



# Sir Peter Leitch's Mad Butcher Club

AT MT SMART STADIUM, HOME OF THE MIGHTY VODAFONE WARRIORS

## Newsletter #65

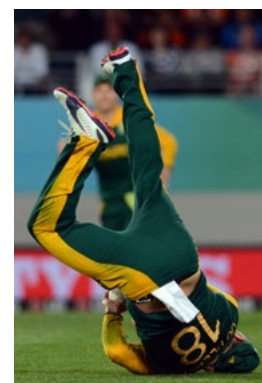
26 March 2015

To subscribe or unsubscribe email: [stephan.maier@medstar.co.nz](mailto:stephan.maier@medstar.co.nz)

### What a Fantastic Win for the Black Caps! Outstanding!



Photos from the Game on Tuesday Evening at Eden Park.



Photos courtesy of [www.photosport.co.nz](http://www.photosport.co.nz)

I am not much of a cricket fan, but as I have said before, this World Cup has captured me. And crikey the old ticker is getting a workout. The performance from the Black Caps to take us all the way to this weekend's Cricket World Cup final in Melbourne was unbelievable.

Grant Elliott, born in South Africa, smacking that ball into the stand for six, with just one more ball to go was incredible. I could not sleep after it all I was so excited.

But for the fact the Vodafone Warriors have a big game themselves at Mt Smart on Sunday, I'd be headed for Melbourne.

It's an amazing feeling and I am so proud to be a Kiwi. The Black Caps have united us all and that is something very special.

I had a commitment on Waiheke Island that meant I could not take up Sports Minister Jonathan Coleman's invitation to be at Eden Park, so I missed a treat, although I was glued to the TV.

I was still buzzing from the quarter-final, where the Black Caps had that outstanding win over the West Indies thanks to Martin Guptill and his 237 not out.

We have done so well and it will be long time before the drama of the Eden Park games against Australia and South Africa fades, let alone Guptill hitting it everywhere.

Regardless of the result in the final, I think the Black Caps have been magnificent.

*Get behind our Black Caps. Info on page: 11.*

# Vodafone Warriors Three From Three

**S**ATURDAYS don't get any better, with the three Vodafone Warriors teams all winning. Our Holden cup team beat the Eels 38-10, the NSW Cup team won 44-20 against the Wentworthville Magpies, and the NRL side won 29-16 over the Eels.

We were outstanding in the first half but struggled through a second spell where we did not fire in the same way, although our defence held well enough to get us home.

Great to see rookie centre Solomone Kata get a double, to see Ryan Hoffman make it three tries from three games, and to see our other new centre Tuimoala Lolhea get over too. He and Kata are going good considering their lack of NRL experience.

Four tries in 17 first-half minutes set up the win but when the Eels got it back to a 12-point deficit I was nervous, so when Shaun Johnson sealed it with a field goal I was relieved.

Photos courtesy of [www.photosport.co.nz](http://www.photosport.co.nz)



Thomas Leuluai runs out with the team for the first 2015 home game



Chad Townsend runs with ball in hand as Ryan Hoffman looms in support and Eels player Chris Sandow tries to cover both.



Tuimoala Lolohea scores a try.



Vodafone Warriors players tackle hard from left; Simon Mannering, Albert Vete and Bodene Thompson.

**Vodafone Warriors vs Brisbane Broncos,  
Mt Smart Stadium this Sunday 29 March Gates Open: 11.30am**

## Congratulations Due

Nathan Friend has had an outstanding career so it was real pleasure to watch him play game no. 200 against the Eels. Some way back but equally impressive, a young man with a big future, Ben Henry, clocked up game No 50.

## Get Well Sam, We Need You!

Fullback Sam Tomkins picked up a knee injury in our 29-16 NRL win over Parramatta. He went off when we were ahead 28-0, and that was when things started to slide.

Sam has had a scan to determine the extent of the injury, which happened as he was tackled. He said the team physio checked him out and he couldn't see anything too serious, but he was wrong.

Sam will be sidelined for up to six weeks with a partial tear of the posterior cruciate ligament in his left knee and won't be available again until April or even May.

That's a run of games that includes a trip to North Queensland (April 18), the Titans at home (April 25) and away to Cronulla (May 9).

Amazingly, coach Andrew McFadden says it is not as bad as it could have been. "Obviously it's a setback being without a player of his quality but it's also a big opportunity for Tui Lolohea. He's already had a full game at fullback against the Knights and he played there for another 30 minutes on Saturday. He's a player with special ability and we have great confidence in him."

Our injury list includes Sam Rapiro (hamstring), Konrad Hurrell (knee), Ngani Laumape (knee),

Glen Fisiiahi, David Fusitu'a and Mason Lino (all shoulder), and Ken Maumalo (hamstring).

## Juniors Go On Scoring Spree

Captain Toafofoa Sipley, second rower Matiu Love-Henry and centre Nathaniel Roache all scored doubles as the Vodafone Junior Warriors racked up a second straight big win in accounting for Parramatta 38-10. We dominated in the key areas, not least defensively, missing just 15 tackles.



*Siliva Havili dives over to score.*



*Api Pewhairangi gets dumped.*

## Nsw Cup Team on Fire

Eight tries and Api Pewhairangi's 20 points propelled the Vodafone Warriors to a 44-20 win over Wentworthville in the New South Wales Cup.

With two wins in three starts we sit well up the ladder in fourth. The margin was set to be 30 points plus when the home side led 44-12 late in the contest but two tries reduced the damage.



*Nathaniel Roache drives over to score a try*



*Sheldon Pitama in action.*

## Rabbitohs Hop On And On

Only two sides are unbeaten, the Rabbitohs, who beat the Tigers 20-6, and the Knights, 20-18 winners over the Titans.

The Panthers tasted defeat for the first time, going down 20-12 to the Roosters. On the other hand, the Dragons got their first win, 22-20 at Canberra.

The Dogs beat Manly 16-12, Brisbane beat the Cowboys 44-22, and the Storm beat the Sharks 36-18.

All of which leaves the Rabbitohs on top, ahead of the Knights. Then there are seven sides on four points, the Panthers, Roosters, Storm, Bulldogs, Warriors, Tigers and Broncos.

Four sides, Eels, Raiders, Dragons and Manly, have two points, and the Titans, Sharks and Cowboys are all without a point.

The Knights have surprised, with the bookies having them at \$23. The Cowboys have surprised for the opposite reason. Last yet at \$13 to win the title. The side above them, the Titans, are at \$251.

## Perhaps Our Best Guest List Ever

We had some great guests in the lounge, car racer Mitch Evans, boxer Brian Minto, former All Black and now Blues halfback Jimmy Cowan, his Blues team-mate Cullum Retallik, two former Kiwis in George Mann and Lyndsay Proctor, plus former Warriors coach Daniel Anderson.

But the star turn was Konrad Hurrell and Ngani Laumape, who entertained us at halftime. Konrad interviewed Ngani, and the place was in fits of laughter. But Ngani was not to be outdone and he took over and turned the tables on Konrad, and these two could make a living in comedy.

## Great To Have June Back

We had one of our regular members back in the lounge, June, who is in her 80s and normally never misses a game. But she did last season because of her health. She was very crook, so it was nice to have her in back in the Stacey Jones lounge. The place is not the same without you June.



*June and her Daughter Kathy.*

## I'm a busy boy!

Before the big game I have a huge week. Tuesday was the cricket, on Wednesday I did a talk for a com-

pany, then Canterbury and the Vodafone Warriors had the launch of Te Maumaharatanga (The Memorial) Anzac commemorative jersey, which they'll wear against the Titans on April 25.

On Thursday I have a few meetings, and Friday is a massive day, because it is grandparent's day at school, and then I'm off to the Equipage lunch, then that night there is a dinner Shane Cameron is hosting to say thanks to people who supported him in his boxing journey.

Then it might even be a flight on Saturday to Christchurch to support Monty Betham in his fight - for details visit: [www.enthdegree.co.nz](http://www.enthdegree.co.nz).

Then of course it will be back early Sunday for the big game, so all I can say is bring it on.

## Great Night Out With My Mate Phil

Me and my mate Phil Gifford (Loosehead Len) had a great night at a function ahead of the World Cup semi. The star turn at the fundraiser for the Men's Health Trust, which works to make sure us blokes take better care of ourselves, was Sir Ian "Beefy" Botham.

There were lots of laughs from Aussies Damien Fleming, Jeff Thomson, and Black Cap Dipak Patel, who now coaches in Papua New Guinea, and his one-time teammate Mark Greatbatch.

The MC was old Aussie wicket-keeper Wayne Phillips, and he was brilliant. It was great to be with Phil because the last time he put his hand in his pocket it came out with a pound note in it.

## BIG Weekend Ahead

It is another big weekend for the Vodafone Warriors. This Sunday at Mt Smart we turn the clock back 20 years and play the Brisbane Broncos, a repeat of our first ever game two decades ago.

We have a big day planned, so join us if you can.

Tickets are available at: [www.ticketek.co.nz](http://www.ticketek.co.nz), or you can become a member by going to: [www.warriorsforever.co.nz](http://www.warriorsforever.co.nz).

There are some great deals, with the one I like being Warrior Proud for \$59. The deal works really well if you want to plan on attending a few games. Take the time to check the site: [www.warriorsforever.co.nz](http://www.warriorsforever.co.nz) and if you want to be a real fan, become a member like me.

## Phoenix On Top

It was great to see the Wellington Phoenix break the hoodoo of Suncorp Stadium over the weekend, beating the Brisbane Roar 2-1. They had not beaten the Roar in 12 attempts, 11 in Brisbane and 1 on the Gold Coast, so well done to them. They remain top of the table.



## Enter The Contests!

Don't be shy. Enter our giveaway competition for that signed jersey. It will be worth heaps by the end of the year. **Keep scrolling down.**

## Your Team For Brisbane Game

Tuimoala Lolohea is at fullback and Matt Allwood in the centres against the Broncos. Allwood will become Vodafone Warrior No 199 and the seventh player to make his debut this season after Solomone Kata, Ryan Hoffman, Bodene Thompson, Sam Lisone, Albert Vete and Jonathan Wright.

Manu Vatuvei is edging towards the most tries in the NRL by a New Zealand player. His try against the Eels was his 137th, three short of Nigel Vagana's 140. It will also be his 198th game as he eyes becoming only the third player to appear in 200 games for us.

Ryan Hoffman plays his 249th NRL match. He'll bring up his 250th against Melbourne on April 6.

The team: Lolohea, Wright, Allwood, Kata, Vatuvei, Chad Townsend, Shaun Johnson, Jacob Lilyman, Thomas Leuluai, Ben Matulino, Thompson, Hoffman, Simon Mannering. Interchange: Nathan Friend, Ben Henry, Lisone, Vete, Dominique Peyroux.

## Foundation Players To Be Honoured

Our originals will be thick on the ground on Sunday. As many as 13 of 1995's 28 foundation players will be at Mt Smart, including nine who played in the opening night match.

Two of those – Dean Bell and Duane Mann – work for the Vodafone Warriors, while Stephen Kearney will be in Auckland as an assistant coach for the Broncos.

Confirmed are stand-off Gene Ngamu, back-rowers Tony Tuimavave

and Tony Tātupu, prop Gavin Hill, left wing Whetu Taewa and interchange utility Tea Ropati.

Fullback Phil Blake is based in England coaching rugby. Also in England are Hitro Okesene and Martin Moana, who both played extensively there after finishing with the Warriors.

The other five players from the first side – Sean Hoppe, Manoa Thompson, Greg Alexander, Se'e Solomona and Jason Mackie – are non-starters for the reunion.

Four of the other 11 players who appeared for the Auckland Warriors in our first year will be on hand. Record-holder Stacey Jones is now the club's NSW Cup coach, and he'll be joined by Joe Vagana, Logan Edwards and Mike Dorreen.

The remaining first-year players were Syd Eru, Willie Poching, Blues coach Sir John Kirwan, Andy Platt, Richie Blackmore, Frano Botica and Denis Betts.

The 1995 originals will form a guard of honour for the 2015 Vodafone Warriors as they run out.

## Konrad Signs On

Great news that Konrad Hurrell has committed to the Vodafone Warriors with a new contract to the end of the 2018 season. He has 37 tries in 57 games, and is ecstatic about his deal. I'm pretty pleased myself to be fair.

"I'm so happy to be staying," he said. "They brought me into league and I'm pleased I made the change. I'm having fun, trying to become a better player and being with the boys. This is the only club I want to be with."

## Jackson Lands Kiwi Ferns Coaching Job

Taranaki-based coach Alan Jackson will take the helm of the NZ Kiwi Ferns for their Anzac Test against the world champion Australia Jillaroos in Brisbane on May 1.

And Rugby League Northland has appointed Aaron Thomas as its new development manager.



*Photo courtesy Robert Charles/Fairfax NZ*

## Visit the NZRL Museum

Planning a trip to the NZ Warriors' home game against Broncos? Don't miss the chance to visit the NZRL Museum on the way. Situated right across the road from Mt Smart, the museum showcases historical photos, test match programmes and representative jerseys, all lovingly tended by former NZ Kiwis captain and curator Don Hammond.

And, of course, there's the Four Nations Trophy.

**NZRL Museum, 7  
Beasley Ave,  
Penrose - doors open  
at noon.**

# Photos from The Mad Butcher Club in the Stacey Jones Lounge



Bill Wavish the chairman of the club always makes time to come up the Stacey Jones lounge.



Konrad Hurrell who was on fire in the lounge. Very funny.



Lindsay and Raewyn enjoying an afternoon in the Butchers Lounge.



Cullum Retallick, Auckland Blues lock who came to the game with Jimmy Cowan.



Former Warriors coach Daniel Anderson, took the club to the grand final in 2002, was our guest in the lounge all day. Top bloke!



Daniel Anderson now works at the Eels as head of football operations.



Brendon Poplewell, from the TAB, who is race calling on Trackside TV and a massive league fan.



Former Kiwi George Mann chats up Lorna my wonderful helper.



Earle the Barber.



Jimmy Cowan ex All black and current BLUES Halfback a good mate of mine.



Mitch Evans GP22 motor racing driver.



Mitch Evans famous race car driver and former league star. He was Auckland under 9 player of the year.

# Vodafone Warriors vs Brisbane Broncos, Mt Smart Stadium this Sunday 29 March Gates Open: 11.30am, NYC Kick Off: 11.45am, NRL Kick Off: 2.05pm



Ngani Laumape with Konrad Hurrell in the lounge, They stole the show! They were both so funny, it was fantastic. Thanks for coming up to the lounge guys.



Don Graeme made the special presentation to June who has been coming to the lounge from day one. She missed a few games last year due to ill health, so it was a real pleasure to welcome her back on Saturday and have the whole lounge wish well for 2015.



Lounge member Don caught up with the Mt Smart Joker before the Eels game.



Tanya and Oriana both wearing, our new sponsor, Woodstock t-shirts. Looking great .



These 3 drove all the way up from Patea, Taranaki. Now that's what I call loyal fans. Rosa, her Grandson Traiyyaan and her son Jeremiah. Well done.

Brian Minto is a boxer from the USA who has fought our own Joseph Parker.

He is fighting in Christchurch this Saturday night on the super 6 redemption card.

Our own Monty Betham is also fighting that night.

We had a great laugh with him in the lounge.



Brian Minto demanded 2 photos in the newsletter. He is a pro boxer so I wasn't going argue with him.



# SUPER 8

## REDEMPTION



**RYDER BETHAM MINTO HOLLIOAKE SLATER**

**SATURDAY 28TH MARCH, FROM 6PM**  
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**STAND TICKETS FROM \$49+BOOKING FEE**

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**TAB**



**adgraphix**

# Physical Disability Rugby League - Just Started in NZ

## Read on to see how they went.

NOT even weather reports predicting one of the worst storms in recent history hitting the country, could stop a league mad group of people from turning up to Mt Albert Lions Rugby League club grounds on Sunday 15th March 2015 at 2 pm for the Inaugural launch of NZPDRL. The day was opened by Matt Ngametua, the driving force behind the introduction of Physical Disability Rugby League into New Zealand.

With the formalities out of the way it was on to the warm up which is always important but even more so considering the weather conditions. It wasn't long before a number of potential league stars were identified & we look forward to seeing them develop in the future.

Then it was game time, players are identified as full contact or tag only; one of the things about the modified game that makes it accessible to all... and when I say full contact, I mean full contact, there was some real big hits. We made it till just about the end of the second half before the weather started to really blow & with the rain came the end of the first game of the NZPDRL.

The day came to a close with prize giving & a special thank you to the Mt Albert Lions Rugby League Club, who were not only kind enough to let us use their clubs facilities, they also helped out on the day & donated a couple of league balls to start off our kit which was very much appreciated.

With the number of people who participated on the inaugural day, we are confident that Physical Disability Rugby League New Zealand has a bright future.

Physical Disability Rugby League started in Australia by George Tonna 4 years ago, now have leagues in the NRL Sea Eagles, Rabbitohs, Roosters and also the Newtown Jets.

We can't wait for the next game which will be held on Sunday 19th April. Venue still to be confirmed.

**Those Aussies better watch out!!!**



Inaugural PDRLNZ Day Players



Big hit a comin'....Michael zeroing in on Jason



Who da man...Jeremy da man! Don't let his size fool you.

# Vodafone Warriors ANSAC Jersey

## The ANZAC Day Jersey - "Te Maumaharatanga" - (The Memorial)

**A**CKNOWLEDGES the primary aspect of Anzac day, remembrance, and for this reason alone the name given to the 2015 Anzac jersey is the Māori word "Te Maumaharatanga" (The Memorial)

The 4th stanza of Laurence Binyon's poem "The Fallen" is also an integral part of remembering those who fought in past wars. The final line of that ode says "We will remember"

The 2015 Anzac jersey is about paying our respects to our nation's military. 2015 marks the 100 year anniversary of The Battle of Gallipoli.

Each year on Anzac Day, New Zealanders (and Australians) mark the anniversary of the Gallipoli landings of 25 April 1915. On that day, thousands of young men, far from their homes, stormed the beaches on the Gallipoli peninsula in what is now Turkey. For eight long months, New Zealand troops, alongside those from Australia, Great Britain, Ireland, France, India, and Newfoundland battled harsh conditions and Ottoman forces desperately fighting to protect their homeland.

By the time the campaign ended more than 130,000 men had died: at least 87,000 Ottoman soldiers and 44,000 Allied soldiers, including more than 8700 Australians. Among the dead were 2779 New Zealanders.



The jersey is based around 4 figures standing around a monument which features the words to the Ode of Remembrance. On the left side the 2 figures representing the Medical Corps and the Army stand proud saluting all those who have fallen, reflecting on those brave souls who gave their lives so that we would know the freedom we have today. On the other side stand the Navy and Air Force they too strike the same salute. These 4 figures represent the 4 parts of our military and pay respect to all those men and women who have fought, are currently serving and will serve in the future.

Behind them fly the New Zealand and Australian flags together, facing the monument inscribed with the words of the Ode of Remembrance, symbolising that we served together in the war and, in the most respectful way, we continue to serve together on this footy field today. Our club has had many great Australian players over the years and we play in an Australian competition. This is about the spirit of brotherhood as much as it is about remembrance.

The mangopare (hammerhead shark) features in the monument. It is a warrior-like symbol. This also pays respect to the Māori Battalion. As a symbol the mangopare (hammerhead shark) has special meaning to our forces even today, symbolising facing challenges with diligence, tenacity and determination. It represents never backing down - no matter how big the fight.

The kiwi and kangaroo feature prominently in the design and represent the brotherhood and spirit of ANZAC. Below the figures are green fields, filled with poppies. These are the Fields of Remembrance – where our ANZACs have fallen overseas. Behind the fields are our mountains and our whenua (land) symbolising what they fought for at home. Finally, below the figures is a rocky outcrop representing the rocky Gallipoli peninsula with the crosses placed amongst the rocks represent the fallen. We will remember them.

*Continued on next page...*



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The setting is one symbolic of the dawn service. You can see the rays of light protruding from behind the monument. These rays represent what the soldiers fought for, a better day. As the sun rising and a new day begins the sun shines light on the world and helps things grow. The sun represents positivity and growth, happiness and freedom. The colours reflect New Zealand colours, and out of respect and in the spirit of brotherhood, Australia's colours have been subtly added too.

The design has been intentionally treated in a stained glass window effect. It needed to be something befitting what it represents. The designer spent a lot of time researching this project and wanted to create something unique. The Auckland War Museum was used for inspiration

For all involved at Canterbury of NZ, It has been an honour and a privilege to work on this jersey.

Lest we forget.

Colin Gibson - Canterbury of New Zealand Ltd

## Blasts From the Past



Flash back to 1999.  
Can you name all the  
Players and  
Management?



Vodafone Warriors 10th  
Anniversary Match, Ericsson  
Stadium - June 26, 2005

## Support The BlackCaps

Let's make a big thing of this NZ. Get behind our Black Caps  
show your support in 2 ways. 1 go to their web site  
[www.mhyblackcaps.co.nz](http://www.mhyblackcaps.co.nz) or 2 tweet with the hash tag  
#backtheblackcaps at [www.twitter.com/blackcaps](http://www.twitter.com/blackcaps)

# ONE TEAM FIGHTING FOR A WHOLE NATION



YOUR TEAM  
20 YEARS  
VODAFONE



[warriors.kiwi](http://warriors.kiwi)

# Warrior no. 1 Still a Warrior 20 Years Later

By John Deaker



**T**HE significance of the role that Dean Bell played in the Warriors' history by returning from the UK to New Zealand to become Warrior number 1 is something that hasn't been lost with time. The fact that 20 years later the club is still going strong and he's back at the club acting as their General Manager of football is something that should be viewed as being just as significant. Having legends of the past like Bell and Stacey Jones back contributing to the club is one of many examples that this club is developing some genuine history.

It also shouldn't be viewed as a fluke or co-incidence that this is happening. Despite the Warriors' management issues over the years prominent people involved with the club have realized that acknowledging the growing list of former players and other aspects of its history are important in developing a strong culture within the club.

The Warriors' fortress at Mt Smart Stadium is a key part of that history too and for most of their faithful supporters there remains something special about turning up to support their team at the same ground where they watched Dean Bell lead the team out of the tunnel for the first time against Brisbane back in 1995.

It can strongly be argued that the Warriors have built up a better culture for players and fans to be proud of than the Blues rugby team has since it first took the field ( in 1996 ) round a very similar time to the Warriors. Most of the Warriors' fans know Dean Bell was the 1st Warrior – but even the staunchest Blues' fans would struggle to name the first Blues' player. The fact is they've never really identified one - and it's one of many reasons why the Blues franchise has struggled to make progress and obtain pride in playing for and supporting the regions rugby team.

Having very successful years where they made Grand Finals in 2002 and 2011 are important years for the Warriors' to have in their history books. The next 20 years will naturally bring more situations worth celebrating. Along the way it's likely the club will start to notch up more and more interesting aspects to file away in the history books and one of those of special meaningfulness in the club's maturity will be the first 'son of a Warrior' to represent the club's NRL team.

Winning their first title will of course be notable too. Success breeds success and you get that feeling that when the Warriors do finally pull off one title victory the belief could then be there for them to do what the NZ Breakers have done and go on to consistently be a dominant team in their Australian-based competition.

Dean Bell has reflected on that Match number 1 v Brisbane on March 10th 1995 many times over the years. Here are some memories from him ( as told in 'Dean Bell, Warrior' ) :

- Dean Bell on the atmosphere and Tunnel: "Standing there at the tunnel I could hear feel the roar. There had been such a build-up and finally we were there. Using the tunnel was a great idea. I knew we were going to come out from that tunnel the very first time I had a look at the ground when I came home. And I went through that in my mind every time we trained. I would look at it and picture in my mind how we were going to come through it.
- Dean Bell on the hype 20 years ago: "The night before the game John ( Monie ) had asked us to relax and do something unrelated to the game. So I went to the movies and, when I came home, I flicked the television on to watch the news. Well, there was something on about the Warriors and, when I changed channel, there was something else about the game. Surely it wouldn't have been on a third channel? Sure enough, the Warriors were on again. There was just no escaping it."
- Dean Bell on a the 25-22 loss v Brisbane being a Moral Victory : "Once the game had finished I was bitterly disappointed... ( But ) There were still so many positives to erase the doubts I'd had. While I was annoyed with the defeat, when I sat down and thought about it, I saw plenty of good points in the performance. If you could ever have a moral victory when losing, that was it."

# Plenty of Depth for Kiwis

By John Coffey QSM



**T**HIS weekend the Vodafone Warriors are looking back to their first clash with the Brisbane Broncos 20 years ago, a dramatic occasion when war raged across Ericsson Stadium before the kick-off and brilliant Broncos halfback Alfie Langer deprived the home side of a stunning debut victory.

Thanks to Sky Sport we have been able to relive that occasion during a series of Warriors' 20th anniversary match replays. Suffice to say that the scoring fluctuations – from 0-10 down to 22-10 up and an eventual 22-25 loss – previewed the roller coaster ride that fans were to experience and endure for the next two decades.

So let's look ahead instead, to the Anzac Test match at Brisbane on May 1. The Kiwis go into that game as reigning Four Nations champions, which also means the Kangaroos and their wily coach, Tim Sheens, will be all the more determined to exert revenge.

The Australians have been telling us for years they could field two or three teams and still be competitive with New Zealand and England. Hopefully, that boast was silenced last year when both the Kangaroos and Kiwis were without several first-choice players yet it was New Zealand which put together back-to-back victories.

Significantly, the first, and most decisive, of those wins was achieved at Suncorp Stadium, where the Kiwis also triumphed in the 2008 World Cup and 2010 Four Nations finals. So playing in Brisbane should not trouble coach Stephen Kearney and his troops.

Kearney is blessed that New Zealand has more depth than ever in the NRL. Not that long ago Frank Endacott had to pull a bewildered David Kidwell out of the Parramatta reserve grade team to play in an Anzac Test. Kidwell was quickly given another player's cap and shirt to appear before the TV cameras.

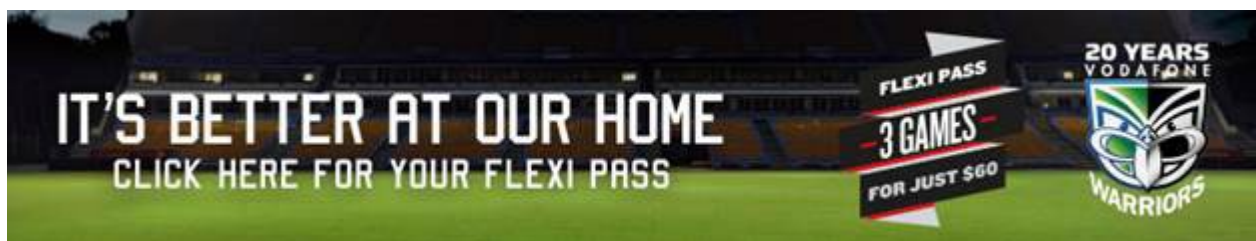
Our 2014 Four Nations winning team included: Peta Hiku, Manu Vatuvei, Shaun Kenny-Dowall, Dean Whare, Jason Nightingale, Kieran Foran, Shaun Johnson, Jesse Bromwich, Issac Luke, Adam Blair, Simon Mannering (captain), Kevin Proctor, Jason Taumalolo. Interchange: Lewis Brown, Greg Eastwood, Martin Taupau, Tohu Harris.

It is likely Kearney will stay loyal to most, if not all, of them. But if he needs look further afield how about this for a second XIII?

Roger Tuivasa-Sheck, Sosaia Feki, Gerard Beale, Josh Hoffman, Dallin Watene-Zelezniak, Thomas Leuluai, Benji Marshall, Jared Waerea-Hargreaves, Matt McIlwrick, Ben Matulino, Alex Glenn, Manu Ma'u, Elijah Taylor. Interchange: Kodi Nikorima, Bodene Thompson, Sam Moa, Sam Kasiaso.

Then there are worthy contenders such as Sam Perrett, Bryson Goodwin, Konrad Hurrell, Curtis Rona, Isaac John, Ben Henry, Sam McKendry, Suaia Matagi, Jeremy Smith, Siliva Havili, Dene Halatau and Roosters newcomer (and one-game Warrior) Siosua Taukeiaho.

We are still a bit light at hooker, though McIlwrick (efficiently deputising for injured Jake Friend at the Roosters) and Nikorima (a lively Broncos colt) are showing plenty of promise, and in the halves. I guess some things never change.



# The Men Who Most of Us Forgot

By David Kemey



**T**WENTY years in the NRL and most of us have memories of Stacey Jones, Frances Meli, Lance Hohaia, Logan Swann, NRL finals, nail-biting wins over – usually – Melbourne, and even travelling to Australia with Sir Pete to watch us play the Tigers.

But spare a thought for the players who have not gone down in history.

This is not to say they were not good players or people, and the intention is not to take the piss, because at the end of the day, all of these guys have something I will never have – a Warriors jersey.

But I have picked a side made up of players who came, and went.

In at fullback is Paul Atkins (1), on the wings Carl Doherty (5) and Siuatonga Likiliki (1), in the centres are Mike Doreen (4) and David Bailey (3), while at stand-off give a cheer for Frano Botica (5), playing outside halfback Mark Robinson (1).

In the forwards Leeson Ah Mau (2) and Kane Ferris (1) prop, with Zane Clarke (5) in the hooker's spot. The second row is Mark Carter (8) and Matt Jobson (2), with Meti Noovao (1) at lock.

We'll need an interchange and I've cheated by just picking four players, Paul Dezolt (3), Aaron Lester (3), Upu Poching (1) and Steve Buckingham (2).

That's 19 guys who made just 48 appearances between them.

I could have come up with an even lower number, but I've tried to keep players in position.

Amazingly, it's a side with three All Blacks, and in fairness, but for a horrific injury, Frano would have played a lot more games. I doubt the same could be said of Carter and Robinson.

It's also a side where Leeson Ah Mau has carved out a good career at St George, Mike Doreen had just four games but scored two tries, and also contains players who made a decent go of it in England, in Aaron Lester's case, even becoming a Whitehaven Hall of Famer and Immortal.

There is also a player who gave me one of my fondest memories of the club, if only for the sheer audacity of what he did – and the price he paid for it.

Atkins played one game, which is one more than I ever will. It was against the Roosters, and he gathered the ball up for his first touch and ran it back with an excellent turn of speed, only to be absolutely smashed by Adrian Morley.

I remember thinking "if he gets up it will be a miracle".

He did, but I certainly thought "he won't try that again".

Only he did. With his second touch he again powered into the line, and again he got absolutely smashed by Morley, who had clearly enjoyed the first encounter more than Atkins.

To his credit, he bounced straight back up again.

It was one of the bravest things I have seen on the field, and despite being a one game man, his courage lives in my memory.

Coach Tony Kemp said after the game that Atkins "needed to learn to sidestep".

Interestingly, it was the same one game that Kane Ferris played, so they will always have something to talk about when they get together.



**SEALINK**  
Auckland - Waiheke - Barrier

SeaLink car  
ferry arriving  
at Waiheke  
6/30am in the  
morning

# Arm Wrestling and League

By Ben Francis



## Inaugural Arm Wrestle A Success

**T**HE first Arm Wrestling competition between the Dargaville Volunteer Fire Brigade and Big River FM was a success. A great number of spectators turned out on the night, to support both sides. There was a total of five matches on the night with the Fire Station winning the first two, Big River lifted their form and won the following two wrestles which set up an entertaining finish in a winner takes all finale. The Fire Station won the final match which gave them a 3-2 victory. It was an exciting night and all the money raised went to the Dargaville Fire Station. This is going to be the first of a number of challenges between Big River FM and the Volunteer Fire Brigade.

## Finalists For Adam Blair Trophy Confirmed

**T**HE Adam Blair Trophy is set up for an exciting finals series. Whangarei Boys High School and Kaitia College both finished first place in their respective pools and will host Kura Hokianga and Kamo High School respectively on their semi-finals. The winner of both games will play for the Northtec Adam Blair Trophy.

While in the plate semi-finals Dargaville High School will play Okaihau College and Northland College will face Bay Of Islands College.

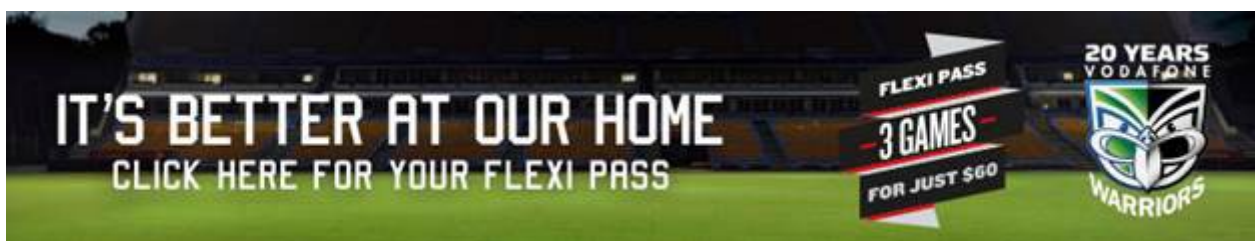
It was also an exciting final round of the Adam Blair Trophy with defending champions Kamo College beating Tikipunga High School 58-16, Dargaville High School beat Bay of Islands College 62-20, Kaitia College beat Whangaroa College 46-22, Northland College had their third draw of the season against Brothers that one ending 20-20 and Kura Hokianga scraped past Okaihau College winning 24-20.

## Northland Taniwha Find New Head Coach

**Y**ESTERDAY Northland a rugby Union announced current deputy principal of Auckland's Tamaki College Richie Harris will be the director of Northland Rugby and head coach of the ITM cup squad for the 2015 and 2016 seasons. Harris has coached the Blues secondary schools team and also coached brothers Kara and Dan Pryor when they were playing club rugby in Auckland. Harris replaces Derren Witcombe who is now coaching with Mitsubishi in Japan on a three year contract.

## My Opportunity Of A Lifetime

**S**ATURDAY I was fortunate enough to be invited by Sir Peter Leitch to the Warriors v Parramatta Eels game and sit in the Stacey Jones Lounge and enjoy the game. I had a wonderful time, met some awesome Warriors fans and even got to watch the entire game next to former Warriors, ST Helens, and Parramatta Eels coach Daniel Anderson. It will be a moment I will never forget. I can not thank Sir Peter enough for the Opportunity to not only be in the Stacey Jones Lounge, but write for this newsletter.



# Raelene Castle

By Barry Ross



**R**AELENE Castle is doing plenty of things right. She is approaching two years as CEO of the Canterbury Bulldogs and would have been punted months ago if there were any doubts about her ability to handle this high pressure position. The former boss of Netball New Zealand, took over at the Bulldogs in July 2013 and has built a reputation as a firm, but fair Rugby League administrator. Coach of the Bulldogs, Des Hasler, can be a prickly character at times and there were some worries that Raelene would clash with the experienced and successful coach. But that hasn't been the case as she has treated the 54 year old coach with the respect he deserves. A question and answer article on the NRL website about a year ago gives an insight into Raelene's admiration for Hasler.

When asked if she envisaged any problems relating to the coach, she replied, " Good Heavens no. Why would I? Des has had many successes in our game for 35 years or more. I have only been involved for five minutes. " This esteem for her coach has become stronger and she said in my interview, " Des is a truly amazing coach and a special man. He can take players to a place they would not reach without his input and he does this at physical and mental levels. "

"He is also the first to put his arm around anyone in his playing group, if they are having some problems, both in football or outside the sport. " The Bulldogs are a big and imposing team. They play very physical football and many believed with all the testosterone in the place, a woman and a New Zealander, would find it difficult to be accepted. But this is far from the case and she has quickly blended into the club.

"The Bulldogs have been one of the most successful, both on and off the field, sporting organisations in Australia for some years now, " she emphasised. " I have had strong support from all levels of the club since my first day. Once Rugby League people work out that you love and know the game they are very supportive. My Board of Directors have been terrific and they are the reason things run so smoothly. The Bulldogs are in a very stable situation in every respect, especially from a brand and balance sheet point of view. "

Bulldog legend, Steve Mortimer, is a Board member and he was playing with the Turvey Park juniors in Wagga around the same time as Raelene's father, Bruce, was the captain/coach of the Turvey Park first grade side. Bruce Castle played two Tests for New Zealand, one as captain, back in the 1960s. He was a talented lock forward and still has many friends in the Wagga region. Raelene is close to her parents and smiled as she told me how her father, now 76, is still working, running an apartment complex in Auckland. While Bruce and his wife Marlene were living in Wagga, their first child was born. It was Raelene, so as many Bulldogs followers are quick to point out, she's an Aussie. But according to Raelene she is a proud Kiwi. " I grew up in Auckland and I am a strong supporter of all and any New Zealand teams, " she said. " On the international scene, black and white are my colours, but in the NRL, blue and white are the only ones. How good was the cricket World Cup semi final in Auckland. The way our boys played left me bursting with pride. "

"While the Bulldogs are my main concern, I am pleased with what the Warriors have achieved since they joined the NRL. Their efforts have been great for our game in New Zealand. "

"We only play the Warriors once this season and that is a long way off in round 26 at ANZ stadium here in Sydney. There will be many friends from home at that match, but for 80 minutes, friendship will be out the window. " Concussion and whether players should be allowed back on the field has been in the headlines during the past few weeks. When asked to comment on this, Raelene was forthright in explaining the Bulldogs situation.

"We have every confidence in our doctor, Bassam Moses, " she emphasised, " and our coach is 100 percent behind all of his decisions. " " While some players might feel, they should have the final say on whether they can be allowed back on the field, the very nature of concussion suggests that sometimes the players are not capable of making the correct decision. " *Continued next page...*

*Continued from previous page...*

There is no doubt that the Bulldogs CEO has already won her plenty of admirers throughout Australian sporting circles, just as she did in New Zealand. Her work as NetballNew Zealand CEO for six years is one of the key reasons why this sport has taken off on both sides of the Tasman. Her drive and achievements was recognised in the New Year's Honours list when she was awarded an ONZM (Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit) for services to sport and business. In 2009 at Rotorua with close friend, Mike Kernaghan, she won a mixed pairs New Zealand lawn bowls championship.

Since Raelene has joined the Bulldogs, the female club membership has almost doubled, while memberships generally has also increased. Just a couple of weeks ago, the Bulldogs opened a new business not far from the Leagues club and the club's Rugby League administration offices at Belmore Oval.

It is a combined Bulldogs merchandising shop and coffee lounge and it is situated in the heart of the club's territory, on busy Burwood road Belmore. I met Raelene at this already popular spot for this story. If you are coming to Sydney for a game or any other reason, the cafe is easily reached by subway from the city. New Zealand ice cream is not on the menu yet, but this could soon change.

## NSW Cup Round #4

**A**UCKLAND, New Zealand, March 24, 2015 – Ngani Laumape returns from a knee injury to line up in the centres for the Vodafone Warriors in their fourth-round New South Wales Cup clash against North Sydney at Mount Smart Stadium on Saturday (1.00pm kick-off).

Laumape, who has made 30 NRL appearances since his debut in 2013, was sidelined with a knee injury he picked up in mid-February but has come through rehab to be available sooner than expected. He has joined the comeback man George Carmont in the centres in what is otherwise a settled Vodafone Warriors side. Laumape replaces the experienced Dominique Peyroux who has been selected as 18th man for the club's NRL side.

Fullback Viliami Kaveinga was originally named to play against Wentworthville last Saturday but was subsequently ruled out and replaced by Matt Allwood. He's back in the No 1 jersey to face the Bears this week. Otherwise the squad is the same as the one which accounted for Wentworthville 44-20, the second win in three starts which has the Vodafone Warriors lying fourth on the ladder at this early stage of the season. While Allwood and Peyroux are missing this week, coach Stacey Jones has still been able to call on nine players with NRL experience.

### Vodafone Warriors

1	Viliami Kaveinga	14
2	Saula Solomona	15
3	George Carmont	16
4	Ngani Laumape	17
5	Jarrold Tua	18
6	Api Pewhairangi	
7	Sam Cook	
8	Suaia Matagi	
9	Siliva Havili	
10	Sebastine Ikahihifo	
11	Raymond Faitala-Mariner	
12	Sione Lousi	
13	John Palavi (C)	

### Interchange:

David Bhana  
Charlie Gubb  
Nathaniel Peteru  
James Bell  
Ray Talimalie

Coached by club legend Stacey Jones



**T**UIMOALA Lolohea moves to fullback and Matt Allwood comes into the centres for the Vodafone Warriors' 20th anniversary match against the Brisbane Broncos at Mount Smart Stadium on Sunday (2.00pm kick-off; match day sponsor: Vodafone).

With first-choice fullback Sam Tomkins sidelined for four to six weeks with a knee injury, the 20-year-old Lolohea will have his second start in the position in four games this season.

He filled the role when Tomkins was out with a hamstring injury against Newcastle – excelling with 213 metres and 10 tackle breaks – and he also played the last 29 minutes against the Eels at fullback after Tomkins left the field.

Allwood will become Vodafone Warrior No 199 and the seventh player to make his debut for the club this season after Solomone Kata, Ryan Hoffman, Bodene Thompson, Sam Lisone, Albert Vete and Jonathan Wright.

The 22-year-old Allwood signed with the Vodafone Warriors after 11 NRL appearances for the Canberra Raiders last season. So far this year he has played twice for the club's New South Wales Cup side – at centre and fullback – as well as being the NRL team's 18th man twice.

“Tui has a big opportunity at fullback with Sam out for a month or so,” said assistant coach Tony Iro. “He was outstanding there when we played Newcastle and had more experience when Sam went off last week. We all know the ability he has and have real confidence in him being able to handle himself.

“Matt gives us NRL experience and is well versed in what we do. He has trained in the centres throughout

the offseason as well as playing in trials.”

The rest of the side remains unchanged with the same starting pack being named for the third straight week.

The match marks the 20th anniversary of the Vodafone Warriors' debut appearance against the Broncos on March 10, 1995, a game Brisbane won 25-22.

The Broncos have been their most regular opponents, this being the 36th clash with Brisbane winning 20 of them and the Vodafone Warriors 15. At Mount Smart Stadium the Vodafone Warriors have a 10-7 edge in 17 meetings.

The Vodafone Warriors have won the last four encounters at Mount Smart and six of the last seven but this time they face a Brisbane side reunited with foundation coach Wayne Bennett who was at the helm when the two clubs first met in 1995.

After twin individual milestones for Nathan Friend (200th game) and Ben Henry (50th game) last weekend, there are no major marks in the offing on Sunday although wing Manu Vatuvei is edging towards the record for most tries in the NRL by a New Zealand player. His try against the Eels was his 137th leaving him three short of Nigel Vagana's 140 tries.

It will be Vatuvei's 198th game as he eyes becoming only the third player to appear in 200 games for the Vodafone Warriors, a mark he is set to achieve against Wests Tigers at home on April 11.

Hoffman plays his 249th match on Sunday as he looks towards bringing up his 250th against his old Melbourne side on April 6.

## Vodafone Warriors

1	Tuimoala Lolohea	10	Ben Matulino
2	Jonathan Wright	11	Bodene Thompson
3	Matt Allwood	12	Ryan Hoffman
4	Solomone Kata	13	Simon Mannering (C)
5	Manu Vatuvei		<b>Interchange:</b>
6	Chad Townsend	14	Nathan Friend
7	Shaun Johnson	15	Ben Henry
8	Jacob Lillyman	16	Sam Lisone
9	Thomas Leuluai	17	Albert Vete
		18	Dominique Peyroux



## THIS WEEK IN BIG LEAGUE'S ROUND 4 ISSUE...

Blake Ferguson talks about the role the Roosters played in his return to rugby league, plus the Warriors turn 20!

### FEATURES

- **Blake Ferguson's** reputation may precede for the wrong reasons, but since arriving at the Roosters, his team-mates are finding his honesty and positivity as a breath of fresh air;
- In 1995 the Auckland **Warriors** entered the NSWRL premiership as the first New Zealand based team. Many thought it was something that would never happen but their success is being celebrated this weekend;
- Winning tough can make all the difference come the end of the season. The **Newcastle Knights** have ground out three wins from three in 2015 and are hoping it lays the platform a big year ahead;
- When **Paul McGregor** returned to the St George Illawarra Dragons he was shocked to find the facilities the same from when he was there in 2004. He's been putting in the elbow grease to bring those in line with some of the competition's best;

**PLUS...** **Damian Lovelock** questions the sentiment of bring back the biff and where a happy medium may lie; **Matt Elliott** addresses the mental welfare of the game's young players and what measures could be taken to ensure they're addressing any difficulties they may be having; **Nathan Brown** takes a look at what formula has worked for the Warriors in the past and how injuries may hurt the Eels' chances; It's the state election this weekend so we look at **Top 8** Would-be politicians in rugby league.

**AND:** Official team lists, Warren Smith's Big Clash preview of Wests Tigers v Canterbury, lower grade reviews, News: Russell Packer a possibility to return, Darius Boyd on track for an early comeback, Beau Scott's get-out clause, Taylor patient with Brooks and Moses; and Cronulla Sharks team poster.



### THIS WEEK'S ISSUE

On sale at newsagents, supermarkets and at the ground from

**Thursday, March 26.**

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### JOIN THE CONVERSATION



# Wonderful Winners

**I love getting emails from our winners. It always puts a smile on my face. Here is what the winners from a few weeks ago sent me:**

## **Got this letter from a reader and winner in the UK:**

Wow! Wow! Wow! what a surprise I got when I got home to see this package on the table, you are totally MAD! but I really do appreciate the goody bag, THANK YOU!

Mate (Sir Peter) really grateful, I can't explain with words or articulate how big a smile I have on my face, my other half just came home and is amazed at what you have sent, November can't come quick enough so we can meet up and share a pie & pint (Wigan delicacy) my treat of course!

I really would like to thank you for your comments and involvement with the great game of rugby league, the twitter post of Sam and me actually made the footy show's "That's Gold" segment so I am now officially a celebrity in my own house! Awesome!!!

We follow the NRL via premier sports in the UK and live and breathe the game in our house, Although my youngest (21) Chris plays professionally for Leigh Centurions (on loan this season to Barrow Raiders) so he has top billing, however this will blow his legs off when he gets home later and I show him what has travelled across the world for me, Brilliant!!

I have a little story that might interest you, going back many years before we got together my now wife and I were stewards at Central Park, the famous old Wigan ground, basically getting paid to watch our favourite team, this is where we met (that's another story) and as a result got married etc..just done

Wow!!

Thank you so much. You can imagine my surprise. I just got home from watching the Black Caps brilliant and very emotional win against the South Africans at Eden Park to find a package on the table for me. To see that I won the ultimate trip for any league fan just blew me away. I cannot believe my luck.

Thank you so very much for these. Me and my 10 year old son who, like his Dad is a die hard NSW fan will be going to cheer on Ryan Hoffman and the Blues!!!!

BLUE ALL DAY BABY!!!!  
**Bryce Swainson**

30 years together????, both our boys played rugby league and on the last ever game played at Central Park my eldest (27) Mike played in the Central Park Trophy Final for Hindley Under 11's, at half time. The last of his generation ever to play at the famous old ground (I still have some of the seats out of the Popular Stand and the sign off the Douglas Stand) he has a lovely medal and memento from the game, and will be forever in the history of Central Park

I used to coach kids from 9's -16's my assistant coach at the time was the world famous Bill Ashurst! former Penrith, Wigan, Wakefield and GB player, my wife Paula also coached and we have enjoyed some fantastic times all because of RL, what a great game!

I am sure you have also have many wonderful experiences/stories/friends and hope to have many more, this is just a little reflection of another amazing circumstance of being involved with RL

Many Thanks for the goodies, Best Wishes & Good Health!

**Gary Hankinson**



Thanks Sir Peter.

Your newsletter is a bloody good read, and am looking forward to it weekly.  
Lucky bugger ,!!!!!!

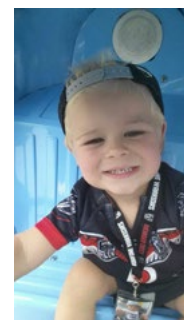
Received your parcel this morning, much appreciated, not sure when I'll get any work done, with the good reads you have sent me.

Have a good weekend..... entertain your audience as usual, and good on you for being so kind to so many kids and adults , that are not so fortunate as you and I. Cheers Pete!

GO THE MIGHTY VODAFONE WARRIORS ( And the Black Caps )

**Peter Howley**

## Benji Moroney a Young Warriors Fan



I spotted this little bloke, Benji, on Waiheke Island and had to share him with you all.

## Readers Looking Good



Mathew Morton (my grandson) age 9 looking sharp.



Rodney green with his son Dylan chilling out in Napier nice photo boys.

# 20 Years of Vodafone Warriors Giveaway

**To celebrate 20 Years of the Warriors we are giving away some great prizes.**

- **3x (1 Signed) Vodafone Warriors 2012 Limited Edition Player Card Handbooks** (contains 32 player profiles) courtesy of Wendys



- **1x Signed Vodafone Warriors Heritage Jersey** - This Jersey has every Warriors player ever on the back. From Warrior 1 Dean Bell to the 192nd Warrior Tuimoala Lolohea.



- **4x Vodafone Warriors Caps** - 2 of Each



- **1x NRL Auckland Nines 2015 Tee Shirt** 2XL



- **5x 2015 NRL Season Guides** - Not available for purchase in New Zealand



**To be into win 1 of 14 amazing prizes** just send a stamped, addressed envelope or postcard to me in the mail with your name, address and phone number on the back to the address below.

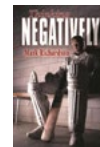
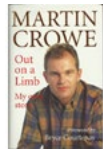
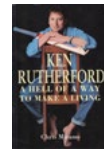
**20 Years Giveaway  
P.O Box 54295  
The Marina 2144, Manukau, Auckland**

**Drawn on  
Monday 6 March**

# Giveaway Winners

## Cricket Book Winners:

**Liz Pollock** from Ashburton  
**Kevin Dixon** from Nelson South  
**John Power** from Ashburton  
**Paul Paton** from Onehunga in Auckland  
**Tyler Blake** from Albany in Auckland  
**Ian Carpenter** from Warkworth in Auckland  
**John McElney** from Tepuke  
**Richard Gerratt** from Papatoetoe in Auckland



## Winners of The State of Origin Tickets:

**Bryce Swanson** from Albany in Auckland  
**Raewyn Ashley** from Christchurch  
**Mark Gleeson** from Papakura in Auckland  
**John Fale** from East Tamaki in Auckland



If you wish to **subscribe** or **unsubscribe** please email Stephen Maier at [stephan.maier@medstar.co.nz](mailto:stephan.maier@medstar.co.nz)

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Here is the team that help me make the newsletter each week. Between us we make the newsletter happen - and like everything it's a team effort.



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Editor



**David Kemeys**  
Editor at Large



**Hayden Woodhead**  
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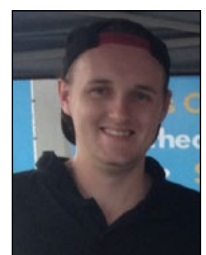
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