

VODAFONE



Sir Peter Leitch Club

AT MT SMART STADIUM, HOME OF THE MIGHTY VODAFONE WARRIORS

18th May 2016

Newsletter #122



Vodafone Warriors vs Panthers AMI Stadium, Christchurch



The crowd cheers on the Vodafone Warriors



Young Vodafone Warriors fans watch the game



The boys exit the tunnel



Ryan Hoffman and Andrew McFadden

Time for Some Table Gazing

By David Kemeys



A FEW WEEKS ago I cautioned all the doom and gloom merchants, and boldly called for people to assess again after a string of what was then our next four games – the Storm (battered), the Dragons (won), the Panthers (soundly beaten), and Canberra.

If we can beat Canberra, who are ahead of us on the table in ninth with nine points, against our eight for 12th, those four games will have thrown up a 50-50 record, and leave us with a six loss, five win record.

If we win, and it is a big if, given our recent form, we will again be in the eight, or at least within touching distance of it.

So things are, despite the gloom and doom merchants again in full cry, not as terrible as they are being painted.

None of this should be taken as me being an absolute cheerleader for the club, because if we lose, things will be starting to look pretty grim.

They say a table does not lie – especially after a full season. And the table, in my view, is already starting to give a very fair indication of where things will sit at the end of the regular season.

Anyone argue that Brisbane, Cowboys, Melbourne and Sharks aren't the four best sides they have seen so far?

We won't catch them.

The next four make interesting reading, the Eels (who knows what will happen to them in the wake of the salary cap drama), Dogs, Panthers and Dragons.

Two of those sides we have beaten, but the really interesting one is Canberra in ninth. They have a couple of very close losses, and if fortune had favoured them, they would have four points more and be much further up the table – fifth in fact.

That is what makes this weekend critical.

Win and we stay in the hunt, lose and we start to fall away.

There are three sides on eight points, us, Manly and the Rabbitohs. You just need to ask yourself if we will overhaul any of the Dogs, Panthers, Eels or Dragons, while staying ahead of Manly and Souths.

The only sides currently below us are the Titans, Tigers, Roosters and Knights, and if there are any likely improvers in there, they are still not likely enough to become, in my view, contenders.

Being a Warriors supporter means you have to put up with a lot of talk about “must win” games, and I had hoped not fall into that trap – but come New Plymouth, there can only be one outcome, and it can't be Andrew McFadden talking about lack of fight, Shaun Johnson talking about “learning”, or Ryan Hoffman forced to defend another substandard performance.

Win handsomely, win convincingly, win ugly, I don't care. Just win.

Continued on next page...

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Another First!

WHEN THE Vodafone Warriors take their 11th-round “home” game against the Raiders to New Plymouth this weekend it will be the first regular season NRL match ever played there.

New Plymouth becomes only the second centre outside Auckland to host a Warriors home game (Wellington was first - 2013, 2014 and 2015).

Issac Luke spent a day at home in Hawera and New Plymouth recently to promote the match and two weeks ago Charlie Gubb also visited New Plymouth to raise awareness.

The Taranaki game is part of the club's desire to gain a nationwide identity. Until the start of the 2011 season, we had never played a home game away from Mt Smart. That season we went to Eden Park, and in 2013 to Wellington.

So we are a well-travelled side, after Gosford for the Roosters, Auckland for Manly, Wellington for the Dogs, Melbourne on Anzac day for the Storm, Auckland for the Dragons and Christchurch last Saturday for the Panthers.

“Taking the Warriors to Taranaki and other areas around the country is important for us as a club,” managing director Jim Doyle said. “It's exciting for us to come to New Plymouth, where we have the chance to connect with another community and give members and fans the chance to see the team up close. We want the Vodafone Warriors to be as accessible to as many people around the country as possible.”

Coach Calls For Fight

The old saying is that it is not the size of the dog in the fight, it is the size of the fight in the dog that counts. And that could not be more important and even Warriors coach Andrew McFadden says his players need to demonstrate a fighting spirit.

He went so far as to warn that if some players don't find it, they face exiting Penrose.

Not many would disagree that the 30-18 loss to Penrith in Christchurch was hard to take.

But McFadden surprised me, when he focused on the lack of fight during the second-half.

Fair enough, we let an 18-14 lead slip and never troubled the scorer ourselves.

McFadden especially focused on Penrith's Tyrone Peachey's third try. Tui Lolohea and Shaun Johnson had cut down a flying Dallin Watene-Zelezniak, but McFadden was unhappy with what followed.

“For those guys to make those efforts and chase him down, we've got to make that count and worth something, and that's probably what disappointed me most.”

Down The Table We Go

We have fallen to 12th on the ladder.

The really depressing part is not even our four wins and six losses record – it's the massive 262 points that have been scored against us.

We don't defend as well as other sides, though it has been getting better, but it still surprises me that there is all this pressure on McFadden, but defensive coach Justin Morgan never seems to be in the firing line.

Ours is a defensive record any NRL side would be concerned about. Almost any side anyway – better exempt Newcastle for that statement.

The Konrad Saga Drags On

Konrad Hurrell's predicament, according to the Herald on Sunday, should serve as a warning to others that on and off the field indiscretions won't be tolerated.

The talk has been that crowd favourite Hurrell is on borrowed time. McFadden says players need to show maturity in their performances and behaviour or face the consequences.

“Everyone makes mistakes but you've got to learn from them and if you don't then sometimes we've got to make decisions around that, that's best for the club. We're obviously talking to his management and certainly we've got to sort some things out.”

Personally, I think this is a bigger problem for McFadden than it seems. Konrad is a crowd favourite, and there are plenty of fans who still think he should be in first grade ahead of Blake Ayshford, who to be fair is going well.

And plenty of those fans would prefer McFadden be shown the door ahead of Konrad.

Talk of a \$500,000 salary – and who knows if that is right – means most clubs would shy away from Konrad, so a resolution might be a way off yet.

Week To Week For Manu

Manu Vatuvei, unavailable against Penrith after a spell on “medical leave”, is a “week to week proposition”, with no guarantee he will be ready for Canberra in New Plymouth, McFadden says.

“Manu has been dealing with things and hopefully he is back soon. It's been a tough couple of weeks for him. He's a legend of our club, he's made a mistake and it hurt him.”

McFadden said any decision on a comeback would be a “mutual” one.

Bench Options Baffling

Am I the only one who can't understand our bench options? On Saturday we had Matt Allwood, why? Charlie Gubb was on the bench and got hardly any game time, why? We all know there are fewer interchanges this season, so managing the bench is crucial.

Most NRL sides carry four monsters on the bench – or at least three and a utility. It just seems like another area where the fans and the management may not be in agreement.

There has always been this thing about what a big pack we are - though who knows why when it is clearly not the case - but against Penrith our lack of size and power was exposed.

Ben Matulino was okay, Bodene Thompson worked – as ever – his butt off, but virtually no one else bent the line, which puts more questions around our bench.

Close But No Cigar

Let's face it, we have lost ugly more than once this year.

But Saturday's loss in Christchurch was bitter. It is hard to believe

Penrith did not hit the front until late in the game, and I say that because watching it, you always knew they were going to.

We have failed to show, we have done crazy things, we have been terrible, and then got worse, but against Penrith we hung in grimly, only for the inevitable to happen.

What was going through the heads of some of the players when the attempted crazy off-loads is beyond me, and the general lack of fight after we finally went behind, was poor.

Even our go-to talisman Shaun Johnson admitted: “We made errors at crucial times.” You think? The off-load he tried to make when he was being driven back over his own goal-line has to qualify as one of the worst. Johnson himself labelled it “unacceptable”.

Worse was his field kicking, in admittedly terribly windy conditions. But it is the old cliché, the same for both teams, and Penrith were just better at it. He was superb off the tee, couldn't fault him, but his run of play kicking game was not what he would have wanted.

Johnson said he had never kicked in conditions like it. “I will learn from that.” Cynics might argue the time to be learning has long since passed.

Like it or not Johnson is a problem for us at the moment. We all know what he is capable of, we just have not seen enough of it. Take into consideration certainly that he is probably still coming back after a horror injury, and he sets himself high standards, and has been open in criticising himself.

But superb one minute off the tee, and in creating chances for others, then terrible at others.

Pray he puts it all together - and soon.

What Is Up With Our Juniors?

We are the most successful team in the nine-year history of the NRL under-20s.

So how did it come to pass that we could be flogged 50-0 one week (Dragons) and 74-10 a week later (Penrith)?

Even I can do the maths - 124 points in two matches.

We gave up 13 tries against Penrith.

Champions in 2010, 2011 and 2014 - and one match from the final last year – we are 14th of 16 teams.

We have now conceded almost 33 points a game through our first 10 matches.

Intrust Super Premiership Side Up To Second

The Vodafone Warriors are second on the Intrust Super Premiership ladder after their 32-16 10th-round win over Penrith on Saturday.

Mason Lino, in for the injured Jeff Robson, scored a try and had a say in others with his kicking. His try and four goals were worth 12 points.

We led 10-4 lead after 23 minutes and it stayed that way to halftime.

Both sides scored early in the second spell but from there on we scored three unanswered tries to put the game out of Penrith's reach.

The Vodafone Warriors take on Manly this week.

LKICKED OFF a great week in Christchurch by catching up with some old friends and dining on the historic Christchurch Restaurant Tram. Along with my good mates Gary Clarke and Frank Endacott we hosted a great bunch of local passionate Warriors fans who were all in great spirits as a warm up to the Panthers' game.

It's a must do experience when your visiting Christchurch .

I was amazed that the four course menu is all cooked on board in such confined space but the chefs really do their thing, there was plenty of choice and I couldn't go past the Lamb Shoulder which was cooked by Chef Ahmad to perfection. Philip Riley, our restaurant Manager for the night did a superb job in what is a cosy environment. The team were in high spirits and no surprise our party of 12 had grown to 18 by the end of the night as other diners joined in. It was like trying to get into the Butcher's Lounge after a Warriors win.

One thing for sure people who love to eat are always the best people and we certainly met a lot of them that night. Attached are some of the shots from the evening, if you're down in Christchurch get hold of my mate Johnny Smith from the Christchurch Tramway, he'll look after you and its certainly one of the things you need to put on your "to do list" when you visit the city which is well on the way to getting back on its feet.

- Sir Peter Leitch



Ex Kiwi Gary Clarke, Ex Kiwi & Warriors Coach Frank Endacott and myself.



We had a lovely meal with personalised name card and fantastic service,



The rest of the dinner group.

Check out www.welcomeaboard.co.nz for more info on this Christchurch icon.



Rugby League fans in Taranaki pay attention!

You will have the chance to meet the Vodafone Warriors this *Friday on May 20 at TSB Stadium from 4pm to 4.45pm*. If you know someone in New Plymouth let them know.



Congratulations to Mark Rayner from Tauranga who won the Ultimate Kiwis Supporter Pack.



We lost a good Rugby League man last Saturday with the sudden passing of Tony Moore. He was a larger than life character who was well known around the Howick area. REST IN PEACE OLD MATE

Gary Clarke's Rugby League Museum



Ben Henry and Simon Mannering with Liam who has been battling ill health. We wish him all the best in his recovery.



Ben Henry presents a signed Warriors Jersey to Gary Clarke.



Dave and Lorraine enjoying the company of Shontayne Hape.



Jim Doyle speaking to members at the BBQ at Gary Clarke's Museum in Christchurch.



Georgia Hale (player of the match in the other weeks Kiwi Ferns vs Jilaroo match) with Sir Peter.



Jerome Ropati, Ben Henry, Simon Mannering with Charissa and Dion who has major health issues.



Lorna, Gary Clarke, Trevor & M8.



Shontayne Hape with Trevor Warrington and M8.



Shontayne Hape interviews Ben Henry.



Alana, Julie and Ben Taylor.



David and Lorraine.

In Christchurch



Lounge members Sheryl, Robbie and Glenda had a blast in Christchurch.



Was nice to catch up with these Sir Peter Leitch club members in Christchurch.



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Gala Dinner



Crowd listening to the Butch interview Beau.



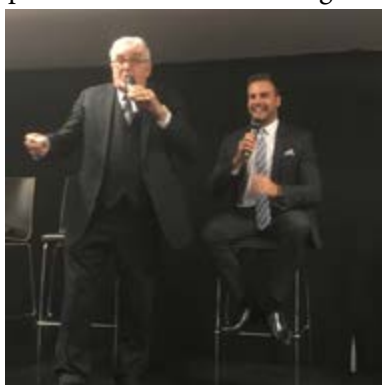
Craig Douglas, Beau Ryan, Mayor Lianne Dalziel, Sir Peter Leitch, Justin Wallace. Craig and Justin were promoters of the Panthers game.



Frank Endacott and Anthon Griffin.



Frank Endacott and his lovely wife Joan look at the auction items.



Having some fun with Beau Ryan while I interview him.



It was great to catch up with these two Kiwis at the Gala dinner. Peta Hiku and Dallin Watene-Zelezniak.



Janice had to have a photo with Beau Ryan.



Justin Wallace.



Me onstage with Beau Ryan at the gala dinner.



Penrith coach Anthony Griffin chatting to the MC at the gala dinner.

Gala Dinner



Peta Hiku, Sir Peter Leitch, Dallin Watene-Zelezniak.



Petrece Keshu (Community Manager Vodafone Warriors), Justin Wallace in center and Georgia Hale (Kiwi Fern).



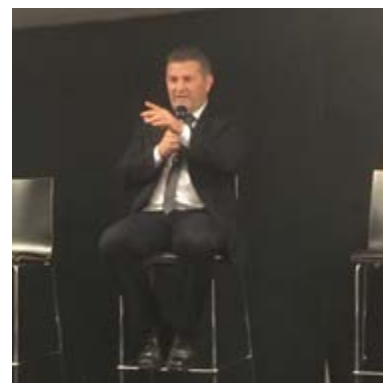
Singing Happy Birthday to Beau.



Sir Peter Leitch, Beau Ryan, Mayor Lianne Dalziel who was great company and a laugh a minute.



Steve in the white shirt was stoked to get a pic with the boys. However his ugly mate photobombed.



The star of the gala dinner was Royce Simmons. He played 238 games for Penrith, 10 games for Australia plus 10 State of Origin for NSW. He also coached the Panthers for 187 games.



With Royce after the dinner..



Gala dinner programme.

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By John Coffey QSM

Rugby League Rocks in Christchurch



A capacity crowd at AMI Stadium overlooks the Panthers pre-game huddle.

Photo courtesy of www.photosport.nz

THE PENRITH Panthers should have been given a standing ovation when they ran onto AMI Stadium in Christchurch last Saturday, and there should have been a lap of honour for Justin Wallace, the former player, current administrator and event manager who was responsible for the Panthers agreeing to concede home ground advantage for their match against the Warriors.

But such is the Warriors' hold on the hearts and minds of rugby league fans throughout the country that – despite their notorious form fluctuations and recent off-field ructions – they were guaranteed to be cheered throughout. They were cheered in faith at the start, cheered in hope when they led 18-14 at halftime, and cheered in charity after being beaten 30-18.

When reviews of the Warriors' season are written, probably several weeks earlier than we would all want, this will be just another game that might have been won. Once again, there were costly penalties, kicking waywardness and vital handling mistakes which all cost points. The Panthers held their nerve, and the ball, in windy conditions and were worthy winners.

Regardless of the result, this was an occasion which the game desperately needed in a city where it has struggled since the great days of inter-provincial supremacy in the early 1990s, before the arrival of the Warriors and the great migration of players to the NRL. Later, the earthquakes of 2010-2011 left rugby league homeless and almost forgotten on the Canterbury sports calendar.

The arrival of the Panthers on the Tuesday before kick-off ignited the most positive media coverage for a decade. The Roosters and Warriors were here as recently as 2010, but the only newspaper scribe with any interest in the code had followed his first love and gone to the soccer World Cup. Local radio's only sports commentator makes no secret of his dislike for the game.

To its credit, The Press newspaper assigned staff to follow the Panthers everywhere. They attracted hundreds of young players to a coaching session at Hornby, and made a majority of their school visits in the eastern suburbs most seriously affected by the earthquakes. Stressed kids – not to mention their parents – were given a welcome diversion by the visiting men in black.

The front men were Kiwis Peta Hiku and Dallin Watene-Zelezniak and Kangaroo Trent Merrin. Photos and videos of them interacting with the youngsters were priceless publicity. Christchurch even laid on a 4.7 after-shock and Merrin's reaction was hilarious, particularly his claim that 115kg prop and room-mate Reagan Campbell-Gillard dived into Merrin's bed to hide under the covers.

Continued on next page...

They did not have to undertake this busy schedule, around their training, to attract a crowd. The stadium was almost full before they landed and the “sold out” sign went up on Thursday, something the Crusaders and Phoenix have failed to do in recent seasons. But the Panthers were being true to their word that the four-year deal involved much more than a few games of footy.

Credit must also be given to the Warriors. Their advance party was led by Simon Mannerling, Ben Henry, Ruben Wiki and Jerome Ropati, and there was a precious front page newspaper photo of Wiki helping a two-year-old along his local school’s new fitness trail. When the team proper flew in, they too, fully engaged with their far-flung fans. Captain Ryan Hoffman reminded all they are the New Zealand Warriors.

A glitzy function at Addington Raceway, featuring the Panthers, the Warriors advance party, Christchurch mayor Lianne Dalziel, Sir Peter Leitch, Beau Ryan from The Footy Show and an auction of sports memorabilia, raised \$28,000 for schoolboy footy. The guest speaker was Panthers legend Royce Simmons, who had previously visited the city three times as Wests Tigers assistant coach.

The Press again promoted a future Christchurch-based NRL franchise. A disturbing addition from previous speculation involved the proposed \$500 million, 35,000 seat covered stadium. Apparently, having a professional rugby league team as a co-tenant would strengthen rugby union’s case for ratepayers to build them such a monolith. OK then, but let’s get the NRL team first.

Fittingly, the Panthers were gifted with far warmer weather than the cold and wet conditions which dogged the Wests Tigers and the sleet which chilled the Roosters. But the strong north-westerly winds which drenched the west of the South Island and roared over the Southern Alps severely tested the playmakers. Penrith’s Jamie Soward handled the conditions best.

Event manager Justin Wallace was a member of Frank Endacott’s champion Canterbury team and has become a far-sighted administrator and entrepreneur. He has taken his share of knocks from more conservative folk but was never daunted in his determination to bring the NRL back to Christchurch. The full house sign was a tribute to his tenacity, while the Panthers were a perfect pick to host the Warriors.

Papanui Tigers Monster Raffle

Your chance to support a local Rugby League club.

1st Prize - Suzuki Splash (value \$12,000)

2nd Prize - Trip for 2 to the NRL grand final (Includes air fares, accommodation and game day tickets)

3rd Prize - \$1500 Pak’nSave vouchers

4th Prize - \$1000 fuel vouchers

5-14 prizes - \$100 Nigel Thompson Service Centre vouchers

15-24th prizes - \$100 grocery vouchers

Drawn under police supervision on 1st June 2016. Winners will be contacted, published in the Press Newspaper 3rd June and on the Papanui Tigers Facebook page.

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Northland Rugby League Wrap

By Ben Francis



Scott Electrical Premiership Round 7

IN THE biggest game to date in this years edition of the Scott Electrical Premiership, the Moerewa Tigers won a nail biting 34-32 battle against the previously unbeaten Takahiwai Warriors. Heading into this match full of confidence after five wins to start the season, Takahiwai were determined to continue their winning start to the season. Moerewa on the other hand were coming off their first loss of the season and wanted to get back to winning ways. It was a physical battle during the game with both teams refusing to back down knowing this result could be the difference between finishing first and second at seasons end. With the game locked up at 16all at the break, the physical game play continued. Takahiwai had a late chance to score the winner, but Moerewa's defence prevailed giving them a massive 34-32 win. Both these teams will meet again on July 9th which is the final round of the regular season.

In the other games in round seven, the Hokianga Pioneers won a tight encounter over the Northern Wairoa Bulls. That game finished 36-34 giving Hokianga win number three in 2016. Horahora are still yet to claim a win in 2016, they went down 66-12 to the Otangarei Knights.

Round 8 sees Hokianga hosting Horahora, Otangarei hosting Portland, and Takahiwai hosting Northern Wairoa. Moerewa have a well deserve bye. All games will be kicking off at 2:30pm on Saturday 22nd May.

Northlanders In The NRL

HOKIANGA BORN James Fisher-Harris had a memorable first NRL game on New Zealand soil as he played a big role in the Panthers 30-18 win over the Warriors in Christchurch. The rookie utility forward started in the second row and was hard to contain, running for 96 meters off 12 carries. Along with that Fisher-Harris completed 42 tackles and set up Dallin Watene-Zelezniak's try with a excellent one handed off load. Fisher-Harris has been one of the most impressive forwards for the Panthers this year. Earning a unexpected debut in round 1, Fisher-Harris is yet to put a foot wrong and could be earning a Kiwis call up for the 2016 Four Nations. Also from Northland, Sam McKendry played his role, running for 75 meters and completing 24 tackles.

Former Panther and Northland player Elijah Taylor made his debut for the West Tigers on Sunday. After failing to make first grade, Taylor looked for a new home, and the Tigers were quick to pounce. Despite the Tigers going down 36-4, Taylor completed 50 tackles and ran for 50 meters also.

Panthers Junior Caleb Aekins made his first start for the Under 20s on the weekend as they demolished the Warriors 74-10 at Pepper Stadium. Staring in the Centres, Aekins scored the opening try in the third minute of the game. Aekins also set up a try, ran for 103 meters, made 8 tackles, had 2 one breaks along with 3 tackles breaks. The Junior Panthers sit comfortably atop the Holden Cup table.



James Fisher-Harris of the Panthers (right) and Peta Hiku of the Panthers tackle Tuimoala Lolohea.

Photo courtesy of:
www.photosport.co.nz

The Canberra Connection Will Hopefully Help the Warriors to Again Prove They Have a Strong Following Round New Zealand

By John Deaker



SINCE TAKING over as captain Ryan Hoffman's already talked many times about his team being the NEW ZEALAND Warriors and the need to take the team around the country. Last week's 17,669 strong crowd in Christchurch was a good example of the strong following the team does have outside of Auckland; it was the biggest crowd the team have received for any of their matches in New Zealand this year.

This Saturday night at 7.30pm the team's ability to attract good crowds outside of the City of Sails will again be put to the test when they face Canberra at Yarrow Stadium in New Plymouth. The biggest obstacle compared to last week is New Plymouth's population of less than 70,000 compared to Christchurch's total of over 350,000.

Canberra has always had a strong connection to New Zealand since Brent Todd, Sean Hoppe, Ruben Wiki, Quentin Pongia and John Lomax all played for the very exciting and successful Raiders teams in the early 1990's.

From the current Warriors team its people from their coaching staff that provide the strongest link to the team. Ruben Wiki is their assistant strength and conditioning coach and although he ended up his playing career with the Warriors it's the Raiders where he learnt his trade and where he went on to play 224 first grade games for.

Before he came to the Warriors it was with the Raiders where Andrew McFadden received his NRL coaching experience as their assistant coach for three years. He also played the majority of his 100 NRL games with them.

Both Wiki and McFadden were team-mates of Canberra's Head Coach Ricky Stuart back when Stuart was one of the best halfbacks in the world during the 1990's.

To add to the Canberra coaching connection, Warriors' assistant Justin Morgan played at the Raiders in 2000 and then coached alongside McFadden as an assistant coach with them in 2012.

Issac Luke's link to the Taranaki area is being featured in the build up to the match with him having being born in Hawera, South Taranaki. Hawera is a good 45 minute drive from New Plymouth but hopefully that won't stop people from grabbing the chance to attend the first ever competition match for the Warriors at Yarrow Stadium.

The attitude and style both teams take in to this match will be fascinating after they conceded intercept tries at the end of their games at the weekend. The more costly pass of the two was thrown by the Raiders' Jack Wighton with their match against St George in golden point extra time when it occurred.

17 wins apiece from their clashes over the years shows these teams are traditionally close and with both sides sitting within two points of the top 8 (The Raiders 9th on 9 points and the Warriors 12th on 8 points) there's no shortage of motivation for both these teams to front up and get their seasons back on track on Saturday night.



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Our next game at Mt Smart

STAND AS ONE

SATURDAY JUNE 4

Kick off 5pm Mt Smart Stadium

It's Stunning How Many People Are Doubting the Hayne Plane Again

By John Deaker



JARRYD HAYNE'S decision to leave rugby league back in 2014 was a massive sports story and his decision to retire from the NFL to link up with Fiji's Olympic Sevens squad this week was possibly just as big. What's been stunning has been the amount of doubt people have cast over why he left the NFL so quickly and whether he'll succeed in Sevens. This is the same man who most critics believed two years ago didn't stand a chance of ever playing in the NFL, yet he ended up playing 8 games for the San Francisco 49ers within a year of taking up the sport.

There's a much better chance of Hayne being a success in Sevens than there ever was of him playing in the NFL. It's inappropriate for people to compare Quade Cooper's recent failure in Sevens as some sort of justification why Hayne won't succeed. Hayne has the speed, fend and tackling ability that Cooper can only dream of. In London, Hayne's anaerobic endurance will be really tested but another attribute he has proven over the years is his mental strength which should get him through this weekend ok and buy him the time to spend the next few months regaining some of the fitness base that will be required for him to perform near his best in Sevens on the international stage.

The biggest challenge for Hayne will be whether his physical prowess can substitute for the lack of game awareness he's going to have on the park. However, he can take some inspiration out of the way that the USA has had NFL players quickly adapt to Sevens. One of Hayne's unique abilities that he had back in rugby league was his spacial awareness when moving at speed and he'll be able to get comfortable on the Sevens park much quicker than many people are giving him credit for. If he can even be moderately successful at Sevens (compared to his switch to the NFL) then he should be able to add the X factor to the Fijian team that they need to ensure their squad go in to Rio as the hot favourites to win gold.

What linking up with Fiji reconfirms is that Hayne is more motivated by achievements than money. Whether he was shoulder-tapped at the 49ers or simply felt his chances of progressing further weren't great it shouldn't detract from the fact that he has again embraced a tough challenge instead of crawling back into a comfort zone. Surely that is behaviour we should applaud in people in any walk-of-life!?

One of the flow-on-effects for Fiji from being able to add Hayne to their squad could be financial. Just his presence could help them get some much-needed sponsorship on board that the team have traditionally struggled to attract despite their success.

Hayne secured a lucrative sponsorship deal for himself with Under Armour in September last year and they also have athletes like Steph Currie and Jordan Speith on their books. The security these types of personal deals have given Hayne may have helped to give him the confidence to take on another fresh challenge like the Sevens rather than taking on a more lucrative deal with league or union. Considering the World-wide exposure that the Olympics receives it'd be unlikely that this latest move will jeopardize his deal with Under Armour in the short-term.

Providing he makes the final squad the Olympics will also be a great stage for Hayne to advertise his skills for a future contract in one of the oval ball codes. There is no guarantee he will succeed at Rio or even make it to the starting line - mainly because he's competing for a spot in a squad that has the greatest depth out of any country in the world game. Barring injury, it would be very surprising not to see him at Rio though and if he makes it there he could be sensational. One thing for sure, we should never write off a champion ...and Hayne has definitely proven he is a champion.

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



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Bunkers' New Policy on Foul Play Confuses Spectators

By Barry Ross



SO THE Bunker has a new policy regarding foul play. Raiders coach, Ricky Stuart, said a few days ago that the new policy had been introduced without anyone being told. From the beginning of the season, the Bunker was quick to be involved at just a hint of any over zealous behaviour. But everyone watching the Dragons- Raiders game last Thursday night were stunned when the men behind the scenes did not advise the referee that the blood pouring from Raiders player, Blake Austin, resulted from a high shot by St. George/Illawarra's Joel Thompson. By not acting the Bunker confused the TV Audience and the fans at the game. Up to this round, people had become accustomed to the Bunker acting as if they believed some foul play had been missed by the referee. Many supporters were unhappy when the Bunker did interfere but they were used to this action. Suddenly it was stopped and if this was an NRL decision, the public should have been told of the change.

What a good try 18 year old Roosters fullback, Latrell Mitchell scored on Monday night football against the Titans. Coming after half an hour or so, the talented Taree youngster showed all the skills. At 193 cms and 104 kgs, he is big and strong with an excellent future in front of him. That was his fifth NRL try in his 10 matches. The try came after a great offload from Jared Waerea-Hargreaves, who was playing just his second game this season after a knee problem. The 27 year old forward damaged his knee last August and has been on the sidelines for about nine months. He is a big positive for his team and after their form against the Titans, the Roosters need all the positives they can find.

The Titans deserve a big wrap for their effort on Monday night. They went into the match after five losses but the entire squad all stood tall. They have an experienced and strong pack of forwards and on Monday, both Greg Bird and Ryan James ran for 161 metres. Five eighth, Tyrone Roberts had a busy game and his five goals from five attempts played a major role in the victory. So far this season Roberts is kicking at a 90 percent success rate. Unwanted by Newcastle, the 25 year old has now scored 448 NRL points in his 107 first grade games. The Titans had to overcome an 11-7 penalty account against them, including 6-1 in the second half. Chris McQueen and William Zillman were happy men after the game. They both collected a four pointer, after a gap of more than a year to their previous try.

Just hours after the story broke about Jarryd Hayne quitting American football, rumours were strong in Sydney that he would join the Roosters, with some stories saying this would happen as soon as the Brazil Olympics Rugby Sevens have been completed. It has been said the Hayne has been guaranteed a place by the Fijians for the Olympics, but if this is the case, he won't find this an easy thing to do. He is a gifted athlete but to fit into such an unpredictable team as the Fijians, will be difficult with such a short preparation.

Back to Hayne joining the Roosters. If the Bondi Junction boys sign him, he will not come cheap and this brings up the salary cap issue. At the end of last season, the Roosters lost James Maloney, Michael Jennings and Roger Tuivasa-Sheck, so they do have some money to play with. While on the salary cap, Parramatta are now compliant in this department but there is still plenty of drama ahead for the Eels. The players have been magnificent with everything that was happening around them. I know they had to be punished but gee I hate to see any team lose their hard won competition points. The rules regarding third party payments to players are difficult to understand and this is where the problems occur. If they have the money available the clubs want to spend it on strengthening the team, but this has to be done according to the rules and so club officials who understand what can and cannot be done are necessary before these agreements are drawn up.

Things looked good for a fair part of last Saturday's game at Christchurch with the Panthers. With a little more patience, especially when close to the opponents try line, there could have seen a different result. After 10 rounds, the Warriors are seventh in the team try scoring list and equal fifth in line breaks. But with errors, there are nine teams with less than the Warriors 93.

This Saturday, the Warriors host the Raiders at New Plymouth. The weather could play a big part in the result, so mistakes need to be kept to a minimum. Ricky Stuart would have been furious after the way his team threw away the game against the Dragons in Golden point time last Thursday night. He will have hammered the message home to his players about mistakes, so the Raiders will probably play conservative football.



High-Tackle Holloway... I'll give ya the tip mate!

The Mad Butchers Weekly NRL Tipping Comp.

By John Holloway

NRL Round 11

Date/ Venue		Game	Sue Phelan	Joe Vagana	John Coffey	Fast Eddie	Monty Betham	Bill Hayward	High-Tackle Holloway
			<i>Maloney's Barber Shop - The best haircut in town.</i>	<i>League Legend and Machine Lease King.</i>	<i>Newsletter Columnist and Veteran Leagueie</i>	<i>Devonport Dutchman - Takin it easy...</i>	<i>The Warrior Boxer - StepsForLife</i>	<i>Link Business - Buying or Selling a Business</i>	<i>Richmond Bulldog - Old School Richmond Leagueie</i>
19/05-ANZ	Rabbitohs v Dragons	Dragons	Dragons	Rabbitohs	Rabbitohs	Rabbitohs	Rabbitohs	Rabbitohs	Rabbitohs
20/05 - 1300Smiles	Cowboys v Broncos	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Broncos	Cowboys
21/05 - Camtown	Tigers v Knights	Tigers	Tigers	Tigers	Tigers	Tigers	Tigers	Tigers	Tigers
21/05 - Yarrow	Warriors v Raiders	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors
21/05 - Sth Cross	Sharks v Sea Eagles	Sharks	Sharks	Sharks	Sharks	Sharks	Sharks	Sharks	Sharks
22/05 - Pepper	Panthers v Titans	Panthers	Panthers	Panthers	Panthers	Panthers	Panthers	Panthers	Panthers
22/05 - ANZ	Bulldogs v Roosters	Bulldogs	Bulldogs	Bulldogs	Roosters	Roosters	Bulldogs	Bulldogs	Bulldogs
23/05 - Pirtek	Eels v Storm	Storm	Eels	Eels	Eels	Eels	Storm	Storm	Storm

How they're traveling....

Picks last week	3/8	5/8	3/8	4/8	3/8	5/8	3/8
Total picks	42/80	45/80	47/80	50/80	49/80	51/80	50/80

ANOTHER BUNCH of ups'n'downs, that's life in the NRL. Some unexpected results early on but more settled later in the round. The Dragons sometimes dreadful sometimes determined showed the latter scorching the visiting Raiders 16/12. Rickys rockets looked the better team but the Red V harried them into errors including a late blooper intercepted pass that cost them the match.

The embattled Eels were the emotional favourite for many but the rugged Rabbits stayed in the fight for a hard-fought 22/20 last ditch heartbreaker advantage. With a hard road ahead the penal Parras were dented at the first bend. The perpetually mobile Panthers sent another strong tremor through the Warriors structure getting up 30/18 in Christchurch. Penrith said they would dominate in the last quarter and were right on the button as Peachey made merry and Lady luck continued to frown on the errors of Cappys capricious crew. Warriors fans can only be diehard, stand firm and yet again dig deep into the faith. Coach McFadden might want to have a beer or two with Knightsman Nathan Brown and Tiger boss Jason Taylor, they would all be speaking the same language...on the same page as they say.

I was sure the Cowboys would stampede the Storm at Suncorp, (FAIL) but it couldn't have been closer at 15/14. Captain Cool, Cam Smith at his scheming best controlling the ref, the pace of the game and the hand to hand combat to answer every attack that JTs men could muster. To top it off the Maroonmiester iced it with the winning one pointer in the 70th minute. A quiet flight home to Townsville for Paulie Greens boundary riders. Normal transmission resumed in part 2 of the Suncorp footyfest. Bennetts basher boys never in trouble against the sliding Sea Eagles.

Continued on next page...

Continued from previous page...

The indigenous environment bringing out the bustling best of brilliant standoff Milford... two tries, little kicks, set ups, line-breaks all the moves on show. Hunt and Boyd also in the highlights. Marty "Kapow" Tapau hero and villain for the visitors taking their only try but tempered by a serious sounding visit (again) to the judiciary.

The sparkling Shire Sharkies had the scoreboard whizzing at Hunter Stadium as they walloped the clueless Knights 62 zip. To be fair Nathan Brown had a very young and very inexperienced outfit on the park and these are thankless days for the Newcastle fans. "Who let the Dogs out!!!!" Dezzys bulldozers gave the teetering Tigers no chance at ANZ with TooTall Klemmer smashing out 200 metres and Pommie Graham grabbing 167 metres in his 100th NRL outing. 36/4 to the Belmore Boys. The Monday niter was another turn-up with the less fancied Titans plucking the Roosters 26/6 go figure....

Tipping Talk: Have you ever tried to pull a paua off the rock barehanded when its clamped down tight... Billy Hayward is like that Paua he aint goin anywhere! A very lucky solo punt on the Storm and then a upset with the Titans put the Bizz sales guru into top spot on the picking pot. The Devo Dutchman not to be outdone had a solo hit on the Bunnies to hang on in 2nd place. Big Joe matched Billys topscore 5 otherwise it was a tough week for the rest of us showing 3s.

Ps. For Christ sake don't tell the Butcher but the Richmond Bulldog Prems clipped the Mangere East Hawks on Saturday. 44/6. Three on the trot for Bernz bazookas... and the sapaui is tastin good.

Check out Joyce's awesome video featuring

Issac Luke on

www.sirpeterleitch.co.nz



This
Saturday



Joseph
Parker
v
Carlos
Takam



This
Saturday

Saturday 21st

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On the Downer Test Doubleheader

By Grant Chapman - Communications Manager NZRL



WHILE THE NZ Kiwis' strong defensive effort was not enough to overcome the Australian world champions, the national women's rugby league team continued their dominance of their trans-Tasman rivals at the Downer Test Doubleheader at Newcastle the other week.

Shooting for a record-equalling fourth straight win over the Kangaroos, the Kiwis were hard by injuries and suspensions that saw just two of last year's successful Anzac Test back-line return and a total of nine front-line players missing.

Still, coach Stephen Kearney was confident his patched-up side could compete strongly with the Aussies and his players duly tackled their hearts out, holding the Kangaroos to just six points over the final 40 minutes, en route to a 16-0 loss.

Positives included the debuts of Dallin Watene-Zelezniak, Manu Ma'u and Kenny Bromwich, and a great performance (on the field and off) by first-time captain Jesse Bromwich.

Despite the loss, the encounter emphasised the depth of developing talent now available to the Kiwis, with a view towards next year's World Cup in New Zealand and Australia.

The Kiwis will next meet Australia in Perth on October 15, before heading to England to defend their Four Nations crown.

Meanwhile, the Kiwi Ferns showed they are trending in the right direction with a comprehensive 26-16 win over the Jillaroos, following up their 2-1 series victory at the NRL Auckland Nines in February.

Under coach Alan Jackson and assistant Grant Pocklington, the women have built on that success in the shortened format of the game, introducing more speed and athleticism, and working hard on conditioning.

That dedication paid off over the final 20 minutes of this contest, as the Ferns held off a determined challenge from the current World Cup holders.

Captain Sarina Fiso and wing Atawhai Tupaea both achieved try-scoring doubles, but only one of the six tries was converted, highlighting the need to find a reliable goal-kicker before next year's World Cup tournament.

Australia Kangaroos 16 (Greg Inglis, Blake Ferguson & Darius Boyd tries; Johnathan Thurston & Cameron Smith goals); HT: 10-0

NZ Kiwi Ferns 26



The Kiwi Ferns after their win.



Kiwis dejected after their loss.



Ma'foaeata Hingano of the Junior Kiwis scores a try.

No adverts are paid for in this Newsletter

NSW Team on a Roll

By Joe Williams - Vodafone Warriors NSW Cup Team Manager

THE VODAFONE Warriors Intrust Super Premiership NSW team secured their fourth consecutive win and have moved up to second place on the ladder after their 32-16 win over Penrith Panthers at Pepper Stadium over the weekend.

With the NRL team travelling to Taranaki to play Canberra Raiders this coming weekend both the Vodafone Warriors NYC and ISP NSW teams are playing at home on Mt Smart #2 this Sunday 22nd May.

The Vodafone Warriors NYC team kick-off at 11:00am against Canberra Raiders whilst the Vodafone Warriors ISP NSW team kick-off at 1:00pm against Manly. Entry to this game is free and parking will be available through the O'Rorke Road entrance. There will be basic catering units available selling coffee and hot food.



Albert Vete.



Ata Hingano.



Ligi Sao.



Mason Lino.

These two teams play at Mt Smart this Saturday!

Key Timings

Gates Open: 10:45am

NYC Kick-off:

11:00am

ISP NSW Kick-off:

1:00pm

Venue: Mt Smart Stadium Field #2

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STEVE LE MARQUAND IS ONE OF OUR BEST ACTORS AND HE SHINES IN BROKE
MATTHEW EELES, CINEMA AUSTRALIA

Physical Disability Rugby League Players Selected for Indigenous Combined Nations Squad

WITH THE ground breaking successful introduction of Physical Disability Rugby league to our shores last year we are proud to announce the selection of Mathew Ngametu-ua and Jim Doolan to the Indigenous Combined Nations Squad playing the New South Wales Physical Disability Rugby League All Stars on July 7th at Redfern Oval, Sydney. The Indigenous Combined Nations last year who were defeated by NSWPDRL All Stars in a tough fought game winning 10-8 will be out to regain the mantle. Both Mathew and Jim will proudly be representing New Zealand Physical Disability Rugby League and are ready to take up the challenge.

Mathew is the Co-founder of PDRLNZ, is 35 years old and this is his second season with PDRLNZ and his third selection for the Indigenous Combined Nations side. He was born with Cerebral Palsy which has left him with hemiplegia paralysis of one side of his body. This affects Mathew's everyday life by everyday tasks taking twice as long as a non-disabled person however this has not stopped him fulfilling his long time dream to play rugby league. "An ABSOLUTE life changer for me. I love the chance to just get out there, get dirty, get roughed up and just play footy. My disability does not stop me or define me, during my games of league I am just Mat truly enjoying the game."

Jim is of Maori and Irish blood and playing his first season, is a current Board member of PDRLNZ and will join the Indigenous side for the first time. Jim was born in 1960 with Thalidomide. His left arm is deformed and palm consists of 4 digits and his right arm is very short absent of a forearm, palm consisting of 2 digits. Jim has been a player and member of the Otago Scorpions Rugby League Club for 25 years now and this is his first time to be representing his country and he is very proud to be given the opportunity to do so. "This is a great honour and I was scouted to be a member and support this growing game of rugby league amongst other disabled competitors."

New Zealand Physical Disability Rugby League is very proud of the heart and commitment to the game these two players display and know they will muster their mana and rise to the occasion. Meanwhile we look forward to continually growing our player base here and one day soon have the opportunity to have our players pull on the black jersey with a Trans-Tasman match with our friends across the ditch

If you have a physical disability and would like to know more about how you can get involved give us a call on 0274990556 or email Sandra on sandramichelle.h@xtra.co.nz

Check out our [Facebook](#) page



Make sure you watch the Footy Show this week on SKY TV. Beau Ryan was in Christchurch and did a segment called Beau knows Christchurch.

The Footy Shows Airs on SKY:

Sky Sport 2 at 10.40pm on Wednesdays

Repeated on Sky Sport 2 at 5pm Fridays

Check your guide for details



Beau filming in Christchurch

ARL Rd 6 Review and Rd 7 Preview

THE SAS Fox Memorial Premiership has a new leader with the ladder having shuffled as a result of Glenora losing their last two games.

The Bears suffered their first loss against Richmond 20-28 in Rd 6 and fell to Mt Albert last weekend 18-26.

That result coupled with a Pt Chevalier 6-62 victory over Howick and an unbeaten Papakura side left the Sea Eagles to assume the lead of the competition, joined by the Pirates who are ahead on differential.

After upsetting both Mt Albert and Glenora, Richmond took another step towards shifting towards the competitions top five with a 44-6 win against Mangere East at home in the ARL Game of the Round.

Meanwhile in the Crown Lift Trucks Sharman Cup, the Te Atatu Roosters sit tied on points with the Ellerslie Eagles.

This week's game of the round takes us to Walker Park, the home of the Pt Chevalier Pirates where they will face Richmond who head into the match off the back of three wins in a row.

Papakura defend the Konica Minolta Roope Rooster challenge trophy in their clash against Howick - the Sea Eagles second home defence.

The Bears will look to bounce back from their back to back losses, after previously leading the competition and will travel out south to face Mangere East at Walter Massey Park

In the remaining games, Northcote will be searching for their second win when they host Otahuhu at home while Marist will travel to Fowlds Park to play Mt Albert.

SAS Fox Memorial Premiership Rd 6 results:

Otahuhu 10 Papakura 28
Richmond 44 Mangere East 6
Glenora 18 Mt Albert 26
Marist 26 Northcote 14
Howick 6 Pt Chevalier 62

Crown Lift Trucks Sharman Cup Rd 6 results:

Papatoetoe 12 Bay Roskill 32
New Lynn 10 Te Atatu 82
Manurewa 12 Ellerslie 28
Otara 64 Mt Wellington 20
Glenfield 26 East Coast Bays 28
Pakuranga 44 Manukau 34
Ponsonby 8 Waitemata 56
Hibiscus Coast BYE

SAS Fox Memorial Premiership Rd 7 Fixtures (Saturday May 21)

Pt Chevalier v Richmond @ Walker Park 2.30pm
Mangere East v Glenora @ Walter Massey Park
2.30pm
Northcote v Otahuhu @ Birkenhead Memorial
2.30pm
Papakura v Howick @ Prince Edward 2.30pm
Mt Albert v Marist @ Fowlds Park 2.30pm

Crown Lift Trucks Sharman Cup Rd 7 Fixtures (Saturday May 21)

Pakuranga v Bay Roskill @ Ti Rakau Park 2.30pm
Manukau v Ponsonby @ Moyle Park 2.30pm
Ellerslie v Papatoetoe @ Ellerslie Domain 2.30pm
Waitemata v Glenfield @ Ranui Doman 2.30pm
Otara v Manurewa @ Ngati Otara Park 2.3pm
East Coast Bays v Te Atatu @ Freyberg Park 2.30pm
Mt Wellington v Hibiscus Coast @ Thompson Park
2.30pm
New Lynn BYE



**Check out Auckland Ruby League's
website for current ladder.**

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Luke to start in Taranaki, Mannering Returns

by Richard Becht

ISSAC LUKE returns to the starting hooker's role for his Taranaki homecoming while loose forward Simon Mannering comes back from a two-match injury absence for the Vodafone Warriors' historic 11th-round home clash against Canberra at Yarrow Stadium in New Plymouth on Saturday (7.30pm kick-off; match day sponsor: Vodafone).

Hawera-born-and-raised Luke was on the bench against St George Illawarra and Penrith but now reclaims the #9 jersey as the Vodafone Warriors take the NRL to his province for the first time.=

The 29-year-old Mannering missed the last two matches after receiving an ugly facial wound in the eighth-round match against Melbourne on Anzac Day.

Named at prop is Ben Matulino – he was used from the bench last week – ensuring the Vodafone Warriors are in line to use their most-experienced starting pack for the first time this season.

Suspension has forced a significant change in the backline with centre Solomone Kata sidelined for one game after taking an early guilty plea on a dangerous contact charge.

For Kata, the side's top try-scorer this season with eight in 10 appearances, it stops a run of 34 consecutive games since his NRL debut in the opening round last year.

His absence results in the well-performed Matt Allwood being called in to face his former club. He was brought into the side for the last two games after consistently impressive displays for the Vodafone Warriors' Intrust Super Premiership side.

VODAFONE WARRIORS

- 1 Tuimoala LOLOHEA
- 2 Jonathan WRIGHT
- 3 Blake AYSHFORD
- 4 Matthew ALLWOOD
- 5 David FUSITUA
- 6 Thomas LEULUAI
- 7 Shaun JOHNSON
- 8 Jacob LILLYMAN
- 9 Issac LUKE
- 10 Ben MATULINO
- 11 Bodene THOMPSON
- 12 Ryan HOFFMAN (c)
- 13 Simon MANNERING
- Interchange
- 14 Jazz TEVAGA
- 15 Sam LISONE
- 16 John PALAVI
- 17 James GAVET
- 18 Toafofoa SIPLEY

VODAFONE WARRIORS v CANBERRA RAIDERS

Yarrow Stadium, New Plymouth

7.30pm, Saturday, May 21

Officials:

Referee: Grant Atkins

Assit Referee: Matt Noyen

Touch Judges: Shane Rehm & Rohan Best

Review Officials: Ben Galea

Senior RO: Ashley Klein



Morning Peter,

JUST A short note to say thank you for the hospitality at the BBQ at Gary Clarkes RL Museum on satmorning, it was fantastic to meet so many old friends and passionate Rugby League people there.

I was very impressed with the words from Jim Doyle, Simon Mannering, Ben Henry and Jerome Ropati all good Role models for the club.

Butch from a former Coaches perspective I believe the Warriors performed with a lot credit on Saturday night, they did not get the result they wanted but they lost no friends down here with their performance.

Thanks again and best of luck to the lads next week in Taranaki.

Kind Regards Frank Endacott.



Ex Kiwi Gary Clarke, Ex Kiwi & Warriors Coach Frank Endacott and Sir Peter.

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



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The Newsletter Team

Here is the team that help me put together the newsletter each week. We have a number of fantastic contributors who send in content each week that along with my editorial gets wrapped up by our graphic designer and sent out by our distribution man to your inbox.

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David Kemeys - Editor at Large

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