

VODAFONE



Sir Peter Leitch Club

AT MT SMART STADIUM, HOME OF THE MIGHTY VODAFONE WARRIORS

5th April 2017

Newsletter #164

Vodafone Warriors Win Against Titans!



Simon Mannering receives an award for 261 games from Stacey Jones



Shaun Johnson receives an award for 674 points from Stacey Jones



Issac Luke makes a run.



Kieran Foran gets away from Kevin Proctor.

Photos courtesy of www.photosport.nz



Captain Roger on arrival.



Chris McQueen, Issac Luke and Chris Grevsmuhl.



Daniel Taiapa gets a selfie with James Gavet.



Facepaint on point.



Fans pumped for the game.



Fans with Simon Mannering poster.



Great family time at the game.



Konrad Hurrell and Sam Lisone.



Little Warriors - Clayton Friend's grandchildren.



Looking good in their Vodafone Warriors gears.



Record breaking balls. One for Simon and one for Shaun.



Simon Manning big heads.



SKYCITY Cheer team.



The team celebrate their win.



Young fan runs out the ball with captain RTS.



Young Shaun Johnson fans.



Foran Named at Standoff

by Richard Becht

AN UNCHANGED 21-man squad has been named for the Vodafone Warriors' sixth-round NRL encounter with the Parramatta Eels at Mount Smart Stadium on Sunday (4.00pm kick-off).

On a day when the Vodafone Warriors' NRL, Intrust Super Premiership and NYC teams will again provide a tripleheader package of football action, the club's game day theme is focused on honouring the community's emergency services, or everyday heroes.

On the field the Vodafone Warriors are set to use the same combination which closed out a thrilling battle against the Gold Coast Titans 28-22 to register the second win of their 2017 campaign.

Second rower Bodene Thompson has been named in the second row after playing only the first half against the Titans. Vodafone Warriors head coach Stephen Kearney brought James Gavet off the bench to start last weekend but he has again listed Charlie Gubb as veteran prop Jacob Lillyman's starting front row partner.

The extended bench comprises the same eight players selected last week.

Kearney reiterated he was pleased with the manner in which the players performed in the second half against the Titans – especially the forwards – after some concerns in a first half which saw the Vodafone Warriors fall 12-22 behind.

A vastly-improved defensive display resulted in the Titans failing to add to their points tally in the last 45 minutes of the contest while the Vodafone Warriors added 16 points through tries to Roger Tuivasa-Sheck, club debutant Kieran Foran and Ryan Hoffman with the match-winner in the 78th minute.

Kearney said the second half provided the kind of template the Vodafone Warriors had been working on in the preseason and the opening rounds of the competition.

With a completion rate of 18 from 21 sets (86 per

cent), the Vodafone Warriors were able to dominate possession and field position in the second half, limiting the Titans to just 13 sets.

After making 19 errors in the loss to St George Illawarra, the Vodafone Warriors cut their error rate to only five last Sunday.

They made 1783 metres with 10 players topping 100 – Roger Tuivasa-Sheck (209), Jacob Lillyman (169), Sam Lisone (147), Ken Maumalo (129), Kieran Foran (123), Issac Luke (119), Ryan Hoffman (112), James Gavet (105), Shaun Johnson (104) and David Fusitu'a (101). Charlie Gubb (99) and Blake Ayshford (97) were only just short of three figures.

Last week's win was the 250th for the Vodafone Warriors since entering the competition while it was the 149th at Mount Smart Stadium.

The Vodafone Warriors and the Eels come into the match with identical 2-3 win-loss records, the Vodafone Warriors rebounding from three defeats to win last week while Parramatta has lost its last three to Gold Coast (14-26), Cronulla (6-20) and Canberra (18-30) after beating Manly and St George Illawarra in the opening two rounds.

The Eels hold a 20-16 advantage overall in contests between the two sides, winning at Mount Smart Stadium in the final round last year. The Vodafone Warriors have won five of the last six encounters against Parramatta at Mount Smart Stadium.

VODAFONE WARRIORS

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

At Last...

By David Kemeys

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



WELL WHAT has Mr Budge written this week that I can complain about. Nothing.

Also I met his rather charming wife in the Sir Peter Leitch Club on Sunday, so time to give the poor guy a break. How he snared her is beyond me, poor girl must have been on the rebound.



Nadia (Dale Budge's wife) and son Taylor

Dale talking to Kieran Foran after the game

They must be taking turn and turn about over at The Herald, and that's an interesting approach given they are sponsors of our much beloved, and decried, Vodafone Warriors.

This time it was the turn of Paul Lewis, who recounted writing a column three years ago that he described as "angry".

Time for change he wrote then, pointing out this time that no one listened and we have all endured a load of misery since.

Three years on, he wrote, and time to make the same call, especially since the anger has been replaced by sadness among the long-suffering crowd.

Well on Sunday those same long-suffering fans finally got something to cheer about.

Many I spoke with were not expecting much, and to be fair, that's what they got in the first 40 minutes.

Except maybe for the man who I reckon was on a hiding to nothing, Kieran Foran, who could be seen barking orders, shuffling the backline, pointing at holes he wanted hit and generally marshalling the troops.

And we looked better for it.

Poor Blake Ayshford was caught out badly on defence, then suffered the indignity of having a ball bounce back off him into the hands of a grateful

Titan, who wandered across, and the crowd was left with that familiar Warriors felling: Here we go again.

I have gone on record saying you can't expect to win giving up 20-plus points a week, but I was wrong on Sunday.

The floodgates might have opened, but instead we kept the Gold Coast pointless, a remarkable turnaround given how easy they were finding it in the first 40.

The side that came out in the second 40 was vastly improved. I do not know what was said in the sheds at the break, but whatever it was, say it again.

We became urgent in the tackle, hungry for the ball, and the crowd sensed that if that first try came on Sunday there was only one side that was going on to win.

And so it proved.

Take a bow Foran. Had he been anything other than influential the doubters would have had a field day. But he was exactly that, even bagging a try on his debut.

The attacking line looked a whole heap better for his inclusion.

The defensive line looked a whole heap worse given Mannerings's exclusion for a trip to the bench after a head knock. Shambolic.

Roger Tuivasa-Sheck, Issac Luke, Shaun Johnson, and Foran were all contributors, and Luke especially has a lot more to offer.

Expecting Foran to be the magic bullet is just plain dumb, but not many would have left Mt Smart unimpressed. We have all been here before, and one swallow does not make a summer, and yes, Budge and Lewis might ultimately be proved correct, but it did feel good leaving Penrose as a winner for a change.

The optimists will expect a better showing still against the Eels and a three-three record, the pessimists will expect us to fall off the pace and be reduced to a two and four record.

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Strangely I don't much care, just as long as I see the same desire that was etched on the players' faces on Sunday. Just as long as they play with grit and determination, just as long as they recognise that putting it on the line for the fans is what we expect week in and week out.

Pity....

Am I the only one disappointed that talk of Tigers front-rower Aaron Woods coming to Mt Smart in exchange for Ben Matulino is apparently off the table?

I thought it was an April Fool's joke to be fair.

Woods is of course off contract at the Tigers at the end of the season.

Surely you would not be broken-hearted to see him in our colours.

Apparently reports out of Sydney suggested the hairy one might be on his way over the Ditch to us, but it's all just hot air – more is the pity.

It all depended on whether former Warriors coach Ivan Cleary, who is said to rate Big Ben, got the spot left vacant by the sacking of Jason Taylor.

Recruitment and development manager Tony Iro says we want to reach a new deal with Ben.

“There has been no discussion on our part about that event happening.”

I'd love the bloke, but surely he is going to command a decent whack wherever he goes.

It's been so long since we've seen Matulino I have forgotten what he looks like. But let's face it, we have plenty of props – which is not the same thing as having plenty of props you'd like to keep.

You're Frustrated Sterlo

League commentator and nude-nut Peter Sterling had a pop last week and has already written us off as playoff contenders.

When we lost to the Dragons, he really let fly.

“I think if you are a Warriors fan you can look forward to two things this year, and that is frustration and disappointment, and they have delivered in spades in the first month.”

Yeah, well it's not like we aren't used to it mate.

Sterling's criticism is more about our mental game.

“They are way off the pace. The little things aren't important enough for them. They will have an ordinary start, come good during Origin and then fall away again.”

Like I said, it's not like we aren't used to it mate.

And another one who is none too happy is Chris Rattue.

It only took Chris minutes to get the boot in, which would lead you to think he had his remarks written before Foran even played.

I have said it before, I do not believe Rattue even believes much of the shit he writes, it is just to get a reaction, and poking the Warriors will guaranteed one.

His view was, seen it all before, the Warriors are crap, nothing will change, any win is worth celebrating because we are so bloody awful, we make stupid decisions, we are a mile off the pace etc, etc - although he took several hundred words to say it.

To which I would reply, read it all before Chris.

At least you could not criticise the bloke for inconsistency. Only days before he was giving us a serve for being too protective of Foran, having lemons all over the park, taking too long to dismiss Tui Lolohea, having no wings, being soft mentally and physically, taking fans for granted and a hundred other things.

Other than that he quite likes us.

Oh Dear How Sad

I can't help it, I always really liked Konrad Hurrell - 71 games for 41 tries – what's not to like.

Now at the Gold Coast he did not get to face his former team, a lingering injury keeping him on the sideline.

The sight of his face on the giant screen brought a smile to my face and I found myself asking: Will he or won't he?

I was expecting him to give us a wave but he kept himself in check. Maybe he's maturing.

Hope not, because he is one of the funniest guys I have met.

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I know he copped a few texts from his old teammates during the week. He can expect a few more I suspect.

Praise Where It Is Due

The papers were quick to heap praise on Kieran Foran but I thought Ryan Hoffman was outstanding.

Anyone who thought he was just going to cruise out the final year of his contract with us must be reassessing their view.

The sight of him attempting a field goal actually had

me, rather than criticising him for doing it, praising him for taking on the responsibility.

He looked one player out there who was going to die trying, and he of course got the reward when he crossed for the try that got us the points.

For me it was as much about how that much talked about all Kiwi spine – Luke, Jonson, Foran and

Roger Tuivasa-Sheck cll had better games than we have seen from them lately.

The win will have taken some of the heat off coach Stephen Kearney that is for sure.



James Gavet in action.



Sam Lisone fends off Ryan Simpkins.



Radio Sport's Dale Budge talks to Kieran Foran while his wife is in the stands.



Ryan Hoffman in action.



Nice to see Jim and Kieran smiling. Jim has worked closely with Kieran to get him playing.

In the Stacey Jones Lounge



Aaron Lawton Fan Engagement Manager with Glenn Critchley commercial manager of the Vodafone Warriors.



Adam Worth gets the Selley's BBQ cleaner kit.



Andy Holman wins a Vodafone Warriors membership pack.



Barnsley wins an Asic's voucher.



We sang happy birthday to Erin who was 26 on the day.



Don Graham and Zenny wins Joseph Parkers boxing gloves.



Earle the hair dresser wins the grocery hamper.



Fleur wins a Vodafone carry bag.



Greg from USA came to his first ever rugby league game on Sunday.



Irene Tournata from Mahia Peninsula.



Kate wins a Selley's BBQ cleaner pack.



Kay wins the Sunshine Coast T Shirt.

In the Stacey Jones Lounge



Keith wins the Panasonic radio.



Lucky punter Gary Norton gets the TAB bet for Bodene Thompson to score first.



Mike Brown wins a \$50 Cowboys Bar Voucher.



Mrs Sisso wins the Bendon Voucher.



Neil Saxton wins that great book What a Ride Mate.



New members to the Stacey Jones lounge Emma, Caleb and Jamie from Hamilton.



Paul Barkley is a winner.



Peter Taylor wins a Panasonic mixer.



Richard Greenbury draws the spot prize of Simon Mannering's warm up tee modeled by Joanne Doyle.



Ruby wins the ear phones.



Sean wins a Warriors clothing pack.



Sir Peter Leitch and Don Graham celebrates Campbell's birthday.

In the Stacey Jones Lounge



Toafofoa Siple and James Bell present Richard Matson with the tee.



Toafofoa Siple and James Bell with Sir Peter.



Tony and Cooper Feasey win a Panasonic kettle.



Tony Tatupu former Warriors & Kiwi player with work colleague Campbell McEvedy patrolling the lounge.



Young fans in the lounge.



VODAFONE WARRIORS vs PARRAMATTA 19 EELS 47

KICK OFF THIS SUNDAY, 4PM, MT SMART STADIUM.

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South Island Heroes Guests On Sunday

By Richard Becht



HEROIC COMMUNITY workers involved in the Kaikoura earthquake and Port Hills fire disasters will be flown to Auckland as special guests when the Vodafone Warriors salute everyday heroes at Mount Smart Stadium on Sunday.

The club is dedicating this week's game day to vital community services when it hosts the Parramatta Eels for Sunday's sixth-round NRL home game.

The New Zealand Police, New Zealand Fire Service, St John New Zealand, Surf Life Saving New Zealand and the New Zealand Blood Service will all have a presence on Sunday. Vodafone Warriors members and fans are being encouraged to turn up in numbers to acknowledge and thank the services for their efforts.

By way of appreciation the Vodafone Warriors are offering a free GA ticket to any emergency service* volunteer or staff member to come along to soak up the action.

Vodafone Warriors managing director Jim Doyle also announced today that through the efforts of club sponsors a group of 20 South Island emergency services workers will be VIPs.

"This has been made possible through fantastic support from Air New Zealand with flights, SKYCITY with accommodation and Sir Peter Leitch with his unique match day experience," he said.

"So many people in the South Island were affected by the earthquake and fires recently and we just wanted to reach out to give some of them a special weekend.

"We're honouring our everyday heroes on Sunday so it's special for us to be able to involve some of those community services who did so much in the South Island.

"It has also been a tough time for community services around Auckland with the recent flooding highlighting the face we all have so much to thank our everyday heroes for."

A group of 16 South Island community services personnel will be flown from Christchurch to Auckland by Air New Zealand on Saturday, stay the night at SKYCITY and be special guests of the Sir Peter Leitch Club in the Stacey Jones Lounge on Sunday.

Air New Zealand will fly another four people out of

Blenheim on Sunday to enjoy the day in the Sir Peter Leitch Club when the Vodafone Warriors have their NRL, Intrust Super Premiership and NYC teams on show.

The VIP group includes bulldozer drivers Nik Martin and John Harris, who both worked tirelessly during the Port Hills fires.

Joining them for the trip will be firefighters from Kaikoura, Culverden and Ward who were involved in rescue efforts after the earthquakes in the area.

Martin's deeds featured in television news coverage and on social media.

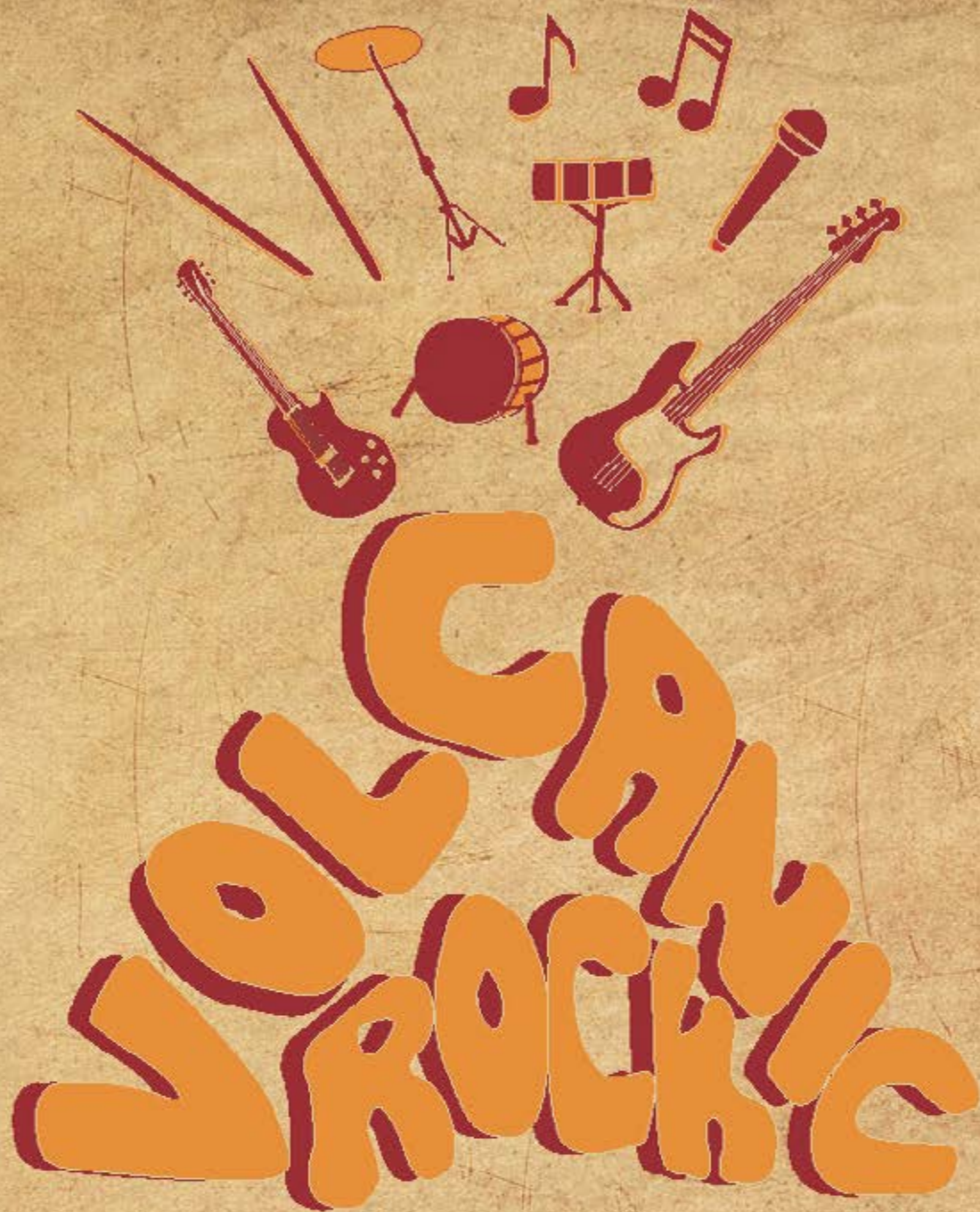
A story is told that Martin's boss at CCL Construction thinks so much of him that he bought him a new ute to drive – but Martin gave it away to one of his co-workers because he reckoned it was too good for him.

Harris, who also works for CCL Construction, was driving the bulldozer before Martin took over from him during the fires. He then jumped into a transporter and moved heavy machinery to the fire under police escort. He was being briefed by the police on how they would escort him under lights and siren when he said: "That's fine, just don't stop in front of me because I won't be able to stop and will run right up your arse."

Another hero was Southeast Earthworks owner Lachie Wain, who worked alongside Martin's bulldozer in a 20-tonne digger during the fires. Efforts were made to bring him to Auckland this weekend to thank him for his deeds but he couldn't make it.

Martin, Harris and Wain will all be attending a League 4 Life luncheon in Christchurch on Friday when Sir Peter Leitch will be MC with guest speakers being Doyle and Vodafone Warriors great Jerome Ropati.





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Te Kōwhiri Mātepuhupuhu
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Coach Killers

By John Coffey QSM

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



I GENERALLY HAVE no particular reason to support the Canterbury Bulldogs. But I was chuffed at the manner in which they fought back from a seven-point deficit to beat the Brisbane Broncos 10-7 in Sydney in the opening match of NRL round five. Sure, the Dogs have a few Kiwis on their books and the winning try was scored by former Junior Warriors fullback Brad Abbey. However, they had my backing that night because I hoped a win would once and for all end the coaching witch hunt the Sydney media has indulged in since the pre-season. Frankly, it had become boring as one Sydney club coach after another was allegedly poised for the chop.

Even before a ball was kicked, Sydney publications had been listing NRL coaches in order of who was most likely to be the first sacked. Once the real footy was underway the barbs became even sharper and for a month newspapers and television talk shows aimed the blow torch at the Y-fronts of a different coach every week. With the notable exception of Wests Tigers' Jason Taylor, they were totally wrong in predicting, almost celebrating, the pending demise of Paul McGregor (St George Illawarra), Trent Barrett (Manly-Warringah) and Des Hasler (Bulldogs).

McGregor was said to be a “dead coach walking” when the bookies opened his Dragons at 100 to one to bring the glory days back to Kogarah and Wollongong. Only Taylor's Tigers, at 150 to one, were offering longer odds. The Dragons were claimed to be totally clueless in the matter of scoring tries. Scribes and television “experts” salivated at the prospect of the Dragons being slayed in the opening round by the Penrith Panthers, one of the title favourites. They fell silent when McGregor's men ran through and around the Panthers to win 42-10 and two weeks later out-pointed the defending champion and fierce local rival Cronulla Sharks.

By the second round the target had been painted on Barrett's back after Manly's home losses to the Parramatta Eels and South Sydney Rabbitohs. Manly captain Daly Cherry-Evans was even asked at a post-training press conference if he felt his coach was on shaky ground. To his credit, Cherry-Evans, whose own form until then had been patchy at best, laughed at the question. A few days later Cherry-Evans outplayed Jonathan Thurston when Manly travelled to Townsville to humble North Queensland Cowboys 30-8. The Sea Eagles next crushed the Bulldogs 36-0 and this weekend toppled the competition leading Sydney Roosters 18-12.

Meanwhile, Taylor – an easy target after the season-long wrangle which eventually resulted in club legend Robbie Farah leaving the West Tigers – had enjoyed an encouraging 34-18 away victory over Souths in the first round. But the full media barrage was again directed at him when the Panthers won the Battle of the Cats 38-2 on the Tigers' home patch and the Canberra Raiders ambushed them 46-6 in round three. By the Monday night Taylor had been terminated by the dysfunctional Tigers board, sparking a media frenzy. Former Warriors and Panthers coach Ivan Cleary was immediately touted as the logical (only?) replacement.

Hasler had started his Bulldogs campaign with narrow losses to the Melbourne Storm (6-12) and Roosters (24-28), respectable scorelines against two of the top contenders. He then took his troops to Dunedin to beat the Warriors 24-12. But with Taylor no longer employed, the media zeroed in on Hasler again when Manly thrashed the Bulldogs 36-0 at Lottoland (formerly Brookvale Oval). They decided his number was up. The media juggling started in earnest, imaginations ran wild, and predictions were made that Hasler would be shunted off to the Tigers and Cleary would instead be diverted from the Tigers to the wealthier Bulldogs.

That's why I was particularly happy to see the Bulldogs beat the Broncos in another Sydney splash down (and they reckon it rains a lot here?). We learned later the Bulldogs board had met before kick-off and empowered chief executive Raelene Castle to offer Hasler a two-year extension. Now the ball is in Hasler's court and he will mull over the offer at his leisure. The coach the same media had affectionately dubbed the “nutty professor” – before they decided his face no longer fit the culture and traditions of the Bulldogs -- is not going anywhere soon.

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There is no doubt Hasler is one of the most successful modern coaches, taking Manly to the 2008 and 2011 titles from three Grand Finals over eight seasons and the Bulldogs to Grand Finals in 2012 and 2014. As a player he made more than 250 appearances for Manly after bookending his first-grade career at Penrith (1982) and Western Suburbs (1997), spent a season with Hull in England and represented NSW and Australia. His playing weight was listed as 79kg but that did not deter him from alternating between halfback and loose forward.

So, who is next for the firing squad? Of the other Sydney clubs, the Sharks (Shane Flanagan) are hardly performing like champions, and the Panthers (Anthony Griffin), Rabbitohs (Michael Maguire) and Eels (Brad Arthur) have lost more games than they have won. Only Trent Robinson at the Roosters (four wins from five games) might feel safe. But, then, he lost to Barrett last weekend!

Chuck, The Eccentric ‘Chinaman’

By John Coffey QSM

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



A MID ALL the major controversies of India's tempestuous home cricket series with Australia there was also a teacup-sized storm over the use of the word "chinaman" to describe the bowling style of new Indian spinner Kuldeep Yadav. In cricket terms a chinaman bowler is a left-arm unorthodox wrist spinner who turns the ball from left to right contrary to normal practice. Only a handful of cricketers have mastered this devilishly difficult art.

In 1933 West Indian bowler Ellis Achong, who was of Chinese descent, spun the ball past England batsman Walter Robins and had him stumped. As he marched back to the pavilion an angry Robins remarked to the umpire, "fancy being done by a bloody Chinaman." The name spread throughout the cricketing world. But it has now upset Sydney Morning Herald journalist Andrew Wu, an Australian of Chinese heritage, who claims it is derogatory and racist. He wants it banned from further use.

One of the few international left-arm unorthodox bowlers was the ill-fated Leslie O'Brien Fleetwood-Smith, known from childhood as Chuck. In his youth Chuck was ambidextrous and could bowl with either arm. But he was "different" and chose the most demanding bowling style of all. Chuck was lured from country town Stawell to Melbourne in 1930 after news of his spectacular success reached the St Kilda club. Two years later he toured North America with a team organised by former Test spinner Arthur Mailey and totally bewildered the locals.

Higher honours followed, for Victoria in the Sheffield Shield and on Australia's 1934 tour of England. Though he took more than 100 first-class wickets, he could not displace established spinners Bill O'Reilly and Clarrie Grimmett from the Test team. But Chuck continued to set new records in district and state cricket and made his belated Test debut in South Africa in 1935-36. A hand injury suffered on tour required surgery and delayed his start to the 1936-37 season, when England toured. By then Grimmett had retired.

After England won the first two Tests, Chuck was called up to partner O'Reilly. In one of cricket's greatest fightbacks Australia won the last three Tests and retained the Ashes. If any one moment decided the series it was Chuck's bowling of champion England batsman Walter Hammond in the fourth Test at Adelaide. In England in 1934 Hammond had taken a severe toll of his bowling. With the fourth 1936-37 Test in the balance, Chuck had his revenge by delivering the perfect off-break: it hypnotically curved away in the air before spinning back viciously between bat and pad into Hammond's stumps.

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Famed English cricket scribe Neville Cardus wrote that Chuck had been “visited by genius” and “sucked the sweet blood of vengeance against Hammond”. O’Reilly described it as the best delivery he saw in a Test match and Bradman wrote “if ever the result of a Test match can be said to have been decided by a single ball, this was it.” Chuck claimed 10 wickets in the match. Chuck toured England again in 1938 and extended his Test appearances to ten. But he also collected a world record no-one wanted. When England made 903 for seven wickets in the final Test at the Oval Chuck conceded 298 runs from his marathon 87 overs.

As mentioned, Chuck was “different”. He was famously eccentric, and his later life was tragic. He had little interest in batting or fielding. When in the field he would sing, whistle, imitate bird calls (specialising in magpies and kookaburras), work on his golf swing, catch imaginary butterflies or shout encouragement for his beloved Port Melbourne football team. He exasperated team-mates by chatting to spectators with his back to the play. “Chuck you must remember was just silly, and usually around the bend,” wrote O’Reilly. “As for his cricketing ability, well if I only had half of it, I never would have been worried about bowling against a team which had eleven Bradmans.”

Chuck developed an addiction to alcohol. Women were attracted by his resemblance to actor Clark Gable. He loved a party. The family of his first wife was in the soft drink trade and employed Chuck as a sales rep, which required him to make daily rounds of Melbourne pubs. Sadly, he descended into alcoholism. When his marriage broke up he not only lost his job but also his own family in Sawtell, who remained close friends with his ex-wife. A second marriage failed. Chuck fell into the life of a homeless vagrant, often sleeping rough near the Melbourne Cricket Ground where tens of thousands had previously cheered him on.

He dropped completely out of sight in the 1950s until an arrest for vagrancy and petty theft in 1969 received widespread publicity and alerted former associates to his plight. Retired Prime Minister Sir Robert Menzies was among those who arranged legal help. The charges were dropped and Chuck reconciled with his second wife after promising to remain sober. But it was too late for him to age gracefully. The many years of homelessness had left Chuck in poor health and he died in 1971, aged 62.

Help Jim Doyle Fundraise for Leukaemia and Blood Cancer New Zealand

Hi Everyone

ON SATURDAY May 13th I’m participating in the 2017 Firefighter Sky Tower Stair Challenge. You can help support the 6 Kiwis diagnosed every day with a blood cancer or related condition by making a secure online donation using your credit card. Click on the link below:

<http://bit.ly/2ox116R>

For more information about the 2017 Firefighter Sky Tower Stair Challenge, please visit us at www.firefightersclimb.org.nz

Thanks so much for your support!

Jim





WELL KNOWN Sydney journalist Phil Rothfield wrote an informative piece in Sydney's Sunday Telegraph about legendary St. George star, Graeme Langlands MBE. Now, 75, Graeme was born in the coastal city of Wollongong, 80 kilometres south of Sydney.

He played 45 Tests for Australia, captaining his country in 15 of them. In these Tests, he scored 206 points from 20 tries and 73 goals. He made three Kangaroo tours to England and France and one to New Zealand, while he played in two World Cups and a World Series. For NSW he played 35 games, for City Firsts eight matches and with St. George from 1963 to 1976, he scored 1,554 points in his 227 first grade games as well as being a member of four Grand Final Premiership winning teams. Graeme coached Australia in 16 Tests from 1973 to 1975, winning 12, drawing one and losing three. He also coached NSW and City Firsts, as well as St. George in 118 games.

Rugby league Immortal Graeme Langlands paying the price for a life lived to the full and a career full of head injuries - By Phil Rothfield

AS A rugby league Immortal, Graeme "Changa" Langlands was as fearless as they come. In 13 years playing for St George and Australia, he never took a backward step, never backed out of a tackle.

Now, 40 years on, the footy legend with the dragon-sized heart is paying the price.

A leading neurologist claims old football head injuries have contributed to the brain deterioration that has resulted in Langlands being placed in a Sutherland Shire nursing home suffering Alzheimer's disease and needing 24-hour care to go about his daily tasks.

From his room in the Lark Ellen nursing facility this week, the former St George, NSW and Kangaroos superstar struggled to complete his sentences as he spoke of his sad decline from football hero.

Langlands, 75, has not just lost his memory, but also his house and life savings from a failed venture in 2011 which led fraud squad detectives to investigate his business partner.

His neurologist, Professor Raymond Garrick, said in Langlands' medical reports that "a clear history of multiple concussive head injuries during his sporting career" had contributed to his Alzheimer's disease.

This is a hard interview. Langlands talks slowly and struggles to complete a sentence.

His daughter Monique is there help out. His short term memory is gone. He doesn't know Josh Dugan is the St George Illawarra fullback.



Graeme Langlands in his room at a Sutherland nursing home. Photo Gregg Porteous.



Langlands was part of a legendary Kangaroos side

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He asks if the long-retired Steve Edge is still playing.

It's sad when you walk into his room and think this is now the home of one of the country's greatest sporting athletes.

The name we used to see on the old SCG scoreboard is on the wall at the back of his bed with a warning sign "High risk of fall". He has slipped a couple of times in recent weeks.

It's easy to blame the fact Langland's has had a "hard" life.

The nights out and drinking escapades with teammates Johnny Raper and Billy Smith are legendary. Even on the evening before a game.

As Monique said: "They played in the red and white but they were certainly no Saints."

But his doctors are convinced the fall in 2008 and old concussions are partially to blame.

Langlands still watches most NRL games on television. He has a poster on his wall of the Cronulla Sharks grand final team, not his beloved Dragons.

"St George never made it — and I'm living in the Sharks area," he said.

He appears to be enjoying himself as the nursing home's most illustrious patient. The nursing staff bring him a cup of tea and pikelets with jam and cream as we're talking.

He still gets chipped by other patients about the white boots he famously wore in the 1975 grand final, a 38-nil loss to Eastern Suburbs at the SCG.

"Jesus, do you have to bring the bloody boots up," he says, "There's that many blokes in here who mention them. I threw them over a set of goalposts in England. They're long gone."

To help pay for his medical costs and other expenses, the family have set up the Graeme Langlands Trust fund.

He signs old photos, footballs and jerseys and the money raised goes towards the junior rugby league club in Picton where his grandsons play rugby league, country junior clinics and other charities.

The NRL is aware of Langland's health problems and have been good to him. They still invite him to functions and provide a hire car to get him and a carer there and back home.

The NRL recently imposed \$350,000 in fines to the Gold Coast Titans, the Newcastle Knights and St George Illawarra as part of a major concussion crackdown to avoid threats of future legal action from players and compensation claims like those in America's NFL.

The NFL has paid out almost \$2 billion in brain injury compensation to former footballers.

Not that Langlands is even thinking about legal action. He's happy living off the pension, which covers his nursing costs and the occasional outing.

Continued on next page...



Langlands was renowned for living life to the full, on and off the field.



*Langlands still gets some support from the NRL.
Photo Gregg Porteous*

Continued from previous page...

The problem is that his medical specialists cannot conclusively define the cause of his illness.

He suffered head injuries when he fell off the back of a car during a parade of former rugby league legends before the 2008 World Cup final in Brisbane. And he is renowned for enjoying a beer and a good time.

When contacted, prominent St Vincent's Hospital Professor Garrick said he stands by his 2014 diagnosis that multiple concussions contributed to Langlands' condition.



Langlands is treated by medical staff after falling from a car on a lap of honour

He said Langlands had been a “model” patient who has worked hard to achieve a healthier lifestyle.

Concussion tests were not around during Langlands' career of 13 years in rugby league. Not in the era of head-high tackles, brawls and stiff arms, and long before punches and shoulder charges were outlawed by the NRL.

He had the most lethal sidestep in the game and was always heavily marked by opposing teams.

Old players recall if you got knocked out the trainer would generally run onto the field, hold two fingers up and ask: “How many fingers can you see?” If the concussed player had blurred vision and didn't know, a team mate would run past and give him the answer. It was a sign of softness to leave the field.

Langlands' family have been an incredible pillar of support as the old champion adjusts to his new life in the nursing home.

He was moved from Port Stephens to Sutherland three months ago to be closer to his family and friends including legendary boxing trainer Johnny

Lewis, former TV commentator Barry Ross and old team mates who visit him regularly.

Langlands' daughter Monique speaks on behalf of the family.

“We're not blaming rugby league for dad's condition,” she said. “It's a contact sport and it's the way it was played in those days.

“But it's important for the people who say ‘bring back the biff’ that they can see what the head knocks have done to dad.

“It might be fun watching it from the sidelines or on TV but there are consequences. Everything the NRL is doing to prevent concussed players from staying out there is great.”

“Life's not too bad,” he says, “I'd like to be outside, but ... It's pretty good here — I'll be OK.”



Footy was a lot different back in Langlands' day.

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By Miles Davis

Johnson & Foran

Vodafone Warriors v Gold Coast Titans. 2/04/17 Photo www.photosport.nz

TRUST ME, as a West Ham and England fan I know what it is like to be constantly let down and disappointed by my sporting teams. But I also know how to look at the positives and fully appreciate them.

There are a lot of negative nellys out there shouting down Vodafone Warriors fans for their delight at the win over the Gold Coast Titans. Ignore them. Despite what those critics are saying no Vodafone Warriors fan thinks their side is about to win the title and that all things in the Mt Smart garden are coming up roses. What they are thinking is that there were some real plusses to come out of yesterday.

The fight. Over the last few weeks one would have expected the Vodafone Warriors to have folded in the second half having gone into the break 10 points behind. Instead we saw a team come out firing and determined to get back into the game. And I would say they were pretty successful in that wouldn't you?

The defence. Having leaked 22 points in the first half they kept the Titans scoreless in the 2nd half. Many people point to the opposition's injuries but that is the nature of rugby league and should never be used as an excuse.

The captain. Roger Tuivasa-Sheck looked back to his dangerous best after being hampered by injury problems for a long period. His pace and elusive ability were demonstrated on many occasions and even without the ball he was attracting the attention of defenders who feared what he might do should he get hold of it. He will only get stronger and that alone is something to get excited about.

The halves. There was an air of anticipation amongst the faithful at Mt Smart at the first appearance of Kieran Foran. After such a long period out of the game it was to be expected that it may take some time to regain full fitness and the first half indicated perhaps that would be the case. The second half however was a different matter. Foran grew into the game minute by minute. He started taking the ball to the line and the timing of his passes became more clinical. You could also see him organising his team behind the ruck, directing, cajoling, encouraging. He then showed a glimpse of his best when scoring a vital try by spotting a gap and slicing through it.

What was also apparent and very encouraging were the embryonic signs of a great halves partnership with Shaun Johnson. As the game progressed they looked more and more as if they had been playing together for years. Having a dynamic halves combination is a potent attacking weapon for any side. The defence then has two major entities to keep an eye rather than one and that leads to holes opening up which leads to tries.

To paraphrase an old saying – 'Two halves make a hole' and these two halves already look like they are going to make more than their fair share of holes.



By Shane Hurndell
Hawke's Bay Today
Sports Reporter

Hakopa's Loyalty Top Shelf

CLOSE BATTLE: The Hawke's Bay women's rugby league team after their 34-28 loss to Linton in Hastings at the weekend.

WHEN DEIDRE Hakopa trotted out on to the field with the Hawke's Bay women's rugby league team at the weekend the word record immediately sprung to mind.

This is Hakopa's 22nd consecutive season of league for her Tamatea club team and either the Hawke's Bay Unicorns women or Hawke's Bay Maori teams at rep level. If there is a female player somewhere else around the country with a longer stint of service please inform your's truly.

It was a pity the Hawke's Bay women's team couldn't celebrate the occasion with a victory. They were pipped 34-28 by Manawatu team Linton in an entertaining Mid Central competition tussle at Kirkpatrick Park in Hastings, an exact score reversal of the previous match between the two teams a fortnight earlier at the same venue.

But Hakopa, 46, wasn't complaining.

"There were some good signs for the rest of the season. Nobody gave up and we kept our heads up," Hakopa said.

"Too many penalties cost us. Linton had a bit more fitness and we lacked the necessary experience at key moments."

The hosts missed the services of experienced player-coach and former Kiwi Fern Chanel Huddleston who was unavailable. Hakopa, the partner of former Unicorns Lion Red Cup forward Des Rowlands, said the match was played in the hottest conditions she has played in – 28 degrees celsius. One player who didn't mind the heat was one of the Bay's substitute forwards, Jasmine Kemp (nee Tihema) who was home on holiday from, Queensland.

A niece of former Unicorns Lion Red Cup forward Mike "Muscles" Tihema, Kemp, impressed with her impact. Backrower Hakopa scored one of her team's five tries while backs Ngahuri Thompson and Abby Collier scored two each.

Hakopa was proud of the fact all of the tryscorers were from her club. She declined to say whether or not this season will be her last.

"I'll continue to take things year by year at this stage of my career," Hakopa who still plays in the Bay's premier women's club rugby competition for Clive, said.

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“I’m rapt my teammates still call me Auntie and not Nanny,” she joked.

Hakopa has played more than 200 club rugby games for Clive and is still good enough to play for the Hawke’s Bay Tuis rugby team but always puts club league first. Hakopa played 39 division one games for the Tuis from 1997 to 2009 and still holds four of the Tuis records.

They are the most tries, 21, most tries in a season, nine, most points in a match 25, and most tries in a match. The last two came when the Tuis thrashed Southland 100-5 in the 2003 division two final on Napier’s McLean Park when Hakopa scored five tries.

It was a memorable weekend for the Tamatea Rugby and Sports Club as the club’s premier rugby team almost pulled off a huge upset in round two of the Nash Cup when beaten 34-29 by last year’s Maddison Trophy runners-up Taradale at Carters Arms Park.

Former Unicorns and Magpies outside back Jason Robinson, 39, got to play with two of his sons when he took the field as a substitute flanker during the final 10 minutes. His sons Ash and Dennon played first five-eighth and wing respectively.

“I felt honoured and privileged to play amongst a band of brothers, plus my two sons. And to cap it off I was presented with a special jersey to celebrate more than 400 games for the Tamatea premiers since my debut in 1996,” Robinson said.

Hakopa’s step son, Hamiora Rowlands, captains the Tamatea premier rugby team and is in his 17th season with the side. Kiwis and Melbourne Storm player Tohu Harris has played premier league and union for Tamatea and the Robinson trio are relatives of his.

Shaun Johnson and Simon Mannering’s Awards Up Close



Shaun Johnson

Simon Mannering





By Miles Davis

Gary Freeman

*Gary Freeman. 12/08/02. WestpacTrust Stadium, Wellington.
Kiwis vs Australia. www.photosport.nz*

WHEN A Wizard is mentioned today most thoughts are liable to conjure up Harry Potter but it wasn't long ago when that moniker automatically made you think of Kiwi legend Gary Freeman. The Wizard (or Wiz for short).

An energetic and combative half-back Freeman cut his teeth on the North Shore with Northcote Tigers making his senior debut in 1982.. Tigers were to be a recurring theme for Wiz with Castleford and Balmain being his next two ports of call.

1983 saw him head to Yorkshire and play 17 games for Castleford before returning to New Zealand. In 1987 he signed for the Balmain Tigers but spent the early part of the season on the bench. When he finally got his chance he made the most of it becoming a key part of the Tigers side (along with another legend Ellery Hanley) that made the 1988 Grand Final before going down 24-12 to the Canterbury Bulldogs (the first Grand Final to be held in the new Sydney Football Stadium). .

The following season he was again to be part of a Tigers Grand Final appearance but had to sit out a 12 week period along the way when suspended for an alleged gouging incident. The 1989 Grand Final turned out to be one of the great finals of all time but that was no comfort for Freeman as his side was on the losing side again with Canberra winning 19-14 in extra time. The Tigers held the lead with 90 seconds left in normal time before a converted Chicka Ferguson try levelled the scores. A field goal and a Steve Jackson try in the extra period won it for the Raiders.

1992 saw Wiz move to Eastern Suburbs where he was an instant hit. Although the Roosters missed out on the play-offs Freeman's performances were such high quality that he was awarded the Dally M Medal for Player of the Year (the only non-Australian to win the award until Jason Taumalolo shared it last year with Cooper Cronk).

His time at the Roosters ended with controversy when it was discovered that he had signed a 2 year deal to join the Penrith Panthers. Nowadays that sort of deal is commonplace but it caused upset at his club and he was dropped by coach Mark Murray for the rest of the season. Murray commented 'He can sit in the stands and cheer for Penrith the rest of the season.

Unsurprisingly he was an instant hit at the Panthers winning their player of the season in 1994. After two seasons with the Panthers where he played 44 games scoring 21 tries, he finished his career with a season with the Parramatta Eels.

Continued on next page...

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On the International stage he also left an indelible mark making 45 appearances for the Kiwis (19 as captain) and at one stage playing a record 37 consecutive tests.

In 2001 Freeman was handed the Kiwi coaching job but was sidelined the following year when the NZRL controversially declined to enforce a 2 year extension option.

For me Wiz was one of the legends of his generation. My abiding memory of him was in the freezing cold at Addington in 1988 when the Kiwis played Great Britain for a place in the World Cup Final and prevailed 12-10 with Freeman coming off the bench to score two tries (from memory he seemed to be on the wing and wearing No. 14 but it was cold and the Lion Red had been flowing). I watched him closely from then on and he never disappointed. He truly was a Wizard of League and was made a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit in 1997.

Gary Freeman – Legend of League <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=irrCc6I12FI>

1988 Grand Final Highlights <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XDNn7wLVyI>

1988 Season Review <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Cvk7qfdUGo>

1989 Grand Final Highlights <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R7w43uNRdyU>

Congratulations Cameron Smith

By John Deaker



ON SATURDAY night Cameron Smith notched up his 238th career victory with the Melbourne Storm's 28-6 win over Penrith making him the most successful player in NRL history. Smith's consistency as a player has been crucial to the great success the Storm have had during the last decade. It's not only been his consistent play on the field that's been important but also his resilient body that's separated him from his peers.

Since debuting for the Storm in 2002 Smith's played 340 NRL matches as well as 49 tests for Australia and 39 origin matches for Queensland. Smith's consistency is something all NRL players and teams aspire to and admire - particularly the notoriously inconsistent Warriors. It's hard to remember him even making a single mistake let alone playing a poor game.

One of the interesting things about Smith is that because he's not a flashy player he's often underestimated by fans - and even the bookies. The Melbourne Storm are now the hot favourite at the TAB to win the 2017 competition, but that wasn't the case at the start of the season. The Storm are the only team to have won every match this season which sees them sitting at the top of the table on their own and has them paying only \$5.00 at the TAB to win the NRL. The next hottest favourite is the Sydney Roosters paying \$7.00 followed by the North Queensland Cowboys paying \$7.50.

SPEAKING OF ODDS AND CONSISTENCY: Warriors' fans might like the look of their team still paying \$2.40 to make the top 8. That and the \$7.00 on offer if they make the top 4 appear to be generous odds with Foran likely to get better every week and the players around him likely to improve as he gives the team the structure they've been wanting for so long. Probably the biggest risk (in particularly the more conservative bet of the Warriors making the top 8) would be how the team would fare if he reinjures his shoulder or his hamstrings keep him out for long periods of the season.

We'll Take It

By John Holloway



OK A little watery but we WILL take the 2 points. According to the Herald scribe Critical Chris Rattue even with Forans entry the Warriors are still dog-tucker ...but right alongside was the Michael Burgess column with a much more positive attitude and I am with him. Yes one swallow doesn't make a Summer but for sure we will have gained a little in confidence and if we can fix a few of the other basic defence and handling lapses we will come good. Foran is definitely a big gain....of course he is not the Messiah but he does bring direction and purpose to the attack and in time I think will help tighten the defence. Mannering, Luke, TVS, Johnson, Fusitua and Kata need to shoulder their loads as well, Mooks Kearney (rhymes with Journey) and the cast of thousands Coaching staff still have obvious work-ons to complete. Mind you that will need to happen in a hurry as next weeks opponents the Parra Eels have a lot of strike power and will be smarting from the Raiders 30/18 touchup.. For all that it was a much more enjoyable and jovial jostle out of the park to the car after the game. The weekend started with a couple of upsets Dezzys Dazzlers hung on grimly in the downpour to deny the hot favourite Broncos 10/7. Mr Haslers job security looking a tad safer. A nice try and goal to ex Richmond Homie and Warrior cast off custodian Brad Abbey...finally getting a chance for the Bulldogs and growing in confidence each week. The second game saw the Manly boyos muscling up against the Roosters and taking the kudos at 18/12. Dashing Dylan Walker the difference with a brace of terrific touchdowns. I was on the loser in both of these opening matches but picked up from that point. JT's far North Rustlers were a semi gimmee against the scratchy Bunnies and got up clear at 20/6. The Southsiders were in the fight early but despite the efforts of the Burgess Boys and cunning Cody Walker got run down. While I admire Cowboy coach Greens loyalty to his players I am missing the entertainment that hugely talented young wing/fullback Kaylen Ponga can provide. It seems very clear to me that because he has signed for the Knights next season he will only get outings through injury to others. What a shame he is worth the admission fee on his own, I would have this Polynesian prodigy on the paddock for the Warriors in a heartbeat. Another turn-up was in the making at Shark Park with the unlucky Knights taking the game right to the wire but losing by a point at the death. 19/18. Jimmy Maloney the decider droppie. Heartache for Nate Browns valiant coaltown crew. What about those Raiders, the Green Machine at full noise too much for the well fancied Eels 30/18 at the bell. Rickys rockets have the best backline in the business and a big busy pack to match. With the Little Pom Hodgson at the helm and Sezer, Austin, Leilua, Captain consistent Croker, Rapacious Rapana, young Cotric and jumpin Jack Wighton at the back they could be a real handful at the rear end of the season. Croker made history getting his 100th try to go with his 500 plus goals a rare feat. The Warriors will get a first hand look at his quality in Canberra in a fortnight, fingers crossed. Also a semi surprise that the prowling Panthers were punished by the Purple Gang in Melbourne. It is never wise to bet against Bellyache Bellamys stormtroopers at home but the margin was unexpected at 28/6. Young flyer Addo-Carr is yet another promising pick-up that's growing an extra leg in the Storm system. He is a magnificent sight in full flight. Zero to a hundie in a flash, a blink of the eye and he's gone. New (interim) Coach same old result for the tortuous Tigers. The hard nosed Dragons grinding them down with a triple try fest for the evergreen and uber reliable Kiwi flanker Nightingale. They won't win the comp but the Red V will certainly take a few scalps at home. Our old friend Ivan Cleary will have his work cut out resurrecting the wilful Westies. Right the road ahead , this weeks picks are fraught with danger, The Broncos will start a point or two fave at home to the Roosters and the luckless Knights will be pushing it against a resurgent Bulldogs outfit. The Panthers host the Rabbotohs and will be TAB leader. DCE is back to his best with Marty kapow Taupau and the Turbojet Trbojevics not far behind. Manly at Lottoland might be just a bit too hot for the Dragons to handle. Titans v Raiders looks a gimmee for Green and the Cowboys should lasso the Tigers up in Townsville. The Storm at home will be the usual hard ask but the Sharks bring plenty of bite...possible golden pointer. 4pm Sunday at Mt Smart the Electric Eels come to town. Street-smart Cory Norman leads a very good unit that will take some subduing for our boys to be in the race. Maximum support from the fanbase (that's us) will be needed....man up time, be there or be square!

Kia Kaha Warriorrss



THE FIRST round of the Rugby League Northland Premiership was played over the weekend with three massive games.

Last year's champions, the Takahiwai Warriors got their title defence off to a great start after a 44-6 win over the Northern Wairoa Bulls.

The Warriors led 10-6 at the break, and went rampant in the second to secure the win.

In other results, Hikurangi Stags' return to the competition was not successful after they were outclassed 84-6 by the Moerewa Tigers.

It was the Stags first game in the Premiership, after a one-year hiatus.

Last year's finalists, the Otangarei Knights had a hard fought 28-16 win over the Portland Panthers, after trailing 12-6 at halftime.

The HoraHora Broncos had the first round bye.

Meanwhile Penrith Panthers forward James Fisher-Harris is expected is likely to return from a fractured cheekbone for next Friday night's clash with South Sydney.

"James will be right next week," said Panthers coach Anthony Griffin.

In junior rugby league news, the final of the Adam Blair trophy will be played between Dargaville High School and Combined Colleges (Taipa Area School and Abundant Life, Kaitaia) at Trigg Arena, Kensington, Whangarei on Wednesday April 5.

Dargaville beat Okaihau 36-16 after trailing early in the match.

Combined beat Bream Bay College in a nail biting 22-20 encounter.

The match will also be a change for the local to see the Rugby League World Cup which will be on display at the match.

In the plate final, Kamo will face Whangarei Boys high school, which will kick off at 2:30pm

The Championship final will kickoff at 4:00pm.

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The Season So Far – Vodafone Warriors ISP NSW Team Make It Five

By Joe Williams - Vodafone Warriors ISP Team Manager

ANOTHER OUTSTANDING effort from team captain Mason Lino have left the Vodafone Warriors ISP NSW team with five victories from as many games this season. Lino has been a crucial part for the first five games of the season being a key in every victory.

The Ricky Henry coached team started off the season at home against the Newcastle Knights. A sizzling 42-point first half secured a 52-24 victory in the season opener. The Vodafone Warriors pulled their foot off the throttle in the second half and allowed Newcastle to make some inroads however were too far ahead for the Newcastle Knights.

In round two, for the second straight week a fast start set the Vodafone Warriors for a victory against Canterbury Bulldogs 36-22. However just as they did in round one they lost momentum in the second half again allowing Bulldogs back into the game. The Vodafone Warriors were once again too strong and held them off for the victory.

After two rounds of fast starts and slow second halves the Vodafone Warriors went into round three setting a goal of not losing momentum in the second half. They achieved this with a dominating performance against the Wests Tigers 36-0 in their first away game for the season. This game welcomed back 2016 ISP Player of the Year Charnze Nicoll-Klokstad who got straight back into it with a dominating performance.

Round four the Vodafone Warriors come up against a tough opponent in the Illawarra Steelers. The Ricky Henry coached side were behind for much of the contest but stayed in the arm wrestle and grinded out a fourth straight victory. Lino snapped a 78th-minute field goal to seal a vital 21-14 away win before heading home for two games.

A Bunty Afoa double helped the competition-leading Vodafone Warriors keep their perfect record intact as they worked their way to a tough 26-14 win over the Blacktown Workers Sea Eagles. Fittingly it was Lino who had the final say scoring the final try which not only left the Vodafone Warriors on top of the ladder but to also emerge from the round as the only unbeaten team in the ISP NSW Competition.

They now head into the weekend playing first of the triple header at Mt Smart Stadium against Newtown Jets on Sunday.



Bunty Afoa scores a try.



Charnze Nicoll Klokstad narrowly escapes.



Ofahiki Ogden sizing up the competition.



Nathaniel Roache on the run.



Mason Lino in action.





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Rolleston

By Will Evans

Rolleston has long been synonymous with its roadside sign: ‘The town of the future.’

But the Selwyn district satellite town gets a blast from the past this weekend when the Rolleston Warriors junior teams make their debuts – the first time a rugby league based in Rolleston has competed since the 1990s.

In 2017, the fledgling Warriors will field two nursery teams, along with sides in the 6s, 8s, 9s, 10s and 11s junior divisions.

The club has between 60 and 70 registered players, and Rolleston Warriors’ inaugural president Nui Ririnui can’t wait for their initial outings on Saturday morning.

“It’s been quite a long process, but we finally got there and we’re very excited,” Ririnui said.

“It’s been probably two years in the making. The first year was pretty much just an idea, then I had someone approach me who said they could help start the club.

“Then the idea started to turn into reality ... (it was) time to set some goals for what we wanted to do.

“The second year we got a committee formed, and it went from there. It’s come together quite well.”

Although there has been plenty of hard graft required to get the Warriors up and running, the genesis of the idea was comparatively organic, Ririnui revealed.

“I played rugby (union) out here for about three years for Rolleston, but I’m from a league background – I’ve played league since I was young – and I saw a photo on Facebook of the old Rolleston Rugby League Club,” he said.

“I thought to myself, ‘man, it would be pretty cool to start up a rugby league club out here,’ so that sparked it for me, seeing that there was rugby league here 20 years ago.”

Ririnui organised a Rolleston team to enter the highly successful Crosbie Nines pre-season tournament, while the Warriors hosted their own six-team Nines tournament in February this year, which was won by Linwood Keas.

Participating in, and hosting, Nines tournaments gave the Warriors more of a foothold, but Ririnui stressed that the club is for the kids – for the time being, at least.

“Our main focus isn’t really seniors, we want to grow the club from the ground up,” he explained.

“A long-term goal is definitely tapping into high schools. Our main focus is our juniors, we’re going to let them pave the way for us for the next five years. We believe that’s going to create the culture for the club.

“It definitely starts with our kids, because they’re going to grow up and eventually be our seniors and that’s what we want to do.

“If we do get a senior team, then that’s great, but we’re not really seeking that at the moment. We’ll focus on the Nines (tournaments for) our senior team, but other than that it’s just our juniors for now.”

Ririnui said that the community response has been overwhelmingly positive, despite a somewhat controversial tact of starting a club from scratch in the town.

“We’ve had massive interest. You get the good with the bad – there’s the old members that aren’t happy with what we’ve done in making a fresh start for Rolleston, but the club’s been gone 20 years and no one was there to help pick it back up.

Continued on next page...

“Rolleston is growing, and it’s only going to keep growing, so we thought why not start a new club and have a fresh start.

“We’ve had massive positive feedback from the community, it’s been bloody awesome.

Emphasising the family and community vibe, the Warriors are staunch supporters of Smokefree, the ‘[Family Violence: It’s Not OK/It Is OK To Ask For Help](#)’ campaigns, and the [crusade for positive sideline behaviour](#).

“We’re big supporters of Smokefree, so (smoking is) banned from our fields and events,” Ririnui said.

“I know a lot of clubs do it, but we’re enforcing it quite hard. And no alcohol in the club as well.

“Sideline behaviour is also a massive thing for us, and we’re trying to become a local champion club with the ‘OK’ campaigns.

“We’re enforcing (those values) from the get-go, so our supporters know what we’re about and that’s what we’re building our club on as well.”

Like any grassroots club, the Rolleston Warriors rely heavily on the backing of local businesses, and they have [MK Buckley Ltd Concrete Pumping](#) as their gold sponsor, [Trident Homes](#) as their silver sponsor, and [Asphalt Contractors Ltd](#) as their bronze sponsor.

“Without them we wouldn’t be able to do what we need to do,” Ririnui said.

“Every club needs some financial (support), and we’re definitely grateful and thankful to have these guys on board.”

To get out and support the Rolleston Warriors’ juniors tomorrow, click [HERE](#) for the full draw, and visit their [website](#) for more information about the club.

ROLLESTON WARRIORS RUGBY LEAGUE CLUB

As a brand new club to the Selwyn district, we here at Rolleston rugby league are excited to get the club up and running for the 2017 season starting April 1st.

We are a family orientated club encouraging all members of the family to get involved for the joy of the sport and the support for our children.

Rolleston Rugby League Club is committed to providing, managing, developing and promoting Rugby league.

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By Harley Wall -
RLWC Community
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NZL vs CAN, ENG vs PNG, AUS vs COK

ROUND 2
SUNDAY 19 NOVEMBER | SOUTHERN CROSS GROUP STADIUM
PNG vs CAN, NZL vs COK, AUS vs ENG

ROUND 3
WEDNESDAY 22 NOVEMBER | SOUTHERN CROSS GROUP STADIUM
ENG vs COK, AUS vs CAN, NZL vs PNG

SEMI-FINALS
SATURDAY 2 DECEMBER | BRISBANE STADIUM
1ST POOL B vs 2ND POOL A, 1ST POOL A vs 2ND POOL B

WORLD CUP FINAL
SATURDAY 2 DECEMBER | BRISBANE STADIUM
WINNER SF 1 vs WINNER SF 2

FORMAT: Three preliminary rounds. Three matches each round. Six Semi-Finals. Top four teams face each other. World Cup Final. Grand Final winners.

RLWC2017.COM

Tickets Are Now On Sale For The Women's Rugby League World Cup!

THE TOURNAMENT will be hosted in Australia, and will be held concurrently with the men's tournament for the first time ever. Southern Cross Group Stadium in Cronulla (Sydney) will host the pool stages and semi-finals over four match days from 16 – 26 November 2017. The final will be held as a double-header with the men's final at Brisbane Stadium on Saturday 2 December 2017.

There will be six nations competing: Australia, Canada, Cook Islands, England, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea. The Kiwi Ferns have etched their name on the World Cup trophy three times (2000, 2005 & 2008), and will be eager to win back the trophy after Australia eclipsed them in the 2013 final 22-12. They only have one test prior to the tournament; which is the ANZAC test against the Jillaroos on May 5 in Canberra. The Kiwi Ferns were victorious in last year's test and will look to keep the ANZAC trophy this side of the Tasman.

The Women's game is continuing to grow in New Zealand at all levels. To help improve these pathways and grow the profile of the women's game, Three-time World Cup winner and former Kiwi Ferns Captain, Luisa Avaiki has come on board as the new NZRL/NRL Well-being and Women's Development Manager. She returns to New Zealand after spending three years with the NRL as a Game Development Officer in Melbourne. Her extensive experience in this position, and as a player, coach and mentor is set to serve her well in the new role.

Across the Tasman, female sport is becoming more high profile than ever before due to increased funding and commercial sponsorship. Both Cricket and AFL now have 8-team national women's competitions, and Australian Netball have re-vamped and expanded their national competition this year too. The NRL is looking to follow suit, however CEO Todd Greenberg has stated they will not be rushing into establishing a competition until there was a stronger player base for clubs. The NRL has looked at 2020 as a target for a National Women's Competition, though there has been pressure to launch a competition earlier than this.

Regardless of when a national competition gets off the ground, the prospects remain bright for the International Women's game, starting with the Women's World Cup at the end of this year. Fans can attend the pool stages and semi-finals from just \$10, with children under 16 and concession card holders admitted for free. Tickets to the Grand Final in Brisbane on Saturday 2 December, start from \$40 for children/concessions, \$70 adults and \$180 for a family of four. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit www.RLWC2017.com.

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THIS WEEK IN BIG LEAGUE'S HUGE ROUND 6 ISSUE...

NRL, HOLDEN CUP, INTRUST SUPER PREMIERSHIP, INTRUST SUPER CUP AND RON MASSEY CUP TEAM LISTS, PREVIEWS AND STATS!

INSIDE

- **Billy Slater** is slowly getting back to the form we expect of him – does that guarantee him a spot for Queensland and Australia? Rugby league greats **Wally Lewis**, **Petero Civoniceva** and **Greg Alexander** weigh in.
- Our columnist **Michael Ennis** says he doesn't believe in long-term contracts in the NRL – but there are five young players he would sign to his club immediately, including **Jayden Brailey**, **Te Maire Martin** and **Kalyn Ponga**.
- 'Journeyman' **Api Koroisau** was getting used to the tag in his young career – but after settling into the starting hooker role at Manly, he hopes to be at the club for life.
- Plenty of Panthers such as **James Tamou**, **Trent Merrin**, **Peter Wallace** and **Dean Whare** struggled to make a splash on the rep scene in recently – but club legend **Ryan Girdler** says the team's form will warrant plenty of rep selection this season.
- Rugby league historian **David Middleton** talks us through why the try-scoring records are the only long-standing ones that will probably never be passed in the modern game.

PLUS... **Pauli Pauli** returns to the field with a new outlook on life, we look back on the **Top 8 grand final rematches**, The Analyst compares **Ash Taylor** to the rest of halfbacks in the competition and a **Darius Boyd** poster.



ROUND 6

On sale at newsagents, supermarkets and at the ground from

Thursday, April 6

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DATE: SUNDAY, APRIL 9
VENUE: MT SMART STADIUM
KICK-OFF: 4PM (NZ)
REFEREE: HENRY PERENARA
ASSISTANT REFEREE: MATT NOYEN
TOUCH JUDGES: ANTHONY ELLIOT & ZIGGY
PRZEKLASA-ADAMSKI SENIOR REVIEW OFFICIAL:
ASHLEY KLEIN REVIEW OFFICIAL: BEN GALEA
FOX LEAGUE: 1PM
LIVE RADIO: ABC, 2GB

P	T	G	PTS	#NRLWarriorsEels		P	T	G	PTS	
3	0	0	0	Roger TUIVASA-SHECK (C)	1	Bevan FRENCH	5	3	0	12
2	0	0	0	Blake AYSHFORD	2	Semi RADRADRA	5	4	0	16
5	4	0	16	David FUSITU'A	3	Michael JENNINGS	5	1	0	4
5	1	0	4	Solomone KATA	4	Brad TAKAIRANGI	5	1	0	4
5	1	0	4	Ken MAUMALO	5	Josh HOFFMAN	5	0	0	0
1	1	0	4	Kieran FORAN	6	Clint GUTHERSON	5	3	14	40
5	3	11	34	Shaun JOHNSON	7	Corey NORMAN	4	1	0	4
5	0	0	0	Charlie GUBB	8	Suaia MATAGI	5	0	0	0
5	1	1	6	Issac LUKE	9	Kaysa PRITCHARD	5	1	0	4
5	0	0	0	Jacob LILLYMAN	10	Tim MANNAH (C)	5	0	0	0
5	1	0	4	Bodene THOMPSON	11	Manu MA'U	5	0	0	0
5	2	0	8	Ryan HOFFMAN	12	Tepai MOEROA	3	0	0	0
5	0	0	0	Simon MANNERING	13	Beau SCOTT (C)	5	0	0	0

INTERCHANGE

0	0	0	0	Nathaniel ROACHE	14	Nathan BROWN	5	0	0	0
2	0	0	0	James GAVET	15	Daniel ALVARO	5	0	0	0
5	0	0	0	Sam LISONE	16	Frank PRITCHARD	5	0	0	0
2	0	0	0	Ligi SAO	17	Siosaia VAVE	2	0	0	0

RESERVES

3	0	0	0	Albert VETE	18	David GOWER	2	1	0	4
4	0	0	0	Bunty AFOA	20/19	Peni TEREPO	0	0	0	0
3	0	0	0	Mafoa'aeata HINGANO	21/20	Kirosome AUVA'A	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	Mason LINO	22/21	George JENNINGS	0	0	0	0

COACHES

Stephen KEARNEY Brad ARTHUR

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

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

50 BIG LEAGUE 2017 Round Six

	WARRIORS	EELS
Position (Points)	13th (4)	10th (4)
Points For	88	92
Points Against	120	104

ATTACK		
Tries	16	16
Completions	77%	76%
Tries 0-20m	13	12
Tries 21-50m	2	3
Tries 51-100m	1	1

DEFENCE		
Tries	20	17
Tries 0-20m	7	11
Tries 21-50m	11	4
Tries 51-100m	2	2

MATCH AVERAGES		
Tries Scored	3	3
Tries Conceded	4	3
Points Scored	18	18
Points Conceded	24	21
Hit Ups/Runs	89	88
Tackles	306	310
Metres Gained	795	763
Handling Errors	5	5
Offloads	6	13
Line-breaks	4	4
Goalkicking	71%	74%

HEAD-TO-HEAD
 Played 36, Parramatta 20, Warriors 16

AT MT SMART STADIUM
 Played 17, Warriors 11, Parramatta 6

WINNING FORM 2017
WARRIORS: WLLLL Streak – 1 win
PARRAMATTA: WLLLL Streak – 3 losses

PAST 8 CLASHES
2016 – PARRAMATTA D. WARRIORS 40-18 at Mt Smart Stadium
2015 – WARRIORS D. PARRAMATTA 17-13 at Pirtek Stadium;
WARRIORS D. PARRAMATTA 29-16 at Mt Smart Stadium
2014 – WARRIORS D. PARRAMATTA 48-0 at Mt Smart Stadium;
PARRAMATTA D. WARRIORS 36-16 at Pirtek Stadium
2013 – PARRAMATTA D. WARRIORS 40-10 at Parramatta Stadium
2012 – WARRIORS D. PARRAMATTA 36-20 at Parramatta Stadium
2011 – PARRAMATTA D. WARRIORS 24-18 at Eden Park

BIGGEST HEAD-TO-HEAD WINS
WARRIORS D. PARRAMATTA 48-0 at Mt Smart Stadium, 2014
PARRAMATTA D. WARRIORS 56-12 at Parramatta Stadium, 2001

NEXT CLASH
WARRIORS: v Canberra at GIO, 5.30pm Saturday April 15.
PARRAMATTA: v Wests Tigers at ANZ, 4pm Monday April 17.

CASUALTY WARD
WARRIORS: Manu Vatuvei (knee), Ben Matulino (knee) – indefinite
PARRAMATTA: Cameron King (knee) – Rd 7; Kenny Edwards (suspension) – Rd 8; Honeti Tuha (ankle), Jeff Robson (calf) – Rd 10; Matt Woods (shoulder) – Rd 13; Isaac De Gois (concussion) – indefinite

Courtesy of our friends at Big League Magazine

NRL Preview

Foran faces former team-mates

Mt Smart Stadium Sunday, 4pm

Form: The Warriors returned to winning form after a three-week lull thanks largely to the steadying influence of Kieran Foran. His combination with halfback Shaun Johnson helped to turn the game for the home side after the Titans had taken a 10-point lead at the break. Parramatta slumped to their third-straight loss when the Raiders downed them last Saturday. Halfback Corey Norman

threatened to swing the momentum for the Eels after half-time, but they were unable to go on with it.

History: Parramatta hold a narrow lead in head-to-head results since 1995, however the Warriors have claimed victories in three of the past four clashes. When they met at Mt Smart Stadium in the final round of last season, the Eels scored a resounding 40-18 victory.

Danger sign: Foran's first meeting with his former Parramatta team-mates will

provide an interesting facet of this clash, however neither team is in a position to be distracted from their match plans. The Warriors will be determined to build on last Sunday's win, while the Eels need to focus on ball security after several error-plagued performances.

Best Bet? An edge in the halves may be enough to lift the Warriors to victory by 1-12 points.

Money-spinner: First Tryscorer hopefuls include Solomon Kata, David Fusitu'a and Bevan French.

by DAVID MIDDLETON
@Middleton_David



HOLDEN CUP

DATE: SUNDAY, APRIL 9 **VENUE:** MT SMART STADIUM **KICK-OFF:** 1.45PM (NZ)
REFEREE: CHRIS TRENEMAN **ASSISTANT REFEREE:** ADAM CASSIDY
TOUCH JUDGES: ANTONETTE WATTS & CHRIS McMILLAN **FOX:** 11.30AM

WARRIORS V EELS

Lee TURNER	1	Anthony LAYOUN
Lewis SOOSEMEEA	2	Greg LELEISIUAO
Kane TELEA	3	Tuimavave AFUALO
Gibson POPOALII	4	Dane AUKAFOLAU
Mathew FAITOTOA	5	John FONUA
Chanel HARRIS-TAVITA	6	Dean MATTERSON (C)
Paul TURNER	7	Troy DARGAN
Kenese KENESE (C)	8	Sean KEPPIE
Erin CLARK	9	Denzal TONISE (C)
Chris SIO	10	Tangi HOKAI
Joe VUNA	11	Filia UTOIKAMANU
Preston RIKI	12	Salesi FAINGAA
Isaiah PAPALI'I	13	Ray STONE
14 Soane HUFANGA, 15 Tyler SLADE, 16 Nathan NEWTON		14 Reed MAHONEY, 15 Mitch BUTFIELD, 16 Frank SALU
17 Dylan TAVITA, 18 Jerome MAMEA, 20 Jordan PINNOCK		17 Oregon KAUFUSI, 18 Dom MURPHY, 19 Kamren CRYER
21 Shane HANNAM, 22 Keanu LAUMATIA-PAKI, 23 Tayhler PAORA, 24 Eiden ACKLAND		20 Noel AUKAFOLAU, 21 Austin DIAS, 22 Nick OKLADNIKOV
		23 Sam MCGREGOR
Grant POCKLINGTON		Luke BURT

COREY NORMAN



6
tackle-breaks in Round 5

HEAD-TO-HEAD LEADERS

AVERAGE METRES	AVERAGE TACKLES	LINE-BREAKS	STATS
Roger Tuivasa-Sheck 175	Kaysa Pritchard 38	Clint Gutherson 5	
Jacob Lillyman 158	Simon Mannering 38	Semi Radradra 5	
Ken Maumalo 146	Bunty Afoa 34	David Fusitu'a 4	
Nathan Brown 131	Issac Luke 29	Shaun Johnson 3	
Semi Radradra 128	Nathan Brown 28	Bevan French 2	

NRL FANTASY

FANTASY POINTS
Shaun Johnson 62.4
Corey Norman 57.0
Clint Gutherson 49.2
Simon Mannering 48.6
Nathan Brown 41.4

SO NEAR, SO FAR... The Warriors were oh-so-close this week, but couldn't hold out the Titans. Leading by two at half-time, the Warriors committed a quick error after the break to give the Titans the ascendancy. Two tries in the final 10 minutes brought the home side to within four points of victory, but poor goal-kicking proved the key difference in the four-point loss.

FIZZLED OUT... Parramatta couldn't back up their Round 4 win, losing to the Raiders in Canberra. Despite starting strong with a try within the first five minutes by Reed Mahoney, the Eels couldn't hold out Canberra's strong attack. They were left a man short after winger Greg Lelesiuao was sin-binned for a professional foul. Dane Aukafolau finished the game with one try and six tackle-breaks.

- KAMILIA HANNA

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PHOTO: Mick Tsikas/AAP Image



Otahuhu Comeback Seals First Win in the Sharman Cup

By Talei Anderson

Photo: Talei Anderson - Rd 2 Sharman Cup Otahuhu v East Coast Bays at Bert Henham Park

IT WAS a hot second half scoring blitz which propelled the Otahuhu Leopards to a 42-16 win in their season opening Sharman Cup clash against East Coast Bays at Bert Henham Park on Saturday.

The Barracudas were in total control for the first 40 minutes, putting the Leopards under pressure with their fast pace and strong defence.

The John Ackland-coached side fell flat, scoring only one try and were down 4-10 at halftime.

East Coast Bays were straight out the gates in the second half. But for the next 40 minutes the Otahuhu Leopards restricted the Barracudas to just one try, while scoring seven and 38 points to secure their first success.

Otahuhu veteran and captain Freddie Turuwhenua held the squads excitement responsible for their poor first half display.

"I think everyone just got a little bit excited to be back on the field and to be playing in front of a home crowd today," he said.

"After half time, everything just came together. We strung through a few tries and got back to what we've been working on during preseason."

Freddie says that relegation from the Fox Memorial is something in the past now.

"It's a new year, new season and we have to put it behind us," he said.

"We're on a new mission and our focus is on winning the Sharman Cup."

Otahuhu 42 (Geronimo Doyle x2, Dylan Uate, Rahiri Witehira, Shaun Motu-Muavae, Tom Vaafusuaga, Connor Purcell x2 tries; Geronimo Doyle x5 goals). East Coast Bays 16 (Henry Ah Kuoi, Ricky Bogue, Jack Allen tries; Stephen Robinson x2 goals).

It was an unsuccessful round for the remaining hosts in section one of the qualification series.

Bay Roskill won their second game straight with a 38-20 win over Pakuranga at Ti Rakau Park, while Hibiscus Coast bounced back from their loss last week to secure a close 26-22 win over the Scorpions at Ngati Otara Park.

In section two of the qualification series, Waitemata sealed their first game of the season winning 32-6 over Manukau while Ellerslie were taken down 114-0 by the Manurewa Marlins.

Continued on next page...

Continued from previous page...

This weekend, the Fox Memorial gets underway with the champion of champions round kicking off at Prince Edward Park in Papakura.

The 2016 SAS Fox Memorial Champions –the Papakura Sea Eagles- will face the Pt Chevalier Pirates in their opening clash. In addition to early bragging rights, the Stormont Shield (champion of champions) and the Roope Rooster (challenge trophy) will be on the line.

In other games, Te Atatu will host their first match against Richmond. Mt Albert who placed third in 2016 go up against the Marist Saints at home. Mangere East travel to Paparua Park to play the Hornets and Glenora will play Northcote at Harold Moody Reserve.

**ARL Sharman Cup results for Saturday April 1:
Round 2**

Qualification Series: Section 1
Otahuhu 42 East Coast Bays 16
Otara 22 Hibiscus Coast 26
Pakuranga 20 Bay Roskill 38
New Lynn bye

Qualification Series: Section 2
Waitemata 32 Manukau 6
Manurewa 114 Ellerslie 0
Ponsonby bye
Papatoetoe bye

**Sharman Cup fixtures for Saturday
April 8: Round 3**

Qualification Series: Section 1
Otahuhu v Otara @ Bert Henham Park 2.30pm
Bay Roskill v Hibiscus Coast @ Blockhouse Bay
2.30pm
New Lynn v Pakuranga @ Lawson Park 2.30pm
East Coast Bays bye

Qualification Series: Section 2
Papatoetoe v Waitemata @ Kohuora Park
Ponsonby v Manukau @ Victoria Park 2.30pm
Manurewa bye
Ellerslie bye

**SAS Fox Memorial fixtures for Saturday April 8:
Round 1**

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



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