

VODAFONE



Sir Peter Leitch Club

AT MT SMART STADIUM, HOME OF THE MIGHTY VODAFONE WARRIORS

16th August 2017

Newsletter #183

Awesome Loyal Fans Supporting the Boys Last Sunday!



For Sale: One Used League Club, Average Condition

By David Kemeys

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



SO AUCKLAND businessman Paul Davys is in talks with our owner Eric Watson about buying the club, although Watson says he's in no hurry. He's had a stake for 17 years, so full marks for persistence, and what's another year.

Watson might be in no hurry, Davys is, saying he'll give Watson until Friday because he needs to know one way or the other, or he'll walk away.

"If he hasn't by the end of the week then it's probably better for the club and me to move on."

Davys has a chunk of the childcare company ChoiceKids, which is as far – or almost identical, depending on your viewpoint – from league as it is possible to get.

Doesn't seem to worry Davys, who says he wants to be hands on, and he is one of the many convinced the culture is wrong, and that attitudes have to improve.

"There's a culture problem, fan scan see it, the coaching staff can see it, and the players can see it. But it's hard to change if you don't know how. I've got a fair idea and a fair amount of knowledge on how to build a culture, so that's what I can bring."

No shortage of confidence then.

Watson owns 90 per cent stake of the Warriors, chief executive Jim Doyle the other 10%.

You could be forgiven for never having heard of Davys. He is a co-director with former Kiwis international Peter Brown of ChoiceKids.

Watson is cautioning there are apparently other interested parties.

Hard to believe anyone would want to buy them, let alone several prospective buyers at one time.

The interesting thing is the presence of Brown, who is also agent to Shaun Johnson, although it is apparently unlikely he will join his business partner if a deal happens.

You can do a standard google search and not that much comes up about Davys, but there must be money in childcare that is for sure.

He calls himself "an entrepreneur with a background in sales and marketing".

If he does buy, who knows what it all means, but Doyle and coach Stephen Kearney must be wondering, given that Davys has said he'll look inside the club and that he'd need a sit down with Kearney.

"But until I sit down with Steve I'm in the dark. I just know the Warriors aren't winning and there's a need for a culture change and whether that's Steve's fault or not, I don't know."

Different Day, Same Result

Another day, another loss, and it's doubtful too many expected much else.

That is six on the bounce, and despite the fact this was a game where we actually looked good in patches, it was actually our worst loss of the year, 36-16 to the Raiders at Mt Smart, and how they must love playing us.

That is now 14 losses and seven wins, and not much surprise the crowd barely ticked over 10,000, like it or not, many have had enough.

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It was all depressingly familiar, good chances to score spurned, chuck in the odd injury, and get punished for not stacking the points on.

Even Issac Luke, dropped to the bench after his lacklustre performance last week, got a get out of jail free card courtesy of Solomone Kata's injury, with Nathaniel Roache moved to the centres.

He must wonder what he has to do to catch a break.

Leaky defence, errors, but at least there was no lack of effort.

In the opening 20 of the second half we were really good, if again guilty of failing to convert opportunities into points.

But at least the boys were firing, the kicking game was good, and there were offloads. I barely recognised us.

Captain Roger Tuivasa-Sheck had a game he can be proud of, and the obvious standout was young Ata Hingano, the man so much is going to be expected of next year, and who has had to bide his time as we persisted with Kieran Foran.

Expect to hear not much else on the radio all week except that we are rubbish, and why would anyone want to buy us?

Injury Curse Jut Gets Worse

We really could not take a trick could we?

Kieran Foran gets ruled out of Sunday's clash against Canberra, failing a fitness test on a shoulder at training on Saturday.

Apparently the injury is not serious and Foran is expected to be available next week.

Not sure I care really.

Foran suffered a season-ending shoulder injury last year, so I would not be in the least surprised not to see him.

With Foran off to the Bulldogs, it was the perfect chance for Hingano. There has been lots of talk about how with Foran going, Ata should get an extended run to at least get a feel for NRL level.

Makes a lot of sense to me.

Graham Talk Hanging About

Also lots of paper talk about the Bulldogs prop James Graham being squeezed out because of salary cap pressure, and how he could find himself at Mt Smart.

Please let that be true.

With Foran, Ben Matulino and Ryan Hoffman all out, and Manu Vatuvei and Tui Lolohea already gone, surely we have some cash available for a no nonsense prop like him. His experience alone would be invaluable, and if pushed, admirer of Adam Blair that I am, I'd sooner have the Englishman.

The same report said we were also keen on James Maloney. I just can't see that.

Assistant For Kidwell

Kiwis coach David Kidwell finally has an assistant for the Rugby League World Cup, Brian Smith, who

Kidwell played under at Parramatta.

"I wasn't sitting around waiting for a job for the World Cup, but the way he pitched his plan and the areas he wanted me to assist in sounded like fun."

Smith has 582 games in charge at NRL level.

It was taking so long I half-pie expected my phone to ring.

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Lillyman's 250th milestone

VODAFONE WARRIORS v SOUTH SYDNEY

ANZ Stadium, Sydney

6.00pm, Friday, August 18

by Richard Becht

VETERAN PROP Jacob Lillyman makes his 250th career appearance but he won't have his regular front row partner Ben Matulino alongside him in the Vodafone Warriors' 24th-round NRL match against South Sydney at ANZ Stadium on Friday (6.00pm kick-off local time; 8.00pm NZT).

Matulino will miss Lillyman's milestone through a one-match suspension after taking an early guilty plea on a shoulder charge offence in last Sunday's clash against Canberra.

The 33-year-old Lillyman, who joined the Vodafone Warriors in 2009 after 62 games for North Queensland, was converted into a front rower in 2011.

Of his 187 appearances for the club so far, 151 have been as a starting prop or as an interchange front rower, more than 130 of them with Matulino in the trenches with him.

On the field for 62 minutes against the Raiders, Lillyman carted the ball up 15 times for 155 metres – the best of any forward in the match – and added 26 tackles. He is now averaging close to 128 metres and 26 tackles across his 20 games this year, well up on his numbers in the previous three seasons.

Lillyman becomes just the 112th 250-game player in the competition's 109-year history.

Paired up with him on Friday night is Sam Lisone, who'll be starting for the fourth game on end after being used almost exclusively as an interchange prop during his 60-game career.

Matulino's absence results in a first-grade return for Charlie Gubb, who has come back from a hernia operation.

Last used at NRL level in the 11th-round match against St George Illawarra in Hamilton, Gubb made 128 metres from 15 carries for the club's 26-16 Intrust Super Premiership win over Wentworthville on

Sunday. He's set for his 38th career outing on Friday night.

Also named to come back into the side this week is veteran standoff Kieran Foran, who missed the Canberra clash with a shoulder complaint. His availability sees Mason Lino move to an extended bench with Ata Hingano in line to team up in the halves with Foran for the first time. Apart from Gubb and Lino, the others named on the eight-man bench are Issac Luke, Chris Satae, Isaiah Papali'i, Charnze Nicoll-Klokstad, James Ball and Toaf Siple.

After losing four games on end, South Sydney has beaten St George Illawarra 26-24 and Canterbury-Bankstown 28-14 to move to 11th on the table on 20 points, two ahead of the 12th-placed Vodafone Warriors.

The Vodafone Warriors' record against the Rabbitohs is their second best against all current teams in the competition. They have an 18-12 advantage in 30 encounters and 9-6 in 15 away matches at various venues (ANZ Stadium, Sydney Football Stadium, North Sydney Oval and nib Stadium in Perth).

Souths has won each of the last five games – two in Auckland and three in Perth – but this will be the first time they've met at ANZ Stadium since 2011 (when the Vodafone Warriors won 48-16). It's the fourth season in a row that the clubs have met just once.

Vodafone Warriors

1 Roger Tuivasa-Sheck
2 David Fusitu'a
3 Blake Ayshford
4 Solomone Kata
5 Ken Maumalo
6 Kieran Foran
7 Mafoa'aeata Hingano

8 Jacob Lillyman
9 Nathaniel Roache
10 Sam Lisone
11 Bunty Afoa
12 Ryan Hoffman
13 Simon Man-nering
Interchange:

14 Issac Luke
15 Chris Satae
16 Isaiah Papali'i
17 Charlie Gubb
18 Mason Lino
20 Toafofoa Siple
21 James Bell
22 Charnze Nicoll-Klokstad

in the Stacey Jones Lounge



Peter Ulrich well known musician sings HAPPY BIRTHDAY to Cooper Feasey.



Cooper Feasey's Birthday cake another fine production from Trudy Warrington.



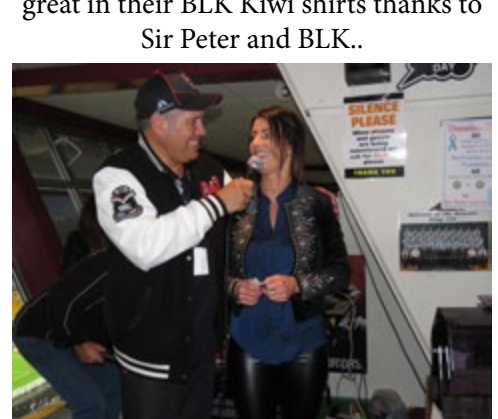
Cooper Feasey, Brad Keane and Charlie Hussey in the Stacey Jones Lounge celebrating Coopers birthday and looking great in their BLK Kiwi shirts thanks to Sir Peter and BLK..



Dexter Traill dissects the game with Nathaniel Roache and Sam Lisone.



Fleur Finlayson and Lorraine McKee with the jersey.



Fleur Finlayson draws a number for Dexter Traill.



Ivan Vicelich New Zealands most capped international footballer with 88 caps talks to Dexter Traill.



James Gavet talks with Sir Peter.



James Gavet, Butch, Patrick Sipley, Charnze Nicoll -Klokstad.



Jesse Lee Monie daughter of premiership winning coach and Warriors original coach.



Joyce is very happy with the score board.

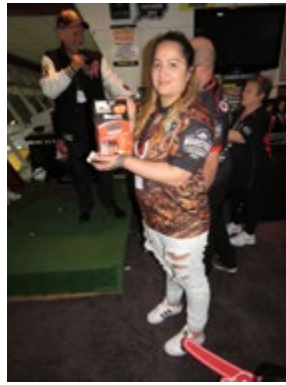


Linda Dunn with Dexter Traill.

in the Stacey Jones Lounge



Mark and son Jamie who flew up from Nelson to the game on Sunday.



Mereuna Trlin gets the famous BBQ cleaner.



Nathaniel Roache, Sir Peter and Sam Lisone.



Adam Worth wins the Kiwi T shirt.



Reg Cethers talks tries to explain why he is wearing Raiders gear.



Sir Peter talks with Charnze Nicoll-Klokstad and Patrick Siple.



Steve and son Ricky flew up from Christchurch for the game.



Earl, the barber with the sharpest pair of shoes in the lounge.



The Matson Family have been Stacey Jones lounge members for 3 years. It's a family affair, they come to every home game from West Auckland..



These boys play for the Howick Hornets. They just came straight from winning their Grandfinal u1213 Restricted to support the Vodafone Warriors..



The happy punters finished the tour of Mount Smart Stadium with my wingman Dexter, or should I say senior Sergeant Dexter Trail. Have a good look because there are a few famous faces.





AUSTRALIAN AND New Zealand have produced many great athletes over a wide spectrum of sports and Sally Pearson, OAM, is right up there with the best of them. The 30 year Queenslander won the ladies 100 metres hurdle race at the 2017 World Championships in London on Saturday (Sunday morning in our part of the world). It took a lot of courage to win this event as she has been plagued with injuries, including a broken wrist along with hamstring and Achilles problems, over the past couple of years. Born at Paddington in Sydney, Sally and her mother, Anne, moved to the Gold Coast when she was nine. Anne, who has always stayed in the background, is a single mother and worked two jobs in the early days to help with the expenses incurred in her daughter's athletics. Sally showed above average ability at any early age and at 14 years of age, she won the Australian 100 metres and 90 metre hurdles youth titles. At the 2003 World Youth Championships held in July, in Canada, she won the 100 metre hurdles event and just a month later, still just 16, she ran for Australia at open level in the four by 100 metres relay at the 2003 World Championships in France. For several years she continued to compete in both the 100 metres and 100 metre hurdles events but for the 2008 Beijing Olympics, she concentrated on just the 100 metre hurdles. In the final, she collected the Silver medal, finishing 0.1 seconds behind the winner, Dawn Harper of the USA. From then on plenty of success came her way in the 100 metre hurdles event. She won Gold at the 2010 Commonwealth Games in Delhi, Gold at the 2011, World Championships in South Korea, Gold at the 2012 London Olympics, Gold at the 60 metre Hurdles at the 2012 World Indoor titles in Turkey and Gold at the 2014 Commonwealth Games at Glasgow. Always friendly, bubbly and happy, Sally is a very popular Australian. She married her long time high school sweetheart, Kieran, a Gold Coast plumber, in 2010 and for the last few years he has often travelled with his wife. The girl who won the Gold at the 2008 Olympics, has been a long term rival and close friend of Sally's. Now Dawn Harper-Nelson, she finished second to Sally in London on Saturday.

Another Australian girl to do well at the World Championships in London was discuss thrower, Dani Stevens (nee Samuels). She collected a Silver medal with a throw of 69.64 metres. As a 21 year old, in Berlin at the 2009 World Championships, Dani won a Gold Medal in the Woman's discus, while she also won Gold in this event at the Glasgow Commonwealth Games. All Australians are hoping that both Sally and Dani can repeat their successes at Glasgow and win another Gold at the 2018 Commonwealth Games on the Gold Coast in April next year. Sally will be 31 at that time and it would be great to retire with another Gold medal. Dani will still be 29 in April and she has said she intends to continue to at least the next Olympics which are in Tokyo in July 2020.

The Storm-Roosters clash in Melbourne on Saturday night was a tough and very physical clash. With their 16-13 win, Melbourne have probably wrapped up this season's minor premiership and this will be confirmed if they defeat the Knights this Saturday in Newcastle. If they do finish on top of the ladder, it will be interesting to see what coach Craig Bellamy does in his last two games before the play-offs begin. The Storm play the Rabbitohs and the Raiders both in Melbourne and if the minor premiership is sealed, Bellamy may decide to rest some of his troops to give them time to recover from niggling injuries that many players carry at this time of the year.

With the final eight teams and their positions in the eight, far from being decided, all games this weekend are important but there are two that really stand out. They are the Broncos-Dragons clash in Brisbane on Friday night and the Raiders-Panthers battle at Canberra on Sunday afternoon. If the Raiders lose, their final eight position will be in jeopardy and the same applies to the Panthers. The Dragons know they have to beat the Broncos and then the Panthers and the Bulldogs to have any chance to be in the play-offs. So it is desperation time in both Brisbane and Canberra.

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South Sydney were impressive in their 28-14 win over the Bulldogs on Thursday night. The two younger Burgess brothers, twins George and Tom, now 25, were excellent, as was the oldest Sam, 28. In only 31 minutes on the paddock, Tom ran for a team high of 161 metres and made 17 tackles, while George ran for 122 metres and made 19 tackles in his 41 minutes of play. Second rower, Cameron Murray, 19, playing only his sixth first grade game, is a star of the future. He played 69 minutes against the Bulldogs and made 39 tackles and ran for 117 metres. He is already a junior Kangaroo and an Australian Schoolboy representative, while he has also played for NSW at under 20, under 18 and under 16 levels. Bryson Goodwin collected the first of Souths four tries against the Bulldogs and now had nine tries and five goals (46 points) this season. Now 31, the son of Lord Ted Goodwin (4 Tests), Bryson will join English club Leigh next year. Bryson has played 173 first grade matches and scored 546 points (70 tries, 133 goals). Because of his father's Maori heritage, he has also played 10 Tests for New Zealand, scoring 60 points (8 tries, 14 goals). Currently Souths sit in 11th position on the ladder and in their present form, they will be more than competitive in their last three games with the Warriors, Storm and Eels.

A penalty goal in the last few minutes allowed the Keighley Cougars to snatch a 26-all draw with the Toronto Wolfpack at Keighley on Sunday. In their three super eight games, the Wolfpack have only collected three of six possible competition points and appear to have stumbled on the quest to gain promotion next season. They went through the regular season undefeated but in their last three games, have managed a win, a draw and a loss. They play their final four Super 8 games at home in Toronto and still should gain a place in the second division next year. The Wolfpack's final four games this year, all Saturday fixtures at Lamport Stadium Toronto, are against Newcastle (19 August), Whitehaven (2 September), Barrow (9 September) and Doncaster (16 September).

More Pics from the Stacey Jones Lounge



Former kiwi Richie Barnett, David Letele aka Buttabeau, Dale Husband and Tame Iti in the Stacey Jones lounge on Sunday.



With my mates Tame Iti and Dennis O'Reilly.



McAuley college girls with Mad Butcher just before they went on the tour of Mt Smart stadium with Dexter.

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



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80 Years Ago: George Nepia's Test

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)



LEGENDARY RUGBY union fullback George Nepia will always be associated with the 1937 New Zealand rugby league season, and in particular the spectacular 16-15 victory by the Kiwis over the Kangaroos in the second Test at Carlaw Park. As a teenager Nepia had been the star of the All Black Invincibles tour of Britain more than a decade earlier. He later switched codes to play rugby league in England and had returned to Auckland earlier in 1937. Meanwhile, the Kangaroos arrived in the city for two Tests and a match against New Zealand Maori at Carlaw Park on their way to tour Britain and, for the first time, newcomer France.

Nepia did not feature in the selectors' plans for the first Test, won 12-8 by the Kangaroos on what their managers described as "a sea of mud". In fact, Nepia was on a promotional visit to Christchurch, where he played a club game for Hornby against Addington and for Canterbury against Inangahua, a West Coast sub-league. Steve Watene, the first Maori to captain a New Zealand team at rugby league – and probably any other sport – had led the Kiwis in the first Test from fullback but he reverted to loose forward for the midweek Maori match. Nepia returned north to assume the Maori fullback and goal-kicking responsibilities.

Maori rugby league was experiencing a revival in the mid-1930s. Although pioneers such as the Asher brothers, Albert and Ernie, and Jim Rukutai were to the forefront of the game's establishment in this country, the national Maori administration was not put in place until 1934. The 1936 Great Britain tourists were disappointed not to have arranged a game against the Maori and the clash with the Kangaroos was widely anticipated. That Nepia, now 32 years of age, was to play just added to the attraction. This time Carlaw Park was described as being in excellent condition, and it was the Maori who capitalised on it.

In what was arguably the proudest hour in Maori rugby league history, Watene's team beat Australia 16-5. Watene, stand-off Rangi Chase and forwards Jack Brodrick, Joe Cootes and Jack McLeod were backing up from the first Test, while the Australians – having been entertained on a trip to Rotorua and Ngaruawahia – fielded most of their fresh players. No replacements were permitted in those days and champion Maori centre Jack Hemi was a passenger for much of the match, while front-rower Cootes twice left the field to have his head bandaged. Chase and Brodrick scored tries and Nepia (four) and Hemi kicked goals.

Contemporary reports heaped praise on the Maori players and the match itself. "The match abounded with tactical skill, deadly tackling and speedy and vigorous manoeuvres," gushed one writer. "There was the magnificent fullback play of George Nepia, his superlative touch finding and lofty long-range goalkicking. Two powerful packs, averaging nearly 14 stone per man, battled strenuously and after a clever effort by the Australian backs to open up the play in the first half the Maori forwards, with more command of the set scrums, revealed enterprise under handicap. The home team rose to the occasion in grand style."

Unhappy with the first Test conditions and then a lop-sided penalty count in midweek, worse was in store for the Kangaroos in the second Test three days later. Watene was not available after the battering he had taken, so Nepia came in for his only rugby league Test. Before the kickoff Prime Minister Michael Savage and Minister for Finance Walter Nash addressed the 25,000 spectators and were given a fine reception. Not as rousing a reception, though, as that accorded the Kiwis after their 16-15 victory. Disaster struck the Kangaroos in the first half when ace forward Joe Pearce broke a leg attempting to tackle Nepia and later New Zealand-born forward Jim Gibbs damaged his ribs and also had to leave the field.

Fine weather and a firm playing surface should have counted against the Kiwis, but the home forwards dominated the under-powered Australian pack. Nepia received lavish praise for his solid defence, sound tactical sense and line kicking which extricated the Kiwis out of many awkward situations. One writer said Nepia's presence gave the New Zealand players a confidence they often lacked against overseas teams. Speedy wing Ces Davison (two), halfback Noel Bickerton and hooker Jack Satherley scored tries to go with Nepia's two goals.

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Davison, from Canterbury, ran away for three tries in the short series. His first-class football career in two rugby codes spanned 18 years and a world war until he played, at 36 years of age, for South Island against Great Britain in 1946. He was instrumental in forming a club at Rakaia, south of Christchurch, when the big road and rail bridges were being built and was one of three Rakaia players on the ill-fated 1939 Kiwis tour to Britain. Davison was also a national sprint champion and later an athletics official. He was chief timekeeper when Peter Snell set world 800 metres and 880 yards world records at Lancaster Park in 1962.

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By Miles Davis

Mason Lino in action.
www.photosport.nz

Warriors Lament

I WENT TO Mt Smart on Sunday keeping the faith. Not that the Warriors would make the play-offs but that they would ruin the Raiders' season just like they had ruined their own. My faith proved misguided to say the least.

The definition of a true fan is one who still supports a team no matter what the result. Loyalty is the key. The lows that come with seasons like this merely serve to make the good ones feel even better. A true fan however has every right to critique his team when they have a poor season. As I have said before, professional sports teams are there because of the fans and for the fans. The players may be the focus but they come and go while the fans stay for a lifetime. The amateur game is about the players.

So what about this season horribilus? Over the last few weeks the tepid performances of our beloved Vodafone Warriors have sucked the passion out of even the most ardent supporters. Of course the hard core turned up as usual but I have never encountered such a flat atmosphere before kick-off at Mt Smart. Unfortunately the team did little to lift the spirits and once they went behind early on it was mainly a downhill ride.

The key players have largely under-performed. Losing Shaun Johnson was obviously a blow and confirmed that without him the Vodafone Warriors are a weaker side. Kieran Foran for me has been a major disappointment. A couple of encouraging performances early on flattered to deceive and he has not lifted the side as many of us had hoped. Granted his forward pack has not given him the optimum impetus but even so he has been a disappointment.

Isaac Luke is another who has failed to reach the potential we know he has and his relegation to the bench was hardly a shock. Roger Tuivasa-Sheck has started to regain his form after a long lay-off but has not had the platform to really damage the opposition. The jury is out on his captaincy (it still seems to be Simon Manner- ing who is laying down the law most of the time) but I am sure he will grow in the role.

The coaching staff need to do a bit of soul-searching and look for areas in which they can grow and develop. Failure to do so will likely result in another poor season next year. I believe they deserve another season to prove themselves but they must put their hands up and take a fair share of the responsibility for increasingly poor performances.

I remember going back to England 6 years ago to watch my beloved West Ham get relegated from the Premier League. 4,500 of us fanatics travelled up to Wigan and sang the whole game as we went from 2-0 up at half-time to lose 2-3. The following week was our last game of the season, at home to Sunderland. We lost 3-0 but the support from the packed terraces was deafening. The point the fans were making that was no matter how poor the team on the park was the club would go on. It was the club and the fans that matter not the transient bunch of professionals on the field. Let's all get to Mt Smart for the last game of the season against Manly and make a noise that lets the World know that the Vodafone Warriors will be back again next year. And the year after.



By Miles Davis

Olsen Filipaina

POLYNESIAN PLAYERS are a huge and influential part of the NRL nowadays but it wasn't always the case and it was the son of a boxer who helped make the breakthrough.

Olsen Filipaina cut his rugby league teeth at the South Auckland club of Mangere East. A solid and stocky individual with thighs the size of Kauri trees that would frequently break tackles, he also possessed balance and pace. In 1977 he was named Auckland Premier Rugby League's Back of the Year and in 1978 won the Rothville Trophy for Player of the Year.

His impact saw him picked for representative honours and he was part of the legendary Auckland side that in 1977 defeated Australia, Great Britain and France in the space of just 20 days (surely a feat that will never be repeated). 1977 was also the year that he debuted for the Kiwis.

In 1978 he was a standout in the Kiwis' tour to Australia and received offers to play over there but decided against it as he was not impressed by what he had seen. "It was too fast and everyone was in a hurry to go nowhere" he later said.

However with a family to look after in 1980 he succumbed to an offer from the Balmain Tigers and headed to Sydney. His first day was a bit of a shock as he encountered a brutal training regime that was alien to the more relaxed efforts he had experienced in Auckland. A bit of a home-boy he was also extremely home-sick and was desperate to return home. He pleaded with the club to be allowed to return home and even offered to pay his own fare. When the club refused he rang his mother Sissie and she told him to stay and knuckle down, which of course he did.

He was soon to find that training was to be the least of his worries as he encountered disgraceful racism at every turn. Even some of his own team-mates targeted him at training in an attempt to injure him and put him out of the game. Despite the constant, vile abuse he never retaliated or hit out. "If I had punched someone and got sent off, people don't care why. It would shame my parents and family name and as one of the first Polynesians, I didn't want to give us a 'troublemaker' stereotype. If you called me 'nigger' or 'black bastard', I would take your number and if I don't get you this game, I'll wait the whole season and I'll get you in the end."

His ploy must have had some effect as in 1981 and 1982 he was voted by his fellow players as the hardest guy to tackle and the hardest hitter.

In 1984, after 77 games and 19 tries for the Tigers, he moved to Eastern Suburbs. It was not a happy time for him in club football as he spent the season consigned to the reserves working days as a rubbish collector. Despite not playing first-grade he was selected for the Kiwis by Graham Lowe who knew his true worth and how to get it out of him. Lowe also decided to move the line-breaking centre to stand-off to mark the legendary Wally Lewis on his own patch at Lang Park. The Kiwis lost 26-20 but Filipaina's performance was so...

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... good that he was awarded Man of the Match. After the game he wanted to introduce himself to the King of Lang Park but was snubbed by Lewis who had been outshone on his own turf. "I tried to introduce myself and he pushed my hand away and made an enemy. I had beaten him on his own turf, all day I was in his face and he couldn't do anything. Now my goal was to mutilate him in front of a Kiwi crowd."

The second test resulted in another close loss with a last-minute try from John Ribot sealing it for the Aussies but once again Filipaina was named man of the match.

The 3rd test saw him get the victory he sorely wanted as the mighty Kangaroos were demolished 18-0 at Carlaw Park. Filipaina was named Man of the Series and to this day has never spoken a word to Wally Lewis. I like to think that win his performances in that series had said everything for him.

After a year with Balmain he spent a couple of seasons with North Sydney but without commanding a regular first-grade spot.

He played a total of 50 games for the Kiwis including 29 tests but will always be remembered for the man who dethroned the King.

A humble man he still does the rubbish round in Sydney he has been doing for well over 30 years. Sir Peter Leitch, one his supporters from his days with the Man-gere Hawks, says of him "There is no nicer, more humble, more respectful guy. I love him like a son."

In 2007 he was inducted in the NZRL Legends of League and he is certainly a legend in the mind of this over-staying Pom.

Olsen gives it to the Aussies

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZIQZZkmjMn0>

Battling the Kangaroos

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jl-FPBRteDU>



As a thank you, Olsen presented this trophy to the Butcher.



THE BUTCHERS award for the best local rugby league write up goes to the Greymouth star for their edition on Monday, May 15. Really comprehensive coverage of the local West Coast club finals, including a double page spread of photos. Looked like a cracker of a day and great to see the game thriving at grassroots on the Coast.





By Shane Hurndell
Hawke's Bay Today
Sports Reporter

Unicorns Pulled From Mid Central Comp

MARKED MAN: Bridge Pa utility Willie Schuster attracted plenty of Omahu Huia defenders when he carried. PHOTO/HAWKE'S BAY TODAY

A STUTE RUGBY league coaches will tell you it sometimes pays to take a step backwards before taking a couple forward to achieve the ultimate goal.

Rugby League Hawke's Bay operations and administration manager Mike Tamati needs to be congratulated for a step he has taken to help improve the code in the province. Tamati has pulled the Hawke's Bay Unicorns out of the Mid Central inter-provincial competition with two of their three games remaining.

While some may see it as a backward step and it is one can see the logic behind Tamati's move. He wants to show the coaching staff and players last month's 86-6 loss to the Wellington Orcas wasn't acceptable and he didn't want to see repeats of that debacle in the game which was scheduled against Manawatu in Palmerston North on Sunday and the third which was to be played against Taranaki in Hawera next month.

"We're confident we will have two teams instead of the one like we had this year in next year's Mid Central Coast to Coast club comp and that will hopefully get players who want to play for the Unicorns better prepared for the inter-provincial comp," Tamati said.

Tamati and fellow Bay officials were hoping last weekend's first round of the Spring Competitions would produce enough fit players to form a competitive Unicorns team for the next two fixtures but the standard of the premier fixtures was far from acceptable.

Defending champions and the only Bay team to play in the Coast to Coast comp, Bridge Pa, walloped last year's runners-up Omahu Huia 58-14.

The Omahu side only had two players, scrumhalf Kavana Ioane and backrower Tam, a Hawkins, who had the necessary fitness levels to compete at this level. Fullback Jarome Mareikura and backrower Ramiha Smiler were prominent for Bridge Pa.

Omahu co-coach Henry Heke said his team is aiming to make the semifinals in the six-team comp as this would be an appropriate way to celebrate the club's 40th anniversary season. There's a lot of work to be done if this goal is to be ticked off.

In the other premier games Dannevirke Tigers celebrated their return to the Bay after several seasons playing in Manawatu with a 36-32 victory against the 2014 and '15 champions Napier Panthers and Tamatea beat Kahuranaki 44-34.

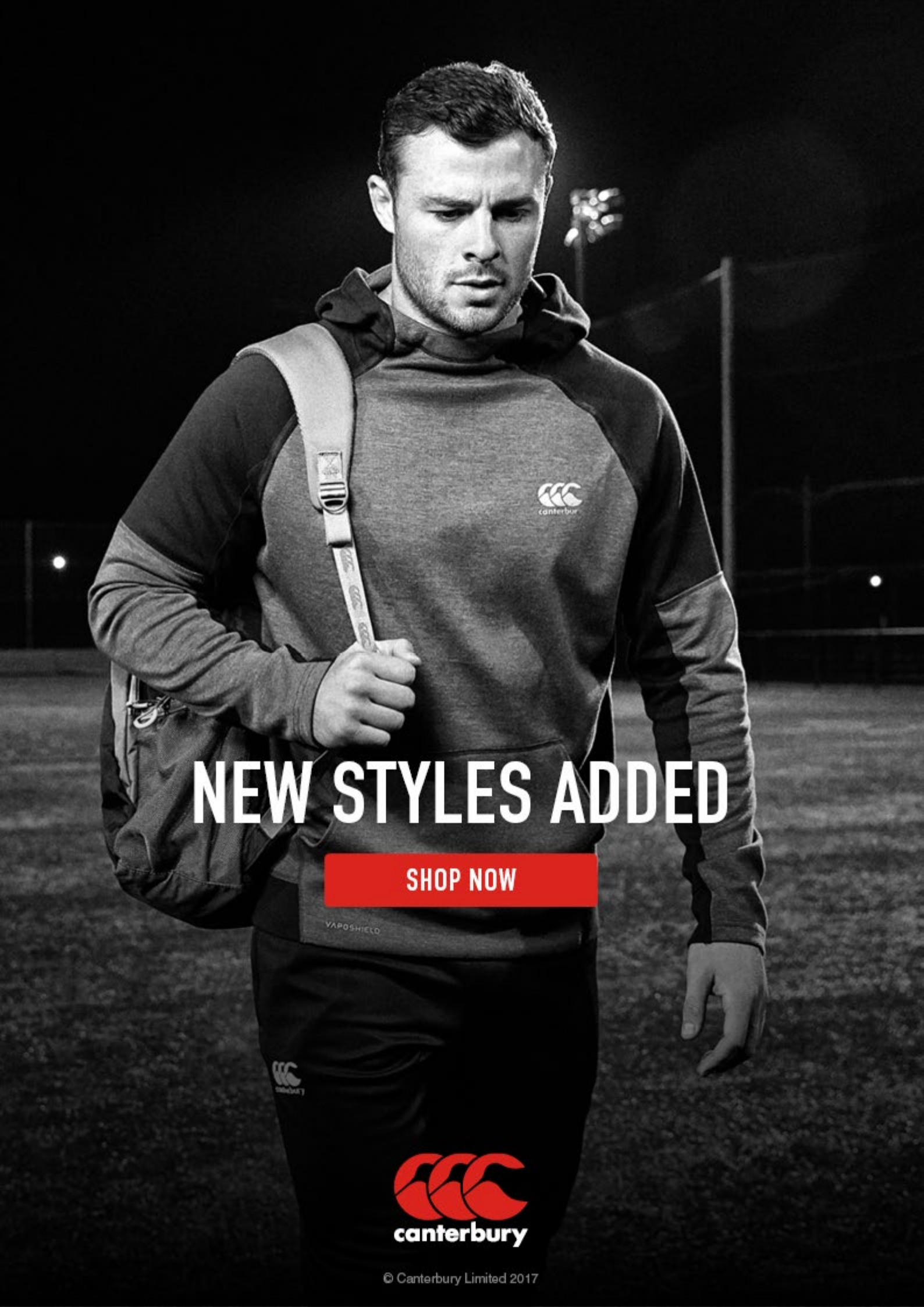
In the reserve grade games Maraenui beat Flaxmere 42-26, Clive beat Te Awhina by default and Bridge Pa beat MAC 52-20. Hawke's Bay's most successful club coach Waka Leonard, 78, is coaching Maraenui.

Leonard is in his 43rd year of coaching and has won 19 Hawke's Bay premier men's titles.

Women's matches saw Bridge Pa thrash Dannevirke Tigers 56-4 and Tamatea beat Hastings 42-32.

The main rugby action in the Bay last weekend saw the Hastings Boys' High School 1st XV draw their Super 8 final against Hamilton Boys' High School in Hastings 12-all. Because no extra time was played in the televised final the trophy is shared.

Hastings Boys' High School have a rest this weekend and begin their quest to retain the Hurricanes region title on August 26.



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Taniwharau Triumph Over Hamilton City Tigers In Hard-Fought Waikato Rugby League Final

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

THE RUGBY League World Cup team were in Huntly last Saturday as Taniwharau held off the Hamilton City Tigers to win a thrilling Waikato rugby league final 16-14.

Taniwharau lifted the A.S. Muir Memorial Shield after completing an unbeaten season with the two-point win at Davies Park.

They had led 16-0 at the halftime break after scoring three tries in the last 10 minutes of the first half.

Fullback Damian Darlington opened the scoring with the custodian showing some great speed to dot down after taking an inside ball.

Hamilton City came close to hitting back immediately with fullback Aaron Jolley showing some individual brilliance to leap high to claim a bomb before offloading to a teammate but the scrambling Taniwharau defenders managed to save a try.

Shortly after that, Taniwharau crossed for a second try with centre Mahinga Rangi flying down the left edge before putting winger Jordan Tai Rakena over in the corner.

Taniwharau completed the flurry of points with halfback Darren Kingi beating the Tigers defence to score after Jolley dropped a towering spiral bomb.

Nine minutes into the second half, Jolley scored Hamilton City's first points when he crossed for a try.

Jolley's try gave the Tigers momentum but they were made to wait over 20 minutes for more points by Taniwharau's stubborn resistance.

With less than 10 minutes to go, Tamainu Huirama crashed over after a break from Jolly but the try went

unconverted to leave the margin at six points.

Shortly after winger Daniel Taungakava finished brilliantly in the left corner with a diving finish but captain Vaughan Calcinai couldn't kick the difficult sideline conversion that would have levelled the scores.

Despite Hamilton City's best efforts, they couldn't come with more points with Taniwharau hanging on grimly to claim the title.

Waikato Rugby League Community Snap Up Rugby League World Cup Tickets As Thrilling Club Finale Plays Out

Off the field, the Waikato Rugby League community took advantage of cash and eftpos ticket sales at Davies Park on finals day with over 150 tickets to the Rugby League World Cup (RLWC2017) sold.

We'll be doing similar cash and eftpos ticket sales promotions at markets in Auckland and selected club finals days around the country so keep posted to this newsletter for a full schedule.

Rugby League World Cup 2017 tickets can also be bought at www.rlwc2017.com



Malcolme Noda - Taniwharau with AS Muir Trophy.





St Paul's Through To Play Kelston Boys' In 2017 Sas College Rugby League Grand Final

By Talei Anderson
ARL

ST PAUL'S College have secured their spot in the 2017 SAS College Rugby League grand final next Wednesday, after taking down third-placed Southern Cross 16-6 in the premier championship semi-final yesterday afternoon.

St Paul's captain Daetyn Tanuvasa said composure was key to winning the game.

"We knew we needed to play at our best if we wanted to make this year's grand final... it was always going to be a tough one because they [Southern Cross] wanted it just as bad," he said.

"In the end, it came down to holding onto the ball. I think the wet weather caused a lot of issues for both sides today and we just managed to hold onto it a little longer.

"There were times where they could have got us on the edges, but we stayed strong on defence so I'm proud of the boys' efforts."

More success for the central Auckland school also saw them claim the under 15s 9-a-side division with a close 22-18 victory over Avondale College.

Manurewa made easy work of Western Springs 52-4 proceeding through to play Wesley College in the premier plate grand final next Wednesday, and Pakuranga will take on James Cook after edging past Southern Cross 7-6 in extra time in the Senior A semi-final.

The Premier Championship, Plate and Senior A grand finals will all be played next Wednesday August 16 at Mt Smart Stadium #2. A gold coin entry and free for those in school uniform.

All three games will also be streamed live online at <http://www.aucklandleague.co.nz>

SAS College Rugby League results for Wednesday August 19

Premier Championship (semi-final)

St Paul's 16 Southern Cross 6 HT: 12-6

Premier Plate (semi-final)

Manurewa 52 Western Springs 4

Senior A (semi-final)

Southern Cross 6 Pakuranga 7

U/15 9-a-side (final)

St Paul's 22 Avondale 18

Southern Cross 22 Sir Edmund Hillary 24

SAS College Rugby League grand final fixtures for Wednesday August 16

Where: Mt Smart Stadium #2

Premier Championship

Kelston Boys' v St Paul's (7.00pm kick-off)

Premier Plate

Wesley v Manurewa (5.45pm kick-off)

Senior A

James Cook v Pakuranga (4.30pm kick-off)

*Entry - gold coin donation, free for those in school uniform.

All games will be streamed live online at

<http://www.aucklandleague.co.nz>

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7:00PM CHAMPIONSHIP GRAND FINAL KELSTON BOYS V ST PAULS



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Christian Tuipulotu named SAS College Rugby League Player of the Year

By Talei Anderson
ARL

ST PAUL'S College Christian Tuipulotu has been named the 2017 SAS College Rugby League Player of the Year at the Auckland Rugby League awards breakfast this morning.

The 16-year-old year 12 student has played a starring role for the school this year, advancing through to the premier championship grand final to be played at Mt Smart Stadium #2 this Wednesday August 16 (7.00pm kick-off).

Tuipulotu was also awarded second rower of the year in the SAS College Rugby League 1st XIII Team of the Year.

"I'm really enjoying the college competition this year," said Tuipulotu.

"There's a lot of history behind St Paul's - especially playing rivalries Kelston Boys' in the grand final - so I'm sure it will be a good game this Wednesday."

A valued member in his second year of playing for St Paul's 1st XIII team has seen him embrace the vice captaincy role for 2017.

Other accolades include being named in the under 16s NZ Merit Team (2016) MVP for the National Youth Finals (2016) and captain of the under 16s NZ Resident Team (2017). He is also part of the Vodafone Warriors' Development which has seen him train with the under 20's side.

Junior Fiu from St Paul's College was awarded Premier Coach of the Year for the second year straight, while Wesley's Rob Short was awarded Manager of the Year.

St Paul's centre Mike Williams who was named in the 1st XIII Team of the Year also won top try scorer with 8 tries, while Jaelin Murray took home top goal kicker with 24. Konrad Tu'ua from Kelston Boys' was awarded top points scorer with 54.

Southern Cross swept the major awards in the Senior A competition with Damien Murgatroyd winning top try scorer (5 tries) and Ropati Tupai winning top goal kicker (14 goals) and points scorer (38 points).

Sir Edmund Hillary were awarded the fair play school award for the division while Jacob Tuisalegi from Pa-kuranga College was awarded MVP.

The SAS College Rugby League Premier Championship, Plate and Senior A grand finals will be played this Wednesday August 16 at Mt Smart Stadium #2.

Continued on next page...

Full list of winners below.

U/15 nine-aside

Manager of the Year – Sam Tanielu (St Paul's College)

Coach of the Year – Faataloga Vaeluaga (Manurewa High School)

MVP – Sione Moala (St Paul's College)

Senior A

Top try scorer (5 tries) – Damien Murgatroyd (Southern Cross)

Top goal kicker (14 goals) – Ropati Tupai (Southern Cross)

Top points scorer (38 points) – Ropati Tupai (Southern Cross)

Manager of the Year – Kevin Long (Sir Edmund Hillary)

Coach of the Year – Nicole Jensen (Pakuranga College)

Fair play school award – Sir Edmund Hillary

MVP – Jacob Tuisalegi (Pakuranga College)

Premier 1st XIII

Referee of the Year – Raima Koti

Top try scorer (8 tries) – Mike Williams (St Paul's College)

Top goal kicker (24 goals) – Jaelin Murray (St Paul's College)

Top points scorer (54 points) – Konrad Tu'ua (Kelston Boys' High School)

Manager of the Year – Rob Short (Wesley College)

Coach of the Year – Junior Fiu (St Paul's College)

Team of the Year

1. Star Toa (St Paul's College)
2. Okusitino Taahafe (Papatoetoe High School)
3. Mike Williams (St Paul's College)
4. Paea Fotu (Southern Cross Campus)
5. Talesi Lovo (Wesley College)
6. Kadiyae Ioka (Kelston Boys' High School)
7. Konrad Tu'ua (Kelston Boys' High School)
8. Sione Ngahe (St Paul's College)
9. Johnny Falelua-Malio (Kelston Boys' High School)
10. Antonio Aufai (St Paul's College)
11. Christian Tuipulotu (St Paul's College)
12. Aiden Aue (Kelston Boys' High School)
13. Larryon Tavita (Kelston Boys' High School)

2017 SAS College Player of the Year

Christian Tuipulotu (St Paul's College)



1st 13 Team of the Year.

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Mangere East Hawks survive the Fox Memorial

By Talei Anderson
ARL

THE MANGERE East Hawks will remain in the SAS Fox Memorial Premiership for another season, after taking down the Marist Saints 33-20 at Murray Halberg Park last Saturday.

Separated by just one point on the competition ladder, it was a game with so much on the line. For the Hawks and Te Atatu Roosters, it was a must win if they wanted to avoid relegation.

Mangere East were leading at half time, giving them hope that relegation wasn't on the cards. But a 6-4 lead to the Roosters in their match against Glenora left the future for both clubs dependant on their result.

Mangere East kept ahead, but Te Atatu couldn't stay afloat going down 10-6 at full-time. Te Atatu's loss coupled with a Mangere East win gives the south Auckland club a one-point lead on the ladder securing their spot in the Fox Memorial for 2018 and Te Atatu relegated to the Sharman Cup.

Mangere East captain Feao Lavemai said it was a rollercoaster of a game.

"It came down to the very last minute for us," he said.

"We stuck to our structures and game plan for the week and fortunately for us, secured a much-needed win."

"Some of the boys got a little too excited throughout the game, but we managed to stay on top for the 80 minutes.

"We just found out we're staying in the Fox next year so we're just really happy," he quipped.

With the top-four being confirmed in both the Fox Memorial and Sharman Cup Premiership, spots in the grand finals will be up for grabs this weekend.

In the SAS Fox Memorial Premiership, Pt Chevalier (1st) and Glenora (2nd) will play in the first semi-final to see who will advance through to the 2017 grand final. Mt Albert (3rd) and Howick (4th) go head-to-head for a life and a second chance to make the championships top three. The winner of Game B will play the losing team from Game A to see who will advance to the 2017 grand final.

In the Sharman Cup Premiership, Otahuhu will play Bay Roskill, and Ponsonby will play Otara.

There's plenty of finals footy to catch over the weekend and rugby league fans can catch all the action at Mt Smart Stadium #2 from 11.15am with entry for kids under 16 just \$2 and adults \$8 (gates open at 9.30am).

From junior grand finals to the Fox Memorial Premiership, all five games will be streamed live online on the ARL website for those who can't make it on the day.

Continued on next page...

ARL results for Saturday August 12

SAS Fox Memorial: Round 18
Northcote 20 Mt Albert 16
Te Atatu 6 Glenora 10
Marist 20 Mangere East 33
Papakura 12 Howick 16
Pt Chevalier 46 Richmond 24

*Mangere East's win coupled with Te Atatu's loss moves them one point ahead on the table to secure their spot in the SAS Fox Memorial Premiership for 2018. After a year in first division, Te Atatu will be relegated to the Sharman Cup.

Crown Lift Trucks Sharman Cup Premiership:
Round 14
Ellerslie 6 Bay Roskill 84
Papatoetoe 4 Ponsonby 92
New Lynn 16 Otahuhu 50
Manurewa 20 Otara 20

Crown Lift Trucks Sharman Cup Plate: Semi-finals
East Coast Bays 17 Waitemata 18 *Waitemata advance through to the Sharman Cup Plate grand final.
Manukau 36 Hibiscus Coast 20 *Manukau will play East Coast Bays in semi-final 2 to see who will play Waitemata in the 2017 Sharman Cup Plate grand final.

ARL fixtures for Saturday August 19

SAS Fox Memorial: Semi-finals
Pt Chevalier v Glenora @ Mt Smart Stadium #2 | 2.30pm
Mt Albert v Howick @ Mt Smart Stadium #2 | 12.45pm

Crown Lift Trucks Sharman Cup Premiership:
Semi-finals
Otahuhu v Bay Roskill @ Bert Henham Park | 2.30pm
Ponsonby v Otara @ Victoria Park | 2.30pm



Manu awaits the ball.



Manu evades a would be Hull FC tackler.

Manu at his new club
Salford Red Devils.



Watch Manu's post game interview after his second game with the Red Devils. Click here: <http://sirpeterleitch.co.nz/videos.php?p=595>



CRL Men's Grand Final

By Will Evans

LINWOOD KEAS have won back-to-back grand finals for the first time in the club's history, powering to a 34-20 triumph in the 2017 Canterbury Rugby League men's premier decider over archrivals Hornby Panthers at Linfield Park.

The Panthers surged to a 16-4 advantage after a dominant opening 20 minutes, but their game fell away through unforced errors and the Keas rallied to lead by eight at the break following a frenetic five-minute period before halftime.

The Keas got off to a dream start, marching upfield on their first set of six before hooker Alani Kakoi sliced through for an early opener.

But the Panthers' reply was swift, big winger Chris Eric latching onto a Sean Spooner grubber to level up and Craig Smith slotting the conversion from out wide for a 6-4 lead.

Hornby's momentum continued when stand-in No.9 Tyrone Arona caught the Linwood defence napping to score, before second-rower Will Tafua charged through a hole on the fringes to extend the advantage to 12 points.

But a mistake from Corey Lawrie provided the Keas with a prime attacking opportunity, which they took with both hands as fullback Erwin Sauni skipped through disorganised Panthers defence to dot down.

The decider settled into a set-for-set pattern as defence belatedly took over, until an in-goal error by Panthers fullback Dene Grace was pounced upon by Keas lock Mike Nicholls-Cane, levelling the scores.

Hornby looked certain to reclaim the lead a few minutes before the break when Charlie Charlie set off on a long intercept run, but retiring Linwood co-captain

Aga Fiso produced a heroic chase to ankle-tap the flying winger.

The Keas capitalised on Fiso's massive play when Joseph Purcell-Mika crashed over out wide, while Danny Latu scored on the halftime hooter for a 24-16 scoreline.

The defending champs came out firing in the second stanza, extending their advantage to 12 points through Will Yeow.

The Panthers had ample possession to work their way back into the contest, but the Keas' line-speed and resolute defence frustrated their comeback efforts.

Rampaging prop Jiordan Fidow-Kele effectively put the grand final out of reach at 34-16 when he barged over next to the posts with 15 minutes to go.

Tauvale Tauvale raced over for a consolation try in the dying minutes, but the Panthers' disappointment – particularly from the likes of veteran Lawrie, who was pitched into the halfback role with James Baxendale unavailable – post-match was palpable after a second straight grand final defeat at the hands of the Keas.

For Fiso, it was a dream way to go out before hanging up the boots, while Linwood's front-row workhorse Alex Todd was a deserving winner of the Mel Cooke Medal for man of the match, producing a typically inspirational display up front.

Linwood Keas 34 (Alani Kakoi, Erwin Sauni, Mike Nicholls-Cane, Joseph Purcell-Mika, Danny Latu, Will Yeow, Jiordan Fidow-Kele tries; Toi Sepuloni 2, Purcell-Mika goals) defeated Hornby Panthers 20 (Chris Eric, Tyrone Arona, Willie Tafua, Tauvale Tauvale tries; Craig Smith 2 goals) at Linfield Park, Sunday, August 13.



CRL Women's Grand Final

By Will Evans

PAPANUI TIGERS clinched back-to-back Canterbury Rugby League women's premiership triumphs with a 34-20 win over Linwood Keas in an entertaining grand final at Linfield Park.

The Keas were gutsy in defeat, but the Tigers' edge in experience and class – led by Kiwi Ferns representatives Corrina Whiley and Bunty Kuruwaka-Crowe – was telling in the eight-tries-to-four result.

Strapping centre Whiley was a standout recipient of the player of the match award, using her pace and power to bag two tries and lay on another. Elusive Tigers fullback Stacey Hildreth – a Ferns World Cup training squad member – also notched an eye-catching double.

The Tigers led 12-4 at halftime but a flying start to the second stanza put the match out of the Keas' reach.

"Personally I'm happy with how I went, but I'm also really proud of the team," Whiley beamed after her five-star showing.

"Coming in as favourites really put a lot of pressure on the girls, and I think it showed in the first half but our experience came through in the second half, which got us that win."

The Keas repelled the Tigers' early attacking forays with some outstanding goal-line defence, but struggled to build any pressure with the ball themselves. The defending champs hit the scoreboard first midway through the first half when halfback Charntay Poko barged through from close range.

The underdog Keas struck back, however, with five-eighth Cassie Siataga crashing over for the equaliser.

Papanui landed two critical blows before halftime to power to a 12-4 lead, hooker Kadison Robertson zip-ping over from dummy-half before Whiley producing a searing 30-metre solo effort.

The Tigers pushed further clear soon after the break when Hildreth latched onto an inch-perfect cross-field kick from Poko to score a spectacular try.

The Keas pegged the deficit back to eight points through Easter Savelio's determined four-pointer, but Whiley set up diminutive winger Michelle Wang for a swift reply out wide and blazed over for her second to put the Tigers firmly in control at 24-8.

Keas Supersub Savelio and quicksilver Tigers No.1 Hildreth each scored their second tries in quick succession, before Jerusha Whiley got on the scoresheet with a barnstorming run to extend the Keas' advantage to 34-14.

The gutsy Keas side would have the last say, with another World Cup training squad member, Sui Pauaraisa, grabbing their fourth try.

The dominant Tigers' victory saw them finish off an undefeated campaign in fitting fashion, but Kuruwaka-Crowe praised the Keas' pluck in providing a worthy grand final match-up.

"They stepped up, they've obviously been watching us and learning from it," the Kiwi Ferns prop and Tigers star said.

"The expectations are always really high for us, but we just wanted to get out there and have some fun."

Papanui Tigers 34 (Corrina Whiley 2, Stacey Hildreth 2, Charntay Poko, Kadison Robertson, Michell Wang, Jerusha Whiley tries; Poko goal) defeated Linwood Keas 20 (Easter Savelio 2, Cassie Siataga, Sui Pauaraisa tries; Siataga 2 goals).



Keas Great Fiso Signs Off With ‘Sattler Moment’

By Will Evans

BACK IN 2003, Penrith Panthers lock Scott Sattler etched his name into NRL folklore by chasing down Sydney Roosters winger Todd Byrne and bundling him into touch to turn the grand final.

Linwood Keas great Aga Fiso earned a similarly indelible place in the pantheon of Canterbury Rugby League grand final moments for an almost identical play in Sunday’s decider against Hornby Keas – in his last game before hanging up the boots.

Like Sattler’s iconic tackle, which provided the impetus for Penrith’s 18-6 upset of the Roosters after the scores were locked at 6-all, Fiso’s incredible chase and ankle-tap on Hornby winger Charlie Charlie was the decisive moment of the 2017 CRL grand final.

The Keas had fought back from a 12-point deficit to level the scores at 16-all when Charlie took an intercept near the Panthers’ 20-metre line and set off downfield. Big and fast, Charlie appeared tryline-bound...until Fiso entered the frame.

The 36-year-old back-rower showed trademark determination and remarkable pace to run down the flyer and take him to ground just on the Linwood’s side of halfway.

The Keas capitalised on Fiso’s momentum-turning play to post two tries in the dying minutes of the first half, before rumbling on to a convincing 34-20 victory courtesy of an ultra-committed second-half defensive display.

After hoisting the Pat Smith Trophy with co-captain Paul Sauni, modest hero Fiso admitted his try-saving effort had played a big part in swinging the grand final the Keas’ way.

“I think it was sort of the turning point, just that ‘never give up’ attitude,” Fiso said.

“I didn’t want to let the boys down, and I think if (Charlie) got through we would have struggled a bit.

“I just gave it (my) all, not for myself but what was best for my team. Our motto is 100 percent, and hopefully I left it all out there today.”

Veteran Linwood prop Alex Todd, who won the Mel Cooke Medal as man of the match for a typically non-stop display up front, was in awe of his long-time club and representative teammate.

“He’s an inspirational player, you know,” Todd said.

“A lot of guys look up to him and he’s going to be a massive loss next year.

Continued on next page...

Continued from previous page...

“It’s unbelievable what he does on and off the field – he’s a true leader.”

The widely-respected Fiso, named Canterbury Rugby League sportsman of the year and Rockcote Canterbury Bulls’ MVP in 2015, said being a part of the first back-to-back grand final triumphs in the Keas’ history was the perfect way to finish his career. s

“It’s a fairytale ending, I guess.

“The game could have gone either way ... I couldn’t have asked for anything more.

“I think it just comes down to the brotherhood and the family that we’ve got, and I’ve been able to finish off on a good note so it’s been great.

“It definitely doesn’t feel real, just seeing everyone here – it’s overwhelming.

“I’m pretty emotional, and I guess it won’t sink in until everything has calmed down and reality kicks in and celebrations start kicking off.

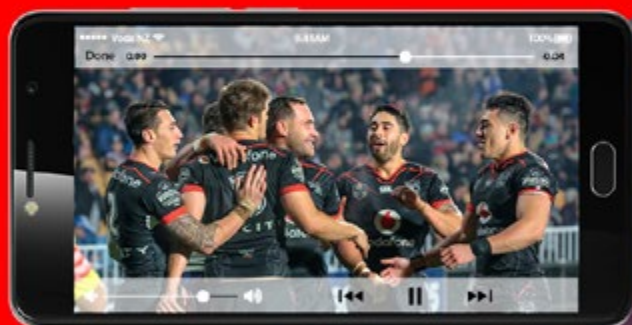
“But I’m very grateful that I’m able to be a part of this, not just for Linwood but all the supporters in the rugby league community.

“It’s just great to see everyone out here and it’s an awesome feeling to finish off like that, with all the community here and the first (grand) final in the East, it’s great to see different faces here supporting the game.”

We may have seen the last of Agaese Fiso in the Linwood strip but, like Scotty Sattler 14 years ago, the local legend provided one last lifelong memory for the Canterbury Rugby League’s premiership narrative.

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TODAY MARKS a major milestone on the road to the Hockey World League Final, with just 100 days until the event opens in Auckland.

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From Tuesday 15th August exclusive pre-sale tickets will be available to purchase through Ticketek for valued members of the Hockey New Zealand community before sales open to the general public on 22nd August.

General admission tickets as well as corporate hospitality packages will be on sale through the Ticketek website (www.ticketek.co.nz) from 10:00am on 15th August.

Please note your exclusive pre-sale promo code is:

HOCKEY

The Hockey World League Final is the culmination of four competition rounds played over two years, giving nations from all over the world a chance to compete for the overall championship.

As hosts the Vantage Black Sticks Women gain automatic qualification (despite also qualifying outright), while the other seven competitors have been determined by results at this year's Hockey World League Semi Finals in Brussels and Johannesburg.

The Vantage Black Sticks are joined in Pool A by seven-time World Cup winners Netherlands, USA (world ranking 4th) and Korea (world ranking 9th).

Defending Hockey World League champions Argentina contest Pool B alongside Rio Olympic gold medalists England, Germany (Rio bronze medalists) and China (world ranking 8th).

Further event information and confirmed match schedule for the Hockey World League Final is available on the International Hockey Federation (FIH) website www.fih.ch



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Fiso Elected New Interim Chairman Of The NZUTSRL

AFTER MISSING out on appearing at the Student Rugby League World Cup last month for the first time since the tournament began 31 years ago, the New Zealand Universities and Tertiary Students Rugby League Council unanimously appointed its current Patron John Fiso as the Interim Chairman after its incumbent Dr Barry Hughes stood down in the 'interests of student rugby league'.

A former NZU player and later founder and CEO of the New Zealand Institute of Sport, Mr Fiso's wealth of extensive skills and experience in Governance, Educational Leadership and Business was seen by the Council as one that would better grow the opportunities for Student Rugby League.

The only player to have made the World Student XIII for two separate nations (New Zealand in 1986 and Samoa in 1992), Mr Fiso, indicated his priorities will be to reorganise the council, improve student rugby league opportunities domestically and to expand the international tours programme.

Earlier this year Mr Fiso received an ONZM in the New Year's Honours list for 'services to sport, education and the Pacific Community'.

"After running the NZIS for 19 years, I believe by now taking on the role as Chairman of the NZUTSRL, I can demonstrate why it is necessary to give back to a sport that gave me so much pleasure when I played the game," he said.



Carlos crosses the try line.



Carlos Tuimavave & Fetuli Talanoa celebrating Carlos' try.



Hull FC players celebrating Carlos' try..



New Zealanders's Tuimavave & Talanoa await the Video Refs decision.



Sika Manu evading a tackler.

SOME ACTION shots of the NZ boys playing for Hull FC during their win against Leeds in the Challenge Cup. Hull FC will now go to the Challenge Cup final on the 26th of August at Wembley Stadium and play against Wigan. Ex Warrior and Kiwi Motu Tony is the general manager of football at Hull FC.
Photos from Dave Lofthouse

West Coast v Tasman

By Jenny Pope

WEST COAST Rugby League representative season kicked off on Saturday when the Chargers played host to the Tasman Titans. The game went down to the wire with everyone on the edge of their set. Chargers winning 38-26, with two great tries to end the game and give them a confidence boost to take down to Invercargill next weekend.

From the kick off West Coast received a penalty with Tasman offside, from there West Coast took control, Billy Fisher and Logan Woodham taking the ball up strongly got them on the front foot. They worked the ball to the left, and winger Harley Vui did well to stay in the field of play, Nik Davy from dummy half caught them off guard to go down the blind to score the first points, the conversion unsuccessful had the home team up by 4.

The next passage of play had the visitors get on top, quick play they balls and some timely penalties had the Chargers showing their character on defence and didn't disappoint. Especially young Brad Campbell communicating to his outside backs had them jam in and cause errors from their opposition. After a few rocky starts with the ball, West Coast found their rhythm. A good bomb from Campbell had Tasman winger catch it deep in his corner. Good thinking from Jorden Forsyth stole it from him when he touched the ground. Shifting hands to the right, had Tasman defenders chasing, Tayla Eason changed directions and scored between two flatfooted forwards, conversion successful West Coast in front 10 – 0.

From a controversial penalty, Tasman got a roll on, their big forwards punching over the advantage line. West Coast were back tracking and Tasman's nuggetty dummy half Jeff MacDonald scored to bring Tasman within 4.

Brad Houston came on off the bench to make a real impact, almost his first touch of the ball he found space behind the ruck to offload to a quick Campbell, who got tackled 10 metres out. Tasman didn't react quicker, another dummy half try this time to Reuben Ellen. Half time closing in Houston picked the ball up from the back of a scrum and stormed over to score giving the hosts a handy 20 – 6 lead.

After the break, Tasman came out all guns blazing and caught West Coast scrambling. Some ill-discipline and some 50/50 calls going against them, they found themselves deep in their own half struggling to get out. Tasman took full advantage and scored three tries to even up the game. West Coast in this passage did display great team work on defence they just kept making fundamental errors to give the ball back to Tasman. You got the feeling that West Coast need to be the next to score to get them back into the game. They did manage to bring the game back to an arm wrestle and start winning field position. Good offloads from forwards and the home team started to trouble the Tasman side again. Royce Greene gave a good pass to Campbell who picked up Thomson, a long ball to a fast running Vui saw the home team get back in front.

Again Thomson found Houston who busted through the line, this time it went to the other winger Navare Jacobs (who played extremely tough all game) he drew is opposite number wide to give space to a flying Davy up the middle to score his second. West Coast had the lead 28 – 20. Tasman never gave up and scored a great try off a cross field bomb landing in just in front of Jacobs who was pushed off the ball, for their centre Sam Hedges to get the travellers within 2. West Coast took back control, Houston who played a fantastic game picked up another try with his trade mark run to score. And to finish off the points on his 18th birthday, Campbell scored the try of the game, which started with a great offload from Houston onto Woodham who gave a nice pass to Jacobs who again drew his player wide to Campbell who was following up the inside like all good halfbacks do to score. Finishing the game with West Coast 38 Tasman 26.

West Coast showed great resilience and kept turning up for each other on defence. It was played in a great team manner and it was hard to single anyone out. If they turn up and play like that next week they will be very hard to beat.

Continued on next page...

Continued from previous page...

West Coast coach Brad Tacon was extremely happy with his team, and had a good feeling going into the game after the last fortnight of trainings were really good. He commented that it was a good game in general, a few errors crept in but were backed up with their defence. He was wrapped and felt it was a great game to kick off their campaign. His best were Logan Woodham, Brad Campbell (on debut) and Nik Davy's talk from the back, Houston off the bench and Bernard Alexander in the second row.

West Coast Chargers 38 (Houston 2, Davy 2, Eason, Ellen, Vui, Campbell tries, Thomson 3 goals) Tasman Titans 26 (MacDonald 2, Telfar 2, Hedges tries, Kaipo 2, Poekau goals)



West Coast half back Brad Campbell (7) keeps on eye on team mate Ethan Long and unidentified defender as they close down the Nelson Titan's attack during the representative Rugby League match played at Wingham Park on Saturday. West Coast eventually won the nail biting encounter 38-26



West Coast flyer Harley Vui is confronted by heavy Nelson Titans defence.

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Harvey Norman Jillaroos to join Prime Minister's XIII for historic PNG match

THE HARVEY Norman Jillaroos will join the Prime Minister's XIII in September to play their first ever match in Papua New Guinea at the National Football Stadium in Port Moresby.

The Jillaroos will take on the PNG national women's side in the penultimate match of an exciting triple-header on Saturday 23rd September that will open with an Under 16's match between the NSW Rugby League Young Achiever's and a PNG Select side, before culminating with the annual PNG Kumuls and Prime Minister's XIII clash.

A squad of 24 women will be selected on Monday the 11th of September, before assembling on the Gold Coast for a training camp.

Jillaroos Coach Brad Donald was looking forward to seeing his side take the field to create history in what is a genuine selection trial for the upcoming Women's Rugby League World Cup in November.

"This is another fantastic step forward for the growth of the game and the exciting opportunities that our women's rugby league pathway program provides," Mr Donald said.

"It'll undoubtedly be a memorable experience. Very few athletes ever get to represent their nation overseas, let alone in such a passionate rugby league-loving nation like Papua New Guinea, so I'll be watching closely to see how everyone handles the occasion."

Several NSW based Jillaroos representatives are likely to be excluded from national duties to participate in the NSWRL's Harvey Norman Women's Premiership final series in Sydney on the same weekend. However; Donald confirmed it will not affect their selection in the final squad for the World Cup later in the year.

"While the timing is unfortunate, selection for the final World Cup squad will be due to a player's overall performances for their club, state and national teams, and not just those selected to play in PNG."

The Jillaroos and Prime Minister's XIII squads will also be involved in a series of events, community visits and coaching clinics while on the ground in Papua New Guinea and are supported by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)

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- Thames river cruise including drinks and nibbles hosted by special celebrity guests.
- Private Beatles Tour in Liverpool.
- Meet and greet with Team Fury.
- Breakfast with Joseph Parker and Kevin Barry.
- VIP access to official Parker v Fury weigh-in.
- Ringside tickets to the WBO World Heavyweight Championship fight.
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TOUR DATES

DEPART AUCKLAND - LONDON: SATURDAY 16 SEPTEMBER

RETURN MANCHESTER – AUCKLAND: SUNDAY 24 SEPTEMBER

BOOKINGS

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Three Weeks Until The National Secondary Schools' Tournament

WE ARE three weeks away from the National Secondary Schools Tournament, New Zealand Rugby League's largest tournament being held September 4-8 at Bruce Pulman Park, Auckland.

This year there are 24 schools, 16 Premiership and eight Development, preparing to put their best foot forward. The 2016 Premiership division winners Southern Cross Campus, will be back to defend their title joined by last year's runners-up Kelston Boys High School who will be vying to take back the top spot they lost back in 2014. Both 2016 Development division finalists, Onehunga High School and Tai Wananga will also take to the field again.

With the game of rugby league growing each year, we welcome four new schools, Haeata Community Campus (Canterbury), Marcellin College (Auckland), Dargaville High School (Northland) and Naenae College (Wellington), who are gearing up to compete at the National Secondary Schools Tournament for the first time.

Supporters and on-lookers can expect five days of full-on footy as schools from all across New Zealand battle it out to decide 2017's National Secondary Schools' Tournament champions.

Can't be at Bruce Pulman Park September 4-8? Make sure you stay updated by following the @NZLeague Facebook page, NZRL ios & Android App and the Secondary Schools dedicated NZRL website page. A live-stream of one game per day will also be available on the New Zealand Rugby League Facebook page (available livestream games to be confirmed).

You can watch Finals day live on Sky, September 8 from 9am.

2017 Premiership division teams:

Aorere College, Avondale College, Dargaville High School, James Cook High School, Kelston Boys High School, Manukura, Manurewa High School, Mt Albert Grammar School, Papatoetoe High School, Rotorua Boys' High School, Southern Cross Campus, St Paul's College, St Thomas of Canterbury, Tokoroa High School, Wesley College, Westlake Boys High School.

2017 Development division teams:

Francis Douglas Memorial College, Haeata Community Campus, Marcellin College, Naenae College, Onehunga High School, Papakura High School, Tai Wananga, Trident College.

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THIS WEEK IN BIG LEAGUE'S HUGE ROUND 24 ISSUE...

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

INSIDE

- Brisbane everywhere-man **Ben Hunt** uses his monthly *Big League* column to rate the chances of the other teams aiming for a win in October. While the Storm and Roosters are the obvious favourites, he says if the **Panthers** can start putting together 80-minute performances, they'll be impossible to stop.
- Knights five-eighth **Brock Lamb** has had a rollercoaster season, but the 19-year-old counts criticism of his performances as character-building. "I just cop it all on the chin because it's only going to make me a better player and a better person."
- Wests Tigers hard-man **Elijah Taylor** said **Ivan Cleary's** appointment at the club has been a "breath of fresh air" – with the whole squad finally being accountable for their performances after several years of floundering.
- **Justin O'Neill's** long-term injury has been a blow for the already struggling Cowboys, but their players are not giving up on the finals despite their depth dwindling. "We have the belief we can go far in the finals this year – that hasn't wavered and it's not going to waver anytime soon," said Ethan Lowe.

PLUS... The **Top 8 costly goalkicking misses**, **The Analyst** runs through the teams in contention for the wooden spoon and a **Luke Brooks** poster.



ROUND 24

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Reader Mail

Hi Sir Peter,

JUST WANTED to extend a mighty thank you from my son Leon and his best friend Jake – they are loving their new BLK t-shirts and are the envy of their team mates.

I was talking to you last week about your newsletter and was very much surprised and excited to get 2 t-shirts in the post from you.

I've attached a photo of the 2 boys showing them off

Theres also a photo of some of his under 12 team who love league so much that yesterdays storms didn't worry them at all – well maybe just the lightning as we left did !

A group of us braved the rain to cheer on the warriors, including one of our new boys from Scotland who had never been to a game (he loved it and hopes to be back again for the last home game)

Thanks for everything you do in league – its much appreciated by us all

Thanks

Vikki Thomson



Good morning mate.

HAURAKI TIGERS Juniors League hosted a mini-tournament last Sunday in Paeroa, this saw teams travel to play in all grades from Whitianga, Thames and Te Awamutu.

The Hauraki Tiger's Under 6 team, coach, manager, whanau and supporters would like to thank Sir Peter Leitch for the wonderful t-shirts – GO THE KIWIS.

(Unfortunately we only had 6 of the 10 players turn up.

Other photos from the game against Thames South – Hoterini.

Rino (Reno) Wilkinson



Good morning Pete

THANK YOU so much for the boys BLK shirts you sent they love them

Tom my oldest as you can see had the jersey and loves it , the 3 of them are rugby mad and wanted to say thankyou very much for the kind gift.

Bloody cold down south (Gore) today with a -5 frost here .

Take care Pete and look forward to catching up again one day soon.

Kind regards

Nathan Abernethy



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