying Fifteen sailing champs, the annual Horse of the Year Show which is the biggest equestrian event in the southern hemisphere, the Hawke's Bay Cup International Festival of Hockey which saw the Black Sticks women take on Australia, Japan and Team USA and the national optimist sailing champs. On Friday night Napier's McLean Park will host a Super Rugby match between the Hurricanes and Brumbies.

To host so many major events in such a short space of time is a major achievement for the province and everyone involved in making all of the events so successful must be congratulated. However when reflecting on the success of these events the many Warriors fans among the Hawke's Bay sporting fraternity have the right to ask the following question:

When will a Warriors NRL game be staged in the Bay?

Surely the time has come for one in the not so distant future. A match between the Storm and Dragons was played at McLean Park in 2015.

Close to 13,000 spectators turned up for the game and a similar number would turn out for a Warriors encounter particularly from next season when one of Ngati Kahungunu's favourite sons, Tohu Harris, will be on the Warriors roster. It's awesome to see the Warriors taking a game to Hamilton next month but the time to take one another couple of hours south is over due.

The manner in which Napier City Council staff worked with officials from the two NRL clubs and Rugby League Hawke's Bay to stage the 2015 encoun-

ter was admirable.

Such an occasion can be repeated at a venue which hosted an All Blacks test against Argentina in 2014. A Warriors Development team which included former All Black Marc Ellis played at the old Nelson Park ground in Hastings in 1996 and the Warriors under-20s played a couple of games at Napier's Park Island less than a decade ago.

A visit from the Warriors NRL side would help give the code the boost it needs in the Bay. No league games were played in Hawke's Bay during Easter.

This weekend the Bridge Pa premier men's team travels to Palmerston North to play their second game in the Coast to Coast comp while the Hawke's Bay women host a Mid Central competition game at Kirkpatrick Park in Hastings.

The youngsters in the national optimist sailing champs did a top job of coping with some challenging conditions in the wake of the recent cyclone. Twelve-year-old Seb Menzies of Auckland's Murrays Bay club was expected to capture the top individual prize on Tuesday. On Sunday he led one of four teams from his club to the top teams title.

In Hawke's Bay premier club rugby at the weekend Clive centre Jonah Lowe scored three tries in his team's 44-25 win against Tamatea in Hastings to take his tally to seven in two outings. For 20-year-old Magpie Lowe it was the ideal way to celebrate his selection in the New Zealand Barbarians team which will play the Lions in Whangarei on June 3.

Defending champions in the Nash Cup, Napier Old Boys Marist, maintained their unbeaten run with a 78-9 thrashing of Taradale, the side they beat in last year's Maddison Trophy final. It's going to take a mighty effort for any side to beat NOBM this winter.



By Ben Francis

Should Ken Maumalo Move to the Forwards?

*Ken Maumalo is tackled during the match against Canberra Raiders.
Photo www.photosport.nz*

THE WARRIORS slumped to their fourth loss of the season over the weekend against the Canberra Raiders, and it was a disappointing result considering how well they had dominated the first half.

While reading a piece on the NZ Herald written by Dale Budge, I saw him mention that the Warriors should consider moving Ken Maumalo to the forwards, and I have to agree after looking at the numbers.

One thing which was lacking in the match was go forward through the middle of the field and Maumalo could be a fix in that department.

The 22-year old is leading the Warriors in runs this season (101) and third in meters (897). Only Roger Tuivasa-Sheck (904) and Jacob Lillyman (926) have run for more metres in 2017, while other forwards Ligi Sao, James Gavet, Charlie Gubb have combined for a total of 969 metres.

Often we see Maumalo comes off his line and hit the ball up in sets, sometimes even twice. He might not be the best on the park, but he is showing that he is an important player for the Warriors

Maumalo has struggled at times defending on the wing, and it showed during the weekend as Joseph Leilua terrorised Maumalo's wing.

If Maumalo moves to the wing, it would mean that Tui lolohea could move into the wing, or even give Char-nze Nicoll-Klokstad a chance in the side.

I believe Nicoll-Klokstad deserves a chance to showcase his skills in the team and this could be the best chance to do that. With Maumalo in the for and then we could get some pace on the edge.

If the Warriors were to move Maumalo to the forwards. It wouldn't happen this season and it would more likely happen during the offseason but it could potentially be worth it in the long run.

The Warriors previously tried to move Manu Vautuvei into the forwards, but that did not exactly pan out, but after every match, Maumalo is looking more like a forward while Vatuvei always seemed like a winger.

But could Maumalo transition into the forwards? Only time would tell, but it should be something the coaching staff is thinking about as it could be the best for both parties.



Super Rugby Flop

IN A rush to satisfy satellite TV and grab the dollar, Sanzar devalued and diluted Super Rugby and left themselves with some contentious issues on the horizon.

The expansion undoubtedly helps Japanese and Argentinian rugby by having more of their players consistently exposed to a higher level of rugby but Australia and South Africa are struggling to find enough quality players to fill their teams. Their lack of depth has been exposed and as a consequence their competitiveness has been affected. Considering the highly competitive nature of the New Zealand Conference it is a damning statistic that its bottom placed team has more points than the top placed side in the Australian Conference.

This lack of competitiveness also detracts from the tournaments worthiness from a television viewers perspective. Lopsided games do not gripping television make so the expansion has backfired on all fronts.

The inevitable reduction of teams will now lead to more problems for Sanzar. You can expect legal challenges from any franchise that gets the chop as well as the many players who will suddenly find themselves unemployed. Surely any administrator worth his salt could have foreseen all these issues and railed against any expansion. Sadly the increasing influence of television and the constant grab for money saw greed take precedence over common-sense. The only upside is that New Zealand have proven beyond doubt that despite its small population is still streets ahead when it comes to playing depth in world rugby.

Vodafone Warriors

WELCOME TO Miles Monday Morning Medicine for any Vodafone Warriors' fans who are suffering from post-match blues. A disappointing result but as ever there are some positive aspects. The Vodafone Warriors dominated the first half and with any luck would have had a healthier lead at half time than the measly 2 points they went into the shed with. The second half didn't go well but it should be taken into account what a tough place Canberra is to visit for any team. Last season the Raiders lost just 2 of its 12 home games. My beloved Dragons went 11 years without winning there even when they were Champions. As one win does not a summer make, one defeat does not mean winter is on its way. So enjoy the continued improvement of skipper Roger Tuivasa-Sheck and the impact of the increasingly impressive James Gavet. Watch them both fire up once more as the Vodafone Warriors head to 2nd placed Melbourne Storm on Anzac Day. A tough fixture on the face of it but one in which the Vodafone Warriors always punch above their weight. Bring it on.

Durability

I LOVE SPORT but nowadays my exertions are restricted to a kickabout with my boys or the odd game of cricket with No. 2 son so I felt put to shame by the arrival of Man Kaur to participate in the World Masters Games. The 101 year old from India is not just competing in one event but 4. The 100 and 200 metres, the javelin and shot putt (I still spell putt with 2 t's as it was in the good old days). Even more impressive is that she only started competing at the age of 93.

Kaur already has 20 medals under her belt and you can guarantee that haul will be increased while she is in Auckland.

Don't know about you but I think it's time to dust off the trainers and get my lazy ass moving.

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/other-sports/101-year-old-mann-kaur-ready-to-conquer-world-masters-games-watch-her-train/story-CjRndsmTUq9oIqC9zQcczO.html>

So near and yet so far...

By John Holloway



7OUT OF 8 for my tips this week with only the pooppy Panthers spoiling my party. Rolling along at 6 from 6 and the smile gets wiped by a poor Panthers display. I had figured that Cronulla might be recovering still from a titanic Grand Final replay victory over the Storm and the Penrith crew would be buoyed by a freshening 9 day turnaround plus the predicted return of Cartwright, Blake, Hiku and especially Peachey and Moylan. Well I was wrong, what doesn't kill you makes you stronger and the Shireboys proved that with an irresistible forceful and calculated performance. Too hot for the Blue mountain men at 28/2. The Sharks showed the sort of grit that can go back to back. The Bulldogs also surprised a few clearing out from the Bunnies 24/9, it was always a possibility that the Doggies would come good but the margin raised eyebrows. Josh Reynolds turned one on to give the club a reminder about his contract. More predictable was the Rooster romp over the "cant take a trick" Knights 24/6. The bucking Broncos prevailed at Suncorp but not without a ferocious fightback from the silver medal specialists the Titans. A triple from the mercurial Roberts only just got them home at 24/22. Likewise Smithys Storm troopers nearly got run down by the hard charging Sea Eagles but 6 tries to 5 and a 30/26 squeaky bum result. Without JT (and a couple of others) the Cowboys struggle and so it proved against the emerging force of the Red V. Pommie pivot Gareth Widdop is just getting better every season and running on full noise this year. With a no-nonsense pack of Frizzel, De Belin, Thompson, Packer and co bashing it up and muscular backs Lafai and Aitken in overdrive they are turning into a very hard to beat outfit. Mary McGregor has his charges at the top of the Ladder which is a huge surprise to everybody including the formerly down in the mouth Dragon devotees. In the Westie battle the electric Eels were gone for all money with Clearys tortured Tigers looking sharp at 22/10 ahead and 25 to go but a stunning triple try surge from Parra secured the bickies, 26/20 at the bell. Now then the Mighty Warriors....ok not so mighty but I gotta say I was strangely comfortable with the team in defeat. I didn't like the indiscipline and errors and 2nd half completion rate but given a kinder ref call on a couple of incidents we could have come home smiling. To be brutally honest I was expecting the Raiders to be too tough for us front and back and feared a blow-out score after 80 mins. The fact that we manufactured lots of attacking chances and largely subdued theirs was heartening to High-Tackle. How often does the rampant Rapana go tryless? Ball running bullyboy Leilua got through twice but when your outside defence goes sideways and backwards you are handing him the line on a plate. Get in the face and smash him bro (yes easy to say from the safety of the couch). Anyway Mooks and definitely Foran have turned the team around...a bit. If we can keep the confidence levels on the up and reduce the error rate we will get a lot better. Big benny Matulino looming as well. My quickie pickies....round 8; Raiders to pip Sea Eagles, Rabbitohs a few points short of the Broncos, eels and Panthers very close, Cowboys just over the Knights, Sharks too tough for the Titans. Tigers in turmoil to drop more points to the Bulldogs. Roosters and dragons 50/50 and the Warriors a bolters chance in Melbourne. KiaKaha brothers and Sisters of the struggle.

Lets go Warriiooorrrsss



**Our Newsletter
is Global!!
We even have
readers in China!**

Westland Wilderness Cycle Trail Catch Up

By Tony Coll - Ex Kiwi

A COUPLE OF weeks ago a good mate, former Kiwi halfback and legend, Ken Stirling turned up in Greymouth along with a fellow group of friends all decked out in their campervans to enjoy the scenery and great weather of the West Coast.

Ken indicated that they were going to bike the Westland Wilderness Cycleway over the next 4 days, starting at Greymouth and finishing at Ross 139 kilometres away and as an avid mountain biker I very kindly invited myself to join them on one of those days.

Ken's team, and I must say Ken was the Captain, as he was the chief organiser and bossing everybody around as he did in his playing days - he even tried that on me but came unstuck on that one.

Ken's team started the cycle trail on the Monday stopping at an old gold mining town of Kumara 35k south of Greymouth, for the night.

The next day I cycled from Greymouth to meet them in Kumara for a coffee before continuing through to a place called Kawhaka about another 25 km into the trail, before leaving them to continue along their way and I returned by bike to Greymouth. I had a great day on the trail with them all.

I caught up with Ken on the return from their adventures.

Most of them had sore butt's from four day's on the bike, but the experiences they had, the amazing scenery they encountered along the way coupled with the great weather outweighed their discomfort. Ken assured me his team had a fantastic adventure thoroughly enjoying the diverse landscapes of dense rainforest, glacial rivers, lakes and wetlands and incredible views of the snow capped mountains of the Southern Alps, as well as the historical villages positioned through the trail.

It was great to see good Kiwis enjoying their Kiwi land.



Ken Stirling (played 43 games for the Kiwis) and Tony Coll (played 65 games for the Kiwis) both captained the Kiwis and recently caught up in the South Island.

League 4 Life Luncheon at the Cashmere Club in Christchurch

By Sir Peter Leitch

Last Friday the patron of League 4 Life, which is to say my good self, Sir Peter Leitch, hosted a luncheon at the Cashmere Club in Christchurch. It was superbly organized by Kevin and Michelle Thorn - two nicer people you will never meet.

Kevin has been a sponsor of Halswell Rugby League Club for more than 45 years, and also of Canterbury Rugby League. He and his wife have Ascot TV in Sydenham, but still find time to run the fundraising events and the end of year prizegivings, do the power point presentations etc., and all while supplying all the televisions. He has also done 27 NRL grand final trips, acting as host along the way for some of them, and managed his son's teams from when he was four until he was 18.

Michele wasn't exactly idle either, acting as the treasurer of Halswell Rugby League Juniors for more than a decade. And our good mate Don Whyte, General Manager of the Cashmere Club has been a huge Canterbury league fan since arriving in Canterbury in the late eighties. During his 11 years in charge of the Cashmere Club, Don has been a proud supporter of local league and a keen Warriors supporter. Don has had the pleasure of Grand Final and State of Origin tours with Sir Peter and is passionate about being involved with the "League for Life" Foundation. Major Sponsors for the event were;

- Super Liquor Colombo St. Dave and Jo Jarden
- Harrington Breweries, John Harrington
- Ascot TV, Kevin and Michelle Thorn, Sir Peter Leitch

MC'd by myself, I had the pleasure of seeing many old Kiwis players at the event. Among them were Jim Bond, who played 14 tests from 1961-68 and captained the team at the 1968 World Cup, and Murray Wright was there, as was Logan Edwards, who played five tests in 1993 and 1995, and ended up a foundation member of the Warriors.

Flying winger Eddie Kerrigan was in attendance, as was Esene Faimalo also made an appearance, as did Brent Stuart, a tough as teak front rower who managed 14 tests from 1992 to 1995, including all five on the 1993 tour of Great Britain and France. It was tremendous to see men like David Field, George Turner, Kevin Pearce, Ian Drayton, John Bond, and Gary Clarke reliving their war stories – although I am certain those tries are getting grander every time the stories are told.

I also got to introduce Vodafone Warriors CEO Jim Doyle, who gave a great speech about his place in the game and what it means to him. Jim was the driving force behind League 4 Life when the foundation was initially set up.

Continued on next page...



Continued from previous page...

Former Warriors and Kiwi, and current League 4 Life board member Jerome Ropati was on hand to answer questions about his career and why he believes so strongly in player welfare initiatives.

And one attendee, former Warriors and Kiwis coach "Happy" Frank Endacott also gave his time to do an impromptu interview. And relived some of events when the kiwis toured Papua New Guinea



Ex Kiwi players at the event. Back Row; David Field, Murray Wright (A), Esene Faimalo, Brent Stuart, Logan Edwards, Mike Dorreen, Jerome Ropati (A). Front: George Turner, Kevin Pearce, Ian Drayton, John Bond, Gary Clarke

Continued on next page...



Nigel Thompson, sponsor of the Papanui Tigers, Neil Stuart, Automotive Christchurch and Ex Warrior Shane Endcott



Warriors CEO Jim Doyle and Ex-Warrior Jerome Ropati with rescue workers



Ex Kiwis Esene Faimalo and Logan Edwards



Ex-players Shane Endacott, Jerome Ropati and Mike Dorreen



Sir Peter and the crowd at the event



Jim Doyle addressing the crowd





Small School Wins Big!

*By Daniel Fraser
New Zealand Media & PR
Manager RLWC 2017*

ALMOST HALF of a small school near Waihi have won the chance to watch the Kiwis at the Rugby League World Cup in November after registering for the RLWC2017 Education Resource.

Over 100 primary and intermediate schools from across New Zealand were in the draw to win a class trip to the RLWC2017, and it was the children from Waimata that had luck on their side, being randomly drawn as the winner.

A combined year class of 43 students will now be in the stands on November 11 at Waikato Stadium in Hamilton as the Kiwis take on Ma'a Tonga, with the same venue to host the clash between Tonga and Toa Samoa on November 4.

Waimata Principal Logan Phillips paid credit to two teachers, Kookie Koopu and Kate Smeaton, who both registered for the RLWC2017 Education Resource separately because they were so excited about getting involved.

"It's obviously a small school with just 89 students so the kids almost couldn't believe that they'd won," Mr Phillips said.

"They're certainly over the moon and will be counting down the days until they get the chance to watch their Kiwi heroes in action."

There will be more incentive for schools to register for the RLWC2017 Education Resource, with a second competition being launched prior to Easter.

The prize will be the chance to accompany players out onto the field each during the seven matches in NZ. To register your school today, email rlwc2017@nzrl.co.nz

New Zealand will co-host the sport's pinnacle international event with Australia and Hosting Partner Papua New Guinea from 27 October to 2 December 2017. For tournament information and tickets, go to www.rlwc2017.com





Lions Overcome the Sting

By Talei Anderson

IT WAS a tight contest between the Mt Albert Lions and Howick Hornets on Saturday - ARL's Game of the Round for the SAS Fox Memorial- which saw the Lions do just enough to claim their second win of the season at Paparoa Park.

The Lions led 14-10 at halftime, but it wasn't long before Howick crossed to take a two-point lead (16-14).

Mt Albert replied with one of their own before the Hornets had the chance to even it up. An unsuccessful conversion left the home side trailing by two points (20-18) with 4 minutes left on the clock.

The footy geared up in the final minutes of play, but the Lions held onto the ball long enough to claim a 20-18 win over the Hornets at fulltime.

"I'm happy we were able to get the two points," said Marcus Fraser, captain of Mt Albert.

"We had the lead at halftime but we knew it wasn't over."

"We went away from our processes but once we got back to structure, we were able to grind it out and get the win in the end."

In other games, defending champions –the Papakura Sea Eagles- took home their first win over Mangere 38-8 at Walter Massey Park. Richmond and Glenora continue their successful season with wins over Northcote (26-16) and Marist (23-16), while Pt Chevalier hold onto the Roope Rooster for another two rounds following their first defence against Te Atatu.

Bay Roskill and Ponsonby remain unbeaten taking down Otahuhu (28-18) and Manurewa (34-18) in Round 4 of the Crown Lift Trucks Sharman Cup. Otara won their first match this season with a close 34-32 over East Coast Bays while New Lynn took care of Hibiscus Coast 62-4.

This weekend Papakura will host Mt Albert in ARL's Game of the Round at Prince Edward Park for Round 3 of the SAS Fox Memorial Premiership. Howick will look to bounce back when they travel to Harold Moody Reserve to play Glenora. Richmond will host Marist and Pt Chevalier travel out south to play Mangere East. Te Atatu and Northcote will be chasing their first win when they go head-to-head this weekend.

ARL results for Saturday April 15, 2017

SAS Fox Memorial: Round 2

Northcote 16 Richmond 26
Glenora 23 Marist 16
Howick 18 Mt Albert 14
Pt Chevalier 48 Te Atatu 14
Mangere East 8 Papakura 38
Crown Lift Trucks Sharman Cup: Round 4
Qualification Series Section 1
Bay Roskill 28 Otahuhu 18
East Coast Bays 32 Otara 34
New Lynn 62 Hibiscus Coast 4
Pakuranga bye

Qualification Series Section 2

Manurewa 18 Ponsonby 34
Manukau 20 Ellerslie 20

Waitemata bye, Papatoetoe bye

SAS Fox Memorial fixtures for Saturday April 22 : Round 3

Papakura v Mt Albert @ Prince Edward Park 2.30pm
Glenora v Howick @ Harold Moody Reserve 2.30pm
Richmond v Marist @ Grey Lynn Park 2.30pm
Te Atatu v Northcote @ Jack Colvin Park 2.30pm
Mangere East v Pt Chevalier @ Walter Massey Park 2.30pm

Crown Lift Trucks Sharman Cup fixtures for Saturday April 22: Round 5

Qualification Series: Section 1

Otahuhu v New Lynn @ Bert Henham Park 2.30pm
East Coast Bays v Bay Roskill @ Freyberg Park 2.30pm
Hibiscus Coast v Pakuranga @ Stanmore Bay 2.30pm
Otara bye

Qualification Series: Section 2

Papatoetoe v Manukau @ Kohuora Park 2.30pm
Waitemata v Manurewa @ Ranui Domain 2.30pm
Ponsonby v Ellerslie @ Victoria Park 2.30pm

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THIS WEEK IN BIG LEAGUE'S HUGE ROUND 8 ISSUE...

NRL, HOLDEN CUP, INTRUST SUPER PREMIERSHIP, INTRUST SUPER CUP AND RON MASSEY CUP TEAM LISTS, PREVIEWS AND STATS + SCORES AND RESULTS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY!

INSIDE

- It's Anzac weekend and rugby league commemorates the rugby league players who gave their lives for others. This includes **Athol Stewart**, who was shot in the elbow in Papua New Guinea in 1941 but returned to Newtown, where he scored 20 tries in 15 games the following season.
- Following **Jack Bird** signing with the Broncos, former Knights legend **Danny Buderus** says the only way to ensure a fair recruiting playing field across all clubs is to introduce a draft, transfer window or change the salary cap.
- Eels hard-man **Suaia Matagi** is one of the 87 players to have played for both Parramatta and Penrith, but he holds no ill-will about facing his old team-mates for the first time this weekend.
- It's been a baptism of fire for Sharks hooker **Jayden Brailey**, who is still getting used to first grade, let alone getting recognised on the street. But the mature 21-year-old hasn't changed his goals. "The goal is to eventually be an 80-minute hooker. I'm up to playing the full game and if Flanno puts me out for 80 then I'll do the best job I can," he says.

PLUS... We celebrate the **Top 8 rugby league advertising campaigns**, The Analyst dissects how the **Souths** have fared without **Greg Inglis** and a **Cody Walker** poster.



ROUND 8

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V



P T G PTS				#NRLStormWarriors				P T G PTS			
5	0	0	0	Billy SLATER	1	Roger TUIVASA-SHECK (C)		6	1	0	4
6	6	0	24	Suliasi VUNIVALU	2	Blake AYSHFORD		4	0	0	0
6	1	0	4	William CHAMBERS	3	David FUSITU'A		7	4	0	16
6	3	0	12	Cheyse BLAIR	4	Solomone KATA		7	1	0	4
7	4	0	16	Josh ADDO-CARR	5	Ken MAUMALO		7	2	0	8
7	1	0	4	Ryley JACKS	6	Kieran FORAN		3	1	0	4
7	2	0	8	Cooper CRONK	7	Shaun JOHNSON		7	3	16	44
5	0	0	0	Jesse BROMWICH	8	James GAVET		4	0	0	0
7	0	21	42	Cameron SMITH (C)	9	Issac LUKE		7	1	1	6
5	0	0	0	Jordan McLEAN	10	Jacob LILLYMAN		7	0	0	0
7	2	0	8	Felise KAUFUSI	11	Bodene THOMPSON		7	3	0	12
7	1	0	4	Kenny BROMWICH	12	Ryan HOFFMAN		7	3	0	12
7	0	0	0	Dale FINUCANE	13	Simon MANNERING		7	1	0	4
INTERCHANGE											
6	0	0	0	Christian WELCH	14	Nathaniel ROACHE		2	0	0	0
4	0	0	0	Tim GLASBY	15	Charlie GUBB		7	0	0	0
7	1	0	4	Nelson ASOFA-SOLOMONA	16	Ligi SAO		4	0	0	0
4	0	0	0	Cameron MUNSTER	17	Sam LISONE		7	0	0	0
RESERVES											
3	2	0	8	Young TONUMAIPEA	18	Ben MATULINO		0	0	0	0
4	0	0	0	Joe STIMSON	19/20	Bunty AFOA		4	0	0	0
2	0	0	0	Mark NICHOLLS	20/21	Mafoa'aeata HINGANO		3	0	0	0
1	0	0	0	Tui KAMIKAMICA	21/22	Mason LINO		0	0	0	0

COACHES

Craig BELLAMY

Stephen KEARNEY

PENALTIES				SCRUMS			
1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	13	14	15	16

PENALTIES				SCRUMS			
1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	13	14	15	16

DATE: TUESDAY, APRIL 25
VENUE: AAMI PARK
KICK-OFF: 7PM
REFEREE: BEN CUMMINS
ASSISTANT REFEREE: DAVE MUNRO
TOUCH JUDGES: JEFF YOUNIS & ZIGGY PRZEKLASA-ADAMSKI
SENIOR REVIEW OFFICIAL: ASHLEY KLEIN
REVIEW OFFICIAL: BEN GALEA
FOX LEAGUE: 6PM **LIVE RADIO:** ABC

	STORM	WARRIORS
Position (Points)	2nd (12)	12th (6)
Points For	134	118
Points Against	85	150

ATTACK		
Tries	23	21
Completions	76%	77%
Tries 0-20m	14	16
Tries 21-50m	5	3
Tries 51-100m	4	2

DEFENCE		
Tries	14	25
Tries 0-20m	9	12
Tries 21-50m	4	11
Tries 51-100m	1	2

MATCH AVERAGES		
Tries Scored	3	3
Tries Conceded	2	4
Points Scored	19	17
Points Conceded	12	21
Hit Ups/Runs	175	176
Tackles	356	312
Metres Gained	1563	1592
Handling Errors	4	5
Offloads	10	6
Line-breaks	4	4
Goalkicking	75%	74%

HEAD-TO-HEAD
 Played 38, Melbourne 20, Warriors 16, drawn 2

AT AAMI PARK
 Played 7, Melbourne 4, Warriors 3

WINNING FORM 2017
MELBOURNE: WWWWWLW Streak – 1 win
WARRIORS: WLLLWWL Streak – 1 loss

PAST 8 CLASHES
2016 – MELBOURNE D. WARRIORS 42-0 at AAMI Park;
MELBOURNE D. WARRIORS 21-14 at Mt Smart Stadium
2015 – WARRIORS D. MELBOURNE 28-14 at Mt Smart Stadium;
MELBOURNE D. WARRIORS 30-14 at AAMI Park
2014 – WARRIORS D. MELBOURNE 16-10 at AAMI Park
2013 – WARRIORS D. MELBOURNE 30-22 at Mt Smart Stadium;
MELBOURNE D. WARRIORS 28-18 at AAMI Park
2012 – MELBOURNE D. WARRIORS 22-12 at Mt Smart Stadium

BIGGEST HEAD-TO-HEAD WINS
MELBOURNE D. AUCKLAND 56-10 at Olympic Park, 2000
WARRIORS D. MELBOURNE 28-12 at Olympic Park, 2002

NEXT CLASH
MELBOURNE: v St George Illawarra at WIN, 4pm Sunday April 30
WARRIORS: v Sydney Roosters at Mt Smart, 4pm (NZ) Sunday April 30

CASUALTY WARD
MELBOURNE: Tohu Harris (foot) – Rd 9
WARRIORS: Manu Vatuvei (knee) – indefinite

NRL Preview

by DAVID MIDDLETON
@Middleton_David

Storm coach Bellamy demanding improvement

AAMI Park
Tuesday, 7pm

Form: The Storm were largely untroubled in building a five-game winning sequence to start the season but vulnerabilities have been exposed after a tryless loss to Cronulla and an unconvincing effort against Manly at Lottoland last Saturday. The Warriors have displayed far more steadiness with Kieran Foran at five-eighth but they were unable to match the Raiders' defensive strength at GIO Stadium last Saturday.

History: It has only been in the past few seasons that the Storm have overshadowed the Warriors, who managed to upset Melbourne repeatedly in the early years of their contests. The Storm have won six of the past nine clashes, including home and away fixtures last season. Melbourne have won four of seven Anzac Day showdowns since 2009.

Danger sign: Fullback Roger Tuivasa-Sheck produced glimpses of his brilliance for the Warriors last Saturday and he will trouble the Storm if given latitude. He went within millimetres of a crucial try before half-time against the Raiders that could have changed the outcome.

Best Bet? Expect Melbourne to have the necessary touch in clutch situations to claim victory over the Warriors by a handful of points.

Money-spinner: Look to Suliasi Vunivalu, Josh Addo-Carr or Solomon Kata for First Tryscorer.

BODENE THOMPSON

39
tackles in
Round 7



HEAD-TO-HEAD LEADERS

AVERAGE METRES	AVERAGE TACKLES	LINE-BREAKS
Roger Tuivasa-Sheck 184	Cameron Smith 43	Suliasi Vunivalu 6
Josh Addo-Carr 150	Simon Mannering 40	Josh Addo-Carr 5
Ken Maumalo 150	Felise Kaufusi 38	David Fusitu'a 4
Jacob Lillyman 146	Dale Finucane 35	Roger Tuivasa-Sheck 4
Suliasi Vunivalu 142	Buntty Afoa 34	Kieran Foran 3

STATS

NRL FANTASY

FANTASY POINTS
Cameron Smith 62.7
Shaun Johnson 58.3
Simon Mannering 54.3
Felise Kaufusi 46.4
Cooper Cronk 45.7



HOLDEN CUP

DATE: SUNDAY, APRIL 23 **VENUE:** SUNSHINE COAST STADIUM **KICK-OFF:** 2.50PM
REFEREE: JACOB WHITEHOUSE
TOUCH JUDGES: JACKSON SHEARER & RYAN HAYES

STORM V WARRIORS

Jesse ARTHARS	1	Lee TURNER
Harlan COLLINS	2	Lewis SOOSEMEGA
Will TOLOI	3	Melino FINEANGANOFU
Sale FINAU	4	Kane TELEA
Cory PARKER	5	Mathew FAITOTOA
Hayden HERBERT	6	Paul TURNER
Scott DRINKWATER	7	Chanel TAVITA-HARRIS
Jake AINSWORTH	8	Kenese KENESE
Caleb DAUNT	9/20	Erin CLARK
Clayton DODT	10	Chris SIO
Beau FERMOR	11	Jerome MAMEA
Louis GERAGHTY	12	Joe VUNA
Tevita ALIFA	13	Isaiah PAPALI'I (C)
14 Jacob ELMORE, 15 Jaiyden HUNT, 16 Dale MADDEN, 17 Jirah MOMOISEA, 18 Taumutu AFEMUI-NOHOTIMA, 19 Declan DAY, 20 Harry GRANT, 21 Braydon TRINDALL, 22 Matt EGAN, 23 Jacob TONGE		9 Eiden ACKLAND, 14 Dylan TAVITA, 15 Jordan PINNOCK, 16 Troy PULUPAKI, 17 Shane HANNAM, 18 Tayler PAORA, 21 Edward VAEAU-MULITALO, 22 Auzzie TUWHANGAI, 23 Soane HUFANGA, 24 Javvier PITOVAO
Eric SMITH		Grant POCKLINGTON

ANOTHER LOSS... The Storm lost their third-straight game after going down to Manly. Despite leading 10-8 at half-time, they couldn't hold out defensively. The once unbeatable side is now a team struggling to find their feet. Their defence was poor, with a total of 36 missed tackles and 16 errors. Centre Sale Finau impressed, scoring a try for his side.

ONE AWAY... The Warriors are still fighting for their first win of season after their close game with the Raiders. Trailing by two at half-time, the Warriors got right back into business with a try to Joe Vuna in the 49th minute. Continuous errors by the Warriors hurt them and the Raiders capitalised, scoring a quick double. A late try to Chanel Tavita-Harris wasn't enough for the Warriors to seal the deal.
- KAMILIA HANNA

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Blake Ayshford gets presented his 150th NRL game milestone jersey in Canberra. His family and friends surprise him for the occasion. It was also his birthday the day of the game.

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