

RLWC 2017

It's 8 days until the Kiwis play
their first game of the 2017 RLWC

Sir Peter
Leitch Club
Newsletter

20th October 2017

#192b

**New Zealand it's
time to get behind
your team!**

Support the Kiwis!

Buy your tickets to see the
Kiwis take on Samoa on
Saturday the 28th

Get your tickets here <http://bit.ly/2yaJN3D>



Kiwi's World Cup Campaign

By Graham Lowe

*Former Coach of:
Kiwis, Otahuhu, Brisbane
Norths, Wigan, Manly,
Oceania, Samoa, Cowboys,
Queensland State of Origin
and East Coast Bays
Barracudas U/6's*

Kiwis players get ready for the official team photo ahead of the 2017 Rugby League World Cup. Photo www.photosport.nz

I LOVE RUGBY League and have been privileged to enjoy it all of my life. Sometimes it's made me laugh, other times it's made me cry, but you know what, it cares for me, and I care for it.

But keep in mind, the game doesn't owe any of us anything, we all owe the game!

And this great game is now asking us to support it during it's show piece, the Rugby League World Cup.

The Kiwis are due to commence their World Cup campaign against Samoa on the 28th, next Saturday week, in my life time there has never been a more critical time than now to get out and buy tickets and get behind your team, whichever country it is.

This RL World Cup is more than the sport of Rugby League, it is a stage that takes the emotion and excitement of everyone to a level rarely experienced before.

It doesn't need to boast or compare itself to other great sports. As it was sung about years ago by the superstar Tina Turner, it is 'Simply the Best'.

The format has given our Kiwis a great opportunity and I think the game plan David Kidwell has in mind for his blokes, will be a revelation.

I've had a few cuppas' with David over the last month or so and I cannot express how excited I'm going to be, to see this in action.

Whether we like it or not, there is a sameness about how many of the clubs play in the NRL.

I can guarantee, this will not be the case with the Kiwis. David knows sameness won't win this World Cup. They need to be different and they are going to be. But so will all the other nations. They will play with the flair that demonstrates their nations flavour!

For example, in David Kidwell's game plan, I think we will see the brilliant Shaun Johnson playing an attacking type of game that will be breath taking. At his best there is nothing better on the planet!

And much has been said about some players who have chosen to wear another nations colours and that's good, it all adds to the flavour and certainly does not diminish our Kiwis chances.

Given the choice of certain players or full stadiums, give me the full stadiums any day. And I'm sure most coaches which ever country they represent would feel similar.

We all admire the spectacular skills that are on display each week in the NRL, but what we have coming now, will take the game to a new level.

Continued on next page...

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Many players in the NRL are restricted with what they are allowed to do, I understand this because the NRL coaches are at best, conservative.

But with these World Cup teams I know the shackles are off, if not, they will not be in the race, it is too short.

I do know from firsthand experience after coaching at every level the game has to offer, all the players hope and dream for the support they deserve. And great support equals great performances.

Sell out crowds play a massive part in State of Origin football. Quite simply if the crowds were poor, Origin would not be what it is today.

This World Cup has all the Origin players involved in it but also, many who should be Origin players.

Test football is just what it says, it's test football. It is a test of players, coaches, the games and how they are played in the various countries around the world, it is

a test of everything.

It is also a test of us as people, have we got what it takes to get out and support our team?

Melbourne is known as the sports capital of the world. And it's the people who live there that are the reason, they show us all how we should get behind not only our sport, but all sports.

And one thing I know for sure, Kiwis, whether they are wearing our jersey or sitting in the stands supporting their team, Kiwis as people, we take a lot of beating.

I look forward to seeing you there.

Graham
Lowe



A promotional poster for the Rugby League World Cup 2017. The background is a black and white image of a stadium at night. In the center is the Rugby League World Cup 2017 logo, a stylized trophy in orange and red. Below the logo, the text reads "THE WORLD'S BEST ARE HERE IN 9 DAYS" in a mix of white and red fonts. At the bottom, it says "AUCKLAND NEW ZEALAND V SAMOA 28 OCTOBER". On the left is a player in a black jersey with "PIRTEK" and "air transfer solutions" logos. On the right is a player in a blue jersey with "SIFA.WS" and "SAMOA" logos. Both players are shouting and pointing.

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GET YOUR TICKETS NOW AT RLWC2017.COM



Thomas Leuluai during a Kiwis media session to launch their playing jersey ahead of the Rugby League World Cup 2017 tournament. Photo www.photosport.nz

The 2017 World Cup Kiwis Need Our Support

*By Mark Graham
Former Kiwi Rugby
League Great*

AS DOES every NZ team of any code. Some may say that we are in trouble, as we have had some issues to date, especially around selections. Be that as it may, we still have a very, very good side; a side that represents me and you. One that wears our colours, knows our passion and pride.

Sure, it would be wonderful to win the World Cup and we can, but the team needs us, the fans, to let the boys know through our support that we as fans want every success for them.

As a past player, I can tell you that the support of the fans is vital to the team's success.

The year was 1988, we the Kiwis had lost our first 2 Tests against Australia, both last minute, narrow defeats. We were preparing for our last Test against Australia and our coach Graeme Lowe had us, the team, walk down Queen Street in Auckland on the Friday at noon. The support we received that day will

live long in our memories. Thousands and thousands of people turned out; it was wonderful and to this day I thank the fans for their show of faith in us.

History says we went on to win that third Test 18-0, the first time Australia was every held to nil.

We had a few issues of our own, but the fans believed and showed up and so did we, the Kiwis.

What is done, is done. The only thing we can do is show our colours; mine are black and white.

Go NZ, go the Kiwis,



Hi Sir Peter,

IAM WRITING in response to the news that the Kiwis game in Auckland is not being well patronized, what is wrong with Kiwi fans ?

Here we are with a World Cup on our doorstep, a great opportunity to support our team ,and Kiwi fans are not supporting by buying tickets, which I may say are very reasonably priced.

I know from personal experience that the support from Kiwi fans on home soil is invaluable, and goes a long way in deciding the result, so let's get out there and support our team.

I must say the support from Pacific Island teams has been outstanding , if we are not careful they will out number Kiwi fans ,which is something we need to combat.

Let's all get down and purchase your tickets, and support our team all the way to the World Cup Final.

Kind Regards, Frank Endacott ONZM



AS YOUR well aware The Rugby League World Cup 2017 kicks off next Thursday night the 27th October

Our “Te Iwi Kiwis” campaign journey behinds on Saturday 28th October at Mt Smart Stadium against one of their island cousins “Toa Samoa” so if you are not doing anything Saturday night get down to the stadium to support our nation

Despite the setbacks we have assembled capable of doing the job, with home ground advantage, you the supporters could be secret weapon to get us through the campaign

Show our “Kiwi Culture” and get behind our “Te Iwi Kiwis 2017”

Kia Kaha!!

Proud Kiwi #655

Ruben Wiki



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Rugby League World Cup 2017 Mural

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

Wairangi Koopu, Lance Hohaia's father Rex, artist Bobby McDonald, and Tawera Nikau

KIWIS GREAT and current Test selector Tawera Nikau joined fellow ex-Kiwi Wairangi Koopu and Lance Hohaia's father Rex to officially launch the Rugby League World Cup 2017 mural in Huntly on Thursday.

Bobby McDonald's mural pays tribute to Huntly and the wider north Waikato region's proud rugby league tradition with three of the town's recent Kiwis, Nikau, Hohaia and Koopu, included as part of a Huntly's Heroes piece.

Ahead of the first ever rugby league international in Hamilton, the mural also includes the three teams playing in the two RLWC2017 matches at Waikato Stadium; Samoa vs Tonga on November 4 and New Zealand versus Tonga on November 11.

Rugby League World Cup 2017, with support from Hamilton City Council and Waikato District Council, the mural alongside the Topp Twins artwork. Keep an eye out for the mural when you're travelling on State Highway 1 through Huntly.



Koopu, Nikau, McDonald and Rex Hohaia (Lance Hohaia's father).



Wairangi Koopu and Tawera Nikau pose with artist Bobby McDonald.



Nikau chats with artist Bobby McDonald in front of the cameras.





Ben Gardiner

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

THE KIWIS have welcomed highly regarded Ben Gardiner as Assistant Coach for the Rugby League World Cup Campaign following the late withdrawal of Garth Brennan, who is now unavailable due to pending commitments in Australia.

Gardiner who has had recent success as the assistant coach of the New South Wales under 20's and was credited with turning around the North Sydney Bears fortunes after taking on the head coach role mid-way through the 2015 season was a candidate that Kiwis Coach David Kidwell had been in regular contact with, "Ben and I have a long relationship, he's a good man and will bring a real focus on our defence. He's done an excellent job everywhere he's been and I'm looking forward to his contribution to the Kiwis."

Kidwell and Gardiner's coaching relationship dates back to 2010 when the duo guided South Sydney Under 20s to the Grand final.

Kidwell wished Brennan well with the opportunity he now has in front of him "Obviously this highlights the calibre of the coach Garth is with other organisations also wanting his services, so as disappointed as

we are not to have him on board, we're really happy for him, and we are really happy to have Ben to join our team."

"Thanks to all the forward planning we've done in regards to this World Cup campaign, Ben has already made a seamless transition into camp."

Gardiner who's been a full-time coach within the South Sydney coaching ranks for the past three years says, "It's a privilege to be in the Kiwis and to contribute to improving the players and the team's direction. I look forward to learning more about the New Zealand culture and adding my personality and determination to compete."

"I'm an energetic coach and I'm looking forward to mixing that with the energy that's already in the Kiwis squad."

Gardiner has already become entrenched in the Kiwis camp having spent his first night with the team at Turangawaewae Marae.



**Want to get this awesome
RLWC 2017 Jersey?**

Then go to: <http://bit.ly/2gHcyeS>



James Bell

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

SCOTLAND INTERNATIONAL rookie James Bell couldn't be happier about the jersey he will be wearing at the Rugby League World Cup, but admits the idea of facing the haka doesn't sit well.

Eligible for Scotland through his Aberdeen-born grandfather who he shares a name with, Bell is also a proud Maori who represented New Zealand's indigenous team just 12 months ago.

One of the leaders of a powerful haka that day, it's little wonder the 23-year-old forward is apprehensive about being on the other side of it, should he be selected to play for Scotland in their November 4 match against the Kiwis in Christchurch.

"It's going to be tough, it's going to be different, I have never faced a haka in these circumstances before," Bell told NRL.com.

"We played the New Zealand Maori team last year in a trial match when I was playing for the Warriors and they did a haka. I couldn't face it, so me and a couple of other mates did a haka back.

"I don't know if I will do that this time though."

Selection in the Bravehearts' final squad for the World Cup caps a huge year for Bell, in which he made his NRL Telstra Premiership debut for the Warriors in Round 21.

Just over a year ago he was still featuring occasionally for his junior side the Papakura Sea Eagles in the Auckland first division when not required by the Warriors' reserve-grade side.

"When I think back on all my achievements over the last year and a bit, it is pretty overwhelming to think it was all just a dream a little while ago, but now it's a reality," Bell said.

"It's gone by too quick, it's kind of all a blur now, at the time of making my NRL debut I was just too excited and nervous to think about anything else, but the year has been amazing.

"If I get the opportunity to play the Kiwis in New Zealand, it will be the best thing that has happened in my career. I am pretty sure I will put a little bit extra into my tackles if I face the Kiwis.

"Playing for the New Zealand Maori was a big achievement, so I've had the chance to represent the Maori side of my family, now I get the chance to represent the Scottish side."

Bell is the only current NRL player included in Scotland's 24-man squad and is one of three New Zealand-born players set to debut for the Bravehearts at the tournament, joining France-based brothers Kane and Andrew Bentley.



2017 Kiwis Team



Kiwis coach David Kidwell and assistant coach Ben Gardiner.



Kiwis players Shaun Johnson and Roger Tuivasa-Sheck during their own photo shoot.



New Zealand Kiwis captain Adam Blair.



Roger Tuivasa-Sheck with the boys.



Physical Disability Rugby League New Zealand (PDRLNZ) gear up for Nines tournament next month

*By Talei Anderson
Auckland Rugby League*

THE PHYSICAL Disability Rugby League New Zealand (PDRLNZ) are gearing up to compete in the inaugural Physical Disability Rugby League Nines – the first international event of its kind – in conjunction with NSW Physical Disability Rugby League (NSWPDRL) at Waitemata Rugby League Club next month.

Teams from both sides of the ditch will come together to participate in a two-day tournament and will go head-to-head to claim the PDRL Nines title.

Chair and co-founder of PDRLNZ Sandra Hickey says it's an exciting time for all involved.

"It's a dream come true for a lot of these players," she said.

"Many of them have never held a passport [and] to travel to New Zealand to play rugby league is something truly special."

NSWPDRL will be welcomed by PDRLNZ when they touch down in Auckland on Wednesday night (November 1). Teams will get together for a training day on Thursday November 2 before the official opening and day one of the PDRL Nines on Friday November 3.

Four PDRL teams will take part in the competition with six games being played on each of the days. Teams will have a free day on the Saturday and return for the final day of the tournament on Sunday November 5.

Following the second round of pool play on Sunday, players will be encouraged to participate in the 'Have a try' event where skills and drills, photos and signings will take place before the grand final kicks off at 4.00pm.

PDRLNZ ambassador – and Vodafone Warriors prop – James Gavet has been supportive of both the players and the event.

Gavet – who was left with a broken arm following his stint in Round 19 of the 2017 NRL season – said his admiration for those playing with a physical disability increased ten-fold following his injury.

"To keep fit and to excel in a sport on top of your daily struggles is admirable," he said.

Hickey says James has been working hard to ensure the PDRL Nines is an event to be remembered for the players, their families and the fans of our great game.

"There are so many people who have been getting behind the Nines," she said.

"Without them, we would not be able to achieve this massive feat."

"I'd like to give a special thanks to Sir Peter Leitch for his overwhelming generosity to this tournament. He has gone above and beyond and we can't thank him enough for all that he has done to ensure this event is a success.

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“For us, the PDRL Nines isn’t about winning, but it’s a chance for players to spread the message of PDRL while making lifelong friendships.

“It’s going to be a great weekend and we look forward to seeing you all there backing our physically disabled athletes.”

KEY INFORMATION

What: Inaugural 2017 Physical Disability Rugby League Nines

When: Friday November 3, Sunday November 5

Where: Waitemata Seagulls Rugby League Club, Ranui Domain

NZ Players to look out for:

Brad Vear – Ngai Tai

Right arm amputee above elbow. Paralympian 1988. Winner of numerous touch national titles in various grades. 1991 World Cup NZ national touch player. 1999 NZ Men’s Touch World Cup player touring Queensland.

Leatuu Lee Ngauama – Tonga

Amputee left arm above elbow. Competed in many tournaments in Australia on the golf amputee circuit. Currently in his 11th year playing rugby league in the masters division. Strong on both attack and defence.

Gary Endacott – NZ born European

Born with cerebral palsy. Parents were told he would never walk. NZ and World Disabled Tennis champion – standing division. Completed in four New York marathons on foot. First physical disabled person to climb Mount Kilimanjaro. NZ Rugby League Sports Personality of the Year award recipient. New Years’ Honours list – MNZM. Winner of Corbett Ryan Pathway award. Has played rugby league for almost 30 years.

Michael Kulene – Kiribati

Left leg below knee amputee. Fit, strong and sporty young player. Played cricket, soccer, basketball and rugby for school. Para-rowing champion for North Island and NZ champs in 2013 and 2014. Tough player to stop on the field.

Physical Disability Rugby League NZ
presents....
AUCKLAND NINES

Waitemata Seagulls
16 Robertson Road
Ranui
9.30am
Friday 3rd & Sunday 5th November
FREE ENTRY

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Sir Peter Leitch (The Mad Butcher)



[2018 NRL draw] Full schedule out

by *Richard Becht*

VODAFONE WARRIORS members and fans can now plan the entire 2018 NRL season following the release of a draw which breaks from recent tradition by listing full details for every match.

A regular season schedule kicking off against South Sydney in Perth on Saturday, March 10 winds up with the Vodafone Warriors hosting back-to-back Friday night home games against Penrith on August 24 and Canberra on August 31.

The first home match at Mount Smart Stadium is against Gold Coast on St Patrick's Day (Saturday, March 17).

"The big change is that the NRL has had full control of the draw this time allowing clubs to plan for 2018 with real certainty," said Vodafone Warriors CEO Cameron George.

"For the first time our members and fans can look at the draw and know exactly where and when the Vodafone Warriors are playing each and every round. That makes it so much easier for them as well as us in terms of looking at our home game days and weekly football schedules for our teams."

A highlight of the just-released draw is a festival of football in April when the Vodafone Warriors will have three straight games at Mount Smart Stadium.

It starts against North Queensland on Saturday, April 7 – the historic doubleheader also involving Wests Tigers and Melbourne – followed by Brisbane on Saturday, April 14 and St George Illawarra on Friday, April 20.

Another feature is a midseason sequence of six consecutive matches against top eight sides starting with Manly in Christchurch on Saturday, June 9, North Queensland in Townsville on June 15, Cronulla at Mount Smart Stadium on June 29, away to Penrith (July 6) and Brisbane (July 15) and Melbourne in Auckland on July 22. The sequence is broken up by the stand-alone weekend for Origin II set down for Sunday, June 24.

Of the 12 home games, six are against 2017 top eight clubs, six are on Saturdays, five on Friday nights and one on a Sunday. Overall the Vodafone Warriors have 11 Saturday games, eight on Friday nights, four on Sundays and one on a Wednesday (Anzac Day against Melbourne).

"It's exciting having such an intense programme in April, including the doubleheader," said George.

"Another feature of the draw is the strong flavour of Friday night and Saturday matches at home.

"They present us with different models and we're working on initiatives to make each and every one of them memorable for everyone who comes along. We're certainly out to put on a St Patrick's Day party atmosphere for our first home game."

This is the first draw of the post-Anzac Test era. With no representative weekend in May, the NRL has created a stand-alone weekend for Origin II in late June while the Vodafone Warriors will also have a bye in round 13 coinciding with Queen's Birthday weekend in New Zealand (June 2-4).

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They're away to the Sydney Roosters on March 31 over the Easter holiday period (March 30-April 2) and are at home to the same opponents on May 12, the day before Mother's Day.

The clubs the Vodafone Warriors face once in 2018 are Cronulla (home), Newcastle (home), Wests Tigers (home), Manly (away), Parramatta (away) and Canterbury-Bankstown (away). They are home and away to the other nine clubs.

VODAFONE WARRIORS | 2018 NRL DRAW

(NB: local kick-off times listed)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 Sat March 10 4.00pm Rabbitohs, nib Stadium, Perth | 16 Fri June 29 8.00pm Sharks, Mount Smart Stadium, Auckland |
| 2 Sat March 17 5.00pm Titans, Mount Smart Stadium, Auckland | 17 Fri July 6 7.50pm Panthers, Panthers Stadium, Penrith |
| 3 Sat March 24 3.00pm Raiders, GIO Stadium, Canberra | 18 Sun July 15 2.00pm Broncos, Suncorp Stadium, Brisbane |
| 4 Sat March 31 5.30pm Roosters, Allianz Stadium, Sydney | 19 Sun July 22 4.00pm Storm, Mount Smart Stadium, Auckland |
| 5 Sat April 7 7.30pm (doubleheader) Cowboys, Mount Smart Stadium, Auckland | 20 Sun July 29 2.00pm Titans, Cbus Super Stadium, Robina |
| 6 Sat April 14 5.00pm Broncos, Mount Smart Stadium, Auckland | 21 Sat August 4 3.00pm Dragons, WIN Stadium, Wollongong |
| 7 Fri April 20 8.00pm Dragons, Mount Smart Stadium, Auckland | 22 Fri August 10 8.00pm Knights, Mount Smart Stadium, Auckland |
| 8 Wed April 25 7.00pm Storm, AAMI Park, Melbourne | 23 Sun August 19 2.00pm Bulldogs, ANZ Stadium, Sydney |
| 9 Sat May 5 7.30pm Wests Tigers, Mount Smart Stadium, Auckland | 24 Fri August 24 8.00pm Panthers, Mount Smart Stadium, Auckland |
| 10 Sat May 12 5.00pm Roosters, Mount Smart Stadium, Auckland | 25 Fri August 31 8.00pm Raiders, Mount Smart Stadium, Auckland |
| 11 Fri May 18 6.00pm Eels, ANZ Stadium, Sydney | NRL FINALS |
| 12 Sat May 26 7.30pm Rabbitohs, Mount Smart Stadium, Auckland | 1 September 7-9 Qualifying Semi Finals |
| 13 Bye | 2 September 14-15 Semi Finals |
| 14 Sat June 9 5.00pm Sea Eagles, AMI Stadium, Christchurch | 3 September 21-22 Preliminary Finals |
| 15 Fri June 15 6.00pm Cowboys, 1300SMILES | 4 September 30 Grand Final |



Sir Peter Leitch.

ON FINDING a parcel at the door, what a great surprise to find Warriors Jersey and Cap

That I was so lucky to win in the Canterbury Competition Wishing Warriors the very best 2018.

Many thanks Peter.

Regards Pam.Timaru

**View the
full NRL
Draw
Click here**



Dear Sir Peter

AFTER SEEING your post on Facebook with the new RLWC2017 Supporter shirts, a colleague (Larry Coughy) and myself rushed out to get one each, when I got there I had to also get the Kiwi's jersey, this year it something pretty special!

Here is a picture of us.

We are looking forward to having some fantastic games of Rugby League to watch over the coming weeks, that's for sure.

I might have to talk some sense in to my mate Larry though, he's not as confident in the Kiwi's as I am.

Hope you enjoy the RLWC Sir Peter, we will be watching from home and even going try to get to a few games.

GO KIWIS !!!!!!!!!!!

All the best
Christy



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The Newsletter Team

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

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