

VODAFONE



Sir Peter Leitch Club

AT MT SMART STADIUM, HOME OF THE MIGHTY VODAFONE WARRIORS

7th March 2018

Newsletter #207

A Message From The Vodafone Warriors CEO

AFTER MONTHS of waiting, the NRL season is finally upon us and I speak for everyone here at the Vodafone Warriors when I say I can't wait.

On the back of a disappointing 2017 campaign, everyone at the club has worked tirelessly throughout the off-season to get this side back on track.

Our new recruits, both on and off the field, have come in and made an impact and as we prepare to take on the Rabbitohs in Perth on Saturday night, I can assure our loyal fans, members and partners that we've left no stone unturned.

I've talked repeatedly since I joined the club last year about accountability being the mantra for the Vodafone Warriors in 2018 and nothing has changed in that respect.

But the time for talking is over. Now it's about performance.

The boys are ready and I am confident they will give a good account of themselves and represent this organisation with pride on Saturday night.

We have work to do to win back some of our supporters; we know that.

What we also know is that it's going to come down to the manner of our performances. We are hungry for success and while many are writing us off, every time we pull on the jumper this season we are going to give it everything we have to win. There is no reason we can't and there will be no excuses.

As I write this, I'm in Perth with the team after arriving in Western Australia on Monday night.

There's no doubt the distance we have to travel to play here is a challenge. But this year we are giving ourselves every opportunity to win by flying over well ahead of game day.

We are excited about the prospect of taking part in an historical double header this weekend and playing before plenty of loyal Vodafone Warriors supporters.

After full-time, we'll be back on the plane and bound for Auckland for our round two fixture against the Gold Coast Titans on March 17 – St Patrick's Day.

Accountability is a mantra that doesn't just apply to the footy department and in the front office, the troops have also been hard at work to deliver a new and improved game day experience for our fans this year.

That all starts with the Titans game where we'll be putting on the best St Patrick's Day party in Auckland and certainly the biggest!

We've also reduced all pre-sold tickets for this game to just \$15 and are donating \$5 of each ticket sold to the New Zealand Red Cross to aid with disaster relief in the Pacific after the devastation of Cyclone Gita.

The work is done and we can't wait to have you all back at our house on March 17.

We'd love nothing more than to have our fans turn up in big numbers to throw their support behind this team. We need you. From there, it's our job to show you exactly why you should be coming back for every game day.

On behalf of everyone at the Vodafone Warriors, thank you for your support.

Let's get behind the boys and make 2018 a season to remember!

Cameron George
Vodafone Warriors CEO



Warriors Injury Curse Strikes Again

By David Kemeys

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



WE HAVE not kicked a ball yet and already we have suffered a cruel injury blow.

As we count down to losing in Perth against the Bunnies, young hooker Nathaniel Roache has been ruled out for the year with a back injury

It's terrible news for us fans – and not great for the 21-year-old either, to be sure.

He will have to have surgery on a lumbar disc injury and is unlikely to return this season.

It was only 2016 the young fella was winning Rookie of the Year.

He looked good for us last year – which was a rarity in itself – until a ruptured Achilles tendon ended his season.

"It's really sad for Nate and we're all feeling for him," Warriors coach Stephen Kearney said.

You think.

We are not exactly overflowing with hookers, though Issac Luke has vowed he has something to prove after failing to fire at Mt Smart.

Roache's misfortune saw 24-year-old Sam Cook blooded in the dummy-half role in our two trials.

Cook is now in line to make his NRL debut against Souths.

All of which makes our latest signing all the more interesting.

Former Titans utility Karl Lawton, who is one those blokes who can pretty much play anywhere, including hooker, has crossed the ditch.

I really like this kid, though he has had a horror time with the injuries too.

The signing of Lawton was announced the same day we upgraded the deals of Cook and promising fullback Hayze Perham.

Lawton, 22, has been secured on a two-year deal.

He has made 12 NRL appearances since his debut against us in 2016 - a match he is unlikely to forget, given it was his debut, and because he broke his leg.

But he battled back and played 11 times for the Titans last season, mostly at hooker and off the bench.

We seem to have a habit of shopping on the Gold Coast, Agnatius Paasi and Leivaha Pulu also coming from Queensland.

"We really like what Karl has to offer and he'll be a great addition to our squad," Kearney said.

It's easy to forget we have Brian Smith, who is hardly a league numpty, toiling away for us in the background.

While most of us would probably argue we have not signed a big name player, there is a look of solidity to the signings that has not always been there, and I am inclined to think you can see a rationale to what is going on.

And on that front, new signing Gerard Beale continues to make progress in his recovery from the broken leg that ended his World Cup campaign in the Kiwis' opening match against Toa Samoa last October.

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The former Cronulla premiership winning centre is expected to be available in late April.

But on the other side of that bit of good news is of course the news Simon Mannering is out of our season-opener. Super Simon is facing up to a month out after suffering a shoulder injury in the trial against the Gold Coast.

Ata Heads To The Raiders

Hard to know what to make of this one.

When we signed Blake Green, Ata Hingano was none too pleased, and there were mutterings he would leave the club.

And so it has come to pass, the youngster moving to Canberra – which would indicate he is not the smartest cookie since Canberra is a shithole.

He may not be ready to start a full NRL season and the Warriors were right to sign experienced half Blake Green, who has joined the club on a three-year deal.

But it is a sad day.

We have swapped a player with a ton of potential for a 31-year-old many say is not much more than a journeyman in Green.

Personally, I think that's a bit harsh, and putting on my "football manager" hat, I'd have been inclined to bring someone in too.

Hingano has a lot of potential, but that does not make him the finished article. Blake has already made a good start alongside Shaun Johnson.

Should Hingano have stuck around and looked to learn a bit more about his craft? In my view yes, but it is hard to criticise the youngster because all footballers want to do is play footy, and he is convinced he is going to get more opportunities at the Raiders.

Good luck with that. The Green Machine have Aidan Sezer, Blake Austin and Sam Williams, all of whom I would snap your hand of if offered to the Warriors.

It would have been nice to see Hingano hang around but as I say, easy to see why he made the choice that he did, and I wish him well.

The former Junior Kiwi had a lot of admirers but still chose to sign a three-year deal at Mt Smart.

Then along came Green - on a contract of the same length.

There are opportunities at hooker at the Raiders too - Josh Hodgson still recovering from a ruptured ACL.

Sezer and Austin are both off contract at the end of the year.

For us, releasing Hingano goes against the Stephen Kearney mantra of achieving depth and creating competition.

But like the kid rugby nicked, if he doesn't want to be here, no point making him stay.

We could be in a well-known ditch if we suffer injuries though.

Should Johnson or Green be injured, step up Mason Lino. Let's just say he is "unproven" at NRL level.

Sterlo Does Not Give Us A snowball's Chance

Footy Show nude nut Peter Sterling is a funnyman – not to mention a smart league brain. And he does not give the Vodafone warriors any chance this season.

The Nine NRL commentator says the Warriors have plenty of talent but there are question marks.

No shit Sherlock!

Sterling said if we can't find success early in the season coach Stephen Kearney will be under pressure. "All coaches are under the pump, but you would think if Kearney doesn't get wins under his belt early on his name is going to be put forward."

Sterling reckons if we are to be successful we'll need our key players to dominate. "Shaun Johnson is the obvious one but I think Isaac Luke has to have a good season. If this side can get on the front foot they're going to be tough to beat."

But, and this will come as no surprise to anyone, he says defence will need to improve.

"If you are to do well in this competition, you have to have a steely resolve, to be able to defend three or four sets of six. Until you do that, you can't play finals football."

And the final verdict... "I've got them down towards the bottom of the ladder."

More on the on next page...

Hark The Herald's Angels Sing

While we are on the subject of predictions, the Herald's three wise men of league, Michael Burgess, David Skipwith and Dale Budge, have outlined what they think will happen.

It made for interesting reading.

Here's a summary.

Dale Budge: Not sold on the roster. Haven't addressed a lack of go-forward, desperately need a big, powerful prop. Tick of approval for Adam Blair and confident Blake Green will work well with Shaun Johnson. He's also a Tohu Harris fan, and concedes Peta Hiku and Gerard Beale add depth.

Says we will be harder side to beat in 2018 and could well be in a race for the eight, then names his eight – and leaves us out.

David Skipwith: A season of rebuilding, more tough times ahead. Big questions over our ability to perform consistently and win on the road. Good start crucial because early defeats will see us come under scrutiny and put the acid on Kearney. Says top eight is possible – then names his eight and leaves us out.

Michael Burgess: Thinks we will improve on 2017. Rates Blake Green as upgrade on Kieran Foran.

Likes Tohu Harris, and the depth Hiku and Beale will add. Tipping less bash-and-charge, and a fitter and more focused side. Got bugger-all confidence in our front row though, and hates the tough draw. Names top eight, and puts us in it – at eight! Well done Michael.

Cappy Moving On

Vodafone Warriors assistant coach Andrew McFadden is leaving at the end of the season. McFadden joined us as an assistant coach in 2013 before doing almost three seasons as head coach from 2014-2016.

He has been an assistant since then.

Say what you like, but he has been loyal, and worked hard. He was always personable and is hardly the first man to find the going tough in the hot seat.

McFadden says his focus now is solely on the season ahead.

"It was important to give the club plenty of notice about our plans. But that's for the future. All that matters now is this season."

Sale Saga Madness

And that is a bit of a blow, but not as much as there apparently being a new bidder interested in the club, and I say this only because I am totally over all the bullshit surrounding the sale process.

There is now, we are told, a three-horse race featuring this NFL consortium, which I will believe when I see it; the Auckland Rugby League, not an organisation to engender huge confidence; and now a Waikato businessman with funds from Chinese backers, which sounds far-fetched to me.

All we get is how "keen" the owners are to wrap up a sale so as not to disrupt the season.

The Hawaii lot are said to be suing the ARL, which has denied doing anything wrong.

Imagine if they did sue and won. So the ARL would presumably have to cough up some dosh. That would be good for the game wouldn't it?

In truth I've stopped reading. piss or get off the pot! I'm over it.



Seven New Faces Named For Season Opener

by Richard Becht

SEVEN NEWCOMERS including debutant Sam Cook have been named for the Vodafone Warriors' season-opening NRL clash against the South Sydney Rabbitohs at the new Perth Stadium on Saturday (4.00pm kick-off local time; 9.00pm NZT).

The encounter is the first leg of the Perth NRL Double Header which is rounded out by the 2017 premier-ship-winning Melbourne Storm facing Canterbury-Bankstown (6.05pm kick-off local time; 11.05pm NZT).

The 24-year-old Cook has claimed a spot as the interchange hooker after impressing throughout the pre-season and in each of the Vodafone Warriors' 20-14 trial wins over the Storm and the Gold Coast Titans.

Set to become Vodafone Warrior #225, Cook is the only player set to make his first-grade debut this week but centre Peta Hiku (#221), standoff Blake Green (#222), prop Adam Blair (#223) and second rower Tohu Harris (#224) have been named to make their first NRL appearances for the club.

Cook apart, second rower Leivaha Pulu and centre Anthony Gelling are included on the extended eight-man bench along with front rower Agnatius Paasi, who played one NRL game for the Vodafone Warriors in 2014 before making 54 appearances for the Titans from 2015-2017.

Veteran back rower Simon Mannering misses the opening round with a shoulder injury while new signing Gerard Beale is on track to return from his broken leg in round eight.

Vodafone Warriors head coach Stephen Kearney said he was especially pleased for Cook, who has come through the club's system with 10 NYC outings for the Vodafone Junior Warriors in 2013 and 37 games for the club's Intrust Super Premiership side to the end of last season.

"I'm pleased with the side we've been able to pick and it's really special being able to name Sam," he said.

"He's had a wonderful preseason and he has worked really, really hard for the last 15 or so weeks. He had some nice touches in the trials and gets his opportunity to make his debut.

"Our new players have fitted in wonderfully well, too, and I'm really excited about seeing them play on Saturday afternoon.

"Simon picked up a shoulder injury in our last trial which could keep him out for a few weeks but young Isai'ah Papali'i has had a great preseason and he'll do a good job."

Ligi Sao claims the No 13 jersey after strong showings in the two trials while James Gavet partners veteran acquisition Blair in the front row.

Halves Shaun Johnson and Green have their first NRL start together as do Hiku and Mate Ma's wing David Fusitu'a on the right wing.

The match is the 10th the Vodafone Warriors have played in Western Australia dating back to 1996.

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**VODAFONE
WARRIORS
v
SOUTH SYDNEY
RABBITHOHS**

Perth Stadium, Perth

4.00pm, Saturday, March 10, 2018

Vodafone Warriors Team to Play in Perth This Weekend!

1	Roger Tuivasa-Sheck	12	Tohu Harris
2	David Fusitu'a	13	Ligi Sao
3	Peta Hiku		Interchange
4	Solomone Kata	14	Sam Cook
5	Ken Maumalo	15	Leivaha Pulu
6	Blake Green	16	Sam Lisone
7	Shaun Johnson	17	Bunty Afoa
8	James Gavet	18	Jazz Tevaga
9	Issac Luke	20	Mason Lino
10	Adam Blair	21	Agnatius Paasi
11	Isaiah Papali'i	22	Anthony Gelling

New Signings for 2018 Season

Tohu Harris from Melbourne (won the NRL grand final with the Storm last year)
Adam Blair from Brisbane
Peta Hiku from Warrington
Gerard Beale from Cronulla (he's injured but should be ready to play by the eighth round)
Blake Green from Manly
Leivaha Pulu from Gold Coast
Agnatius Paasi from Gold Coast
Anthony Gelling from Wigan
Matiu Love-Henry from Brisbane (he hasn't played in the NRL yet)
Karl Lawton from Gold Coast (signed last week)



Another big signing was Alex Corvo, our new head of performance. He's a tough man who has been driving the preseason training programme to knock the players into shape. He knows Stephen Kearney from his Melbourne and Brisbane days.

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ISP And Jersey Flegg Season Kick-Off At Home This Weekend

By Joe Williams - ISP Team Manager

THE VODAFONE Warriors 2018 Intrust Super Premiership NSW campaign alongside the new-look Jersey Flegg Cup (Under-20 competition) gets underway this weekend, with back-to-back home games scheduled to kick-off this Saturday March 10 at Mt Smart Stadium.

The double-header will see the Jersey Flegg Cup side open the day when they go up against the North Sydney Bears at 11.00am, followed by the Vodafone Warriors ISP side kicking off at 1.00pm, Entry via Gate B and free carparking entry through Maurcie Road.

The John Teina-coached Vodafone Warriors – who were within one win of reaching the ISP grand final under Ricky Henry last year – face the North Sydney Bears who placed sixth in 2017.

Named in the ISP side is last year's Vodafone NYC Player of the Year, Chanel Harris-Tavita, alongside prop Agnatius Paasi and regulars such as Charnze Nicoll-Klokstad, James Bell and Chris Satae.

Meanwhile, the earlier game will see a new look team coached now by Ricky Henry in the new under-20 competition in front of family and friends for the first time this weekend.

VODAFONE WARRIORS JERSEY FLEGG CUP V NORTH SYDNEY BEARS

Mount Smart Stadium, Auckland
11.00pm, Saturday, March 10

VODAFONE WARRIORS INTRUST SUPER PREMIERSHIP V NORTH SYDNEY BEARS

Mount Smart Stadium, Auckland
1.00pm, Saturday, March 10

VODAFONE WARRIORS JFC SQUAD (Alphabetical Order)

Brody Tamarua	Paul Turner
Dylan Tavita	Preston Riki
Edward Kosi	Sheldon Rogers
Eiden Ackland	Soane Hufanga
Elijah Sufia	Tayhler Paora
Havi Tupouniua	Tevita Mikaele
Kayal Iro	Tom Ale
Lotu Inisi	Wesley Viekoso
Patrick Elia	

HEAD COACH | RICKY HENRY

ASSISTANT COACH | JEROME ROPATI

VODAFONE WARRIORS ISP SQUAD (Alphabetical Order)

Agnatius Paasi	Lewis Soosomea
Chanel Harris-Tavita	Manaia Cherrington
Charnze Nicoll-Klokstad	Matiu Love Henry
Chris Satae	Pat Siple
Cole Waaka	Reece Charlie
Daniel Reuelu-Buchanan	Sione Afemui
Hayze Perham	Tevin Arona
James Bell	Trent Schaumkel
Joseph Vuna	Zac Santo
Karl Lawton	

HEAD COACH | JOHN TEINA

ASSISTANT COACH | JUNIOR FIU

ASSISTANT COACH | MOEHEWA ARMSTORNG

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Tough Opening Ahead For Warriors

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)



BEAT SOUTH Sydney in the opening NRL premiership round at Perth on Saturday (9pm) and the Warriors will get enough monkeys off their backs to start a zoo.

It is not just that the Warriors have lost six consecutive matches against the Rabbitohs since a spectacular 44-22 success at Mount Smart in 2012.

It is also because the Warriors have never won in multiple visits to Perth. The long air flight above the barren Outback seems to drain all the juice from their legs.

Three of those losses in Perth were to Souths between 2013 and 2015 – hammerings which produced a lop-sided aggregate scoreline of 35 points for and 100 points against.

Nor can I remember when there has been less hysteria around the Warriors' prospects, despite an unbeaten pre-season against admittedly moderate opposition.

The return of Greg Inglis to rejoin the Burgess Brotherhood will be a tremendous boost to Souths, which as recently as 2014 won a record twenty-first championship.

The Rabbitohs are also a more settled organisation. Everyone knows that Russell Crowe owns them, while there is ongoing uncertainty about the Warriors' future owners.

In the Herald on Sunday two of the three scribes predicted the 2018 Warriors to improve but still miss the play-offs, while the third had them just scraping into the top eight.

But to combat any lingering optimism this side of the Tasman, most Aussie pundits have the Warriors either "winning" their first wooden spoon or coming close to it.

Oh, and did I read the other day that the sturdiest Warrior of them all, Simon Mannering, emerged from the second pre-season hit-out with a dodgy shoulder?

On the credit side, the Warriors will play in the first game of any code at the impressive new Perth Stadium, rather than their old nemesis of nib stadium.

The lack of blind optimism can surely do no harm.

Better to be pleasantly surprised when the Warriors win against the odds than bitterly disappointed if they fall short.

For 20-odd years I raced horses with a mate who could spend two hours driving to Timaru telling me why our nag would win and two hours on the way home explaining why it did not.

He was an eternal optimist. I preferred to take the opposite tack. Our horses won 20 races from about 120 starts. So I was ecstatic on 20 occasions and he was shattered 100 times.

I have always felt the same about the Warriors, having long been educated in how tough it is to beat the Aussies at any sport they are truly serious about such as cricket and rugby league.

But it is great that our summer sojourn is about to end. The NRL competition is not perfect, but it is far and away the best sporting competition in this part of the world.

Everyone gets to play every other club at least once and the play-offs are designed to reward the most successful teams over the season-long minor premiership.

Top three? Champion Melbourne is capable of retaining its title, beaten grand finalist North Queensland is stronger, and the Bondi billionaire Roosters lead the Sydney charge.

It will be interesting to see if referees really enforce cleaner play-the-balls as demanded by the NRL and if they sin-bin those who deliberately concede penalties on their own goal-lines.

Good luck to the Warriors.



At lunch yesterday with Peter Burling, Chris Dickson MBE & Blair Tuke



THE 2018 NRL KICKS OFF THIS WEEK!

THURSDAY **Dragons vs Broncos**

Knights vs Sea Eagles
Cowboys vs Sharks

FRIDAY

SATURDAY **Tigers vs Roosters**

**PERTH
DOUBLE
HEADER**

Rabbitohs vs Warriors
Storm vs Bulldogs

Panthers vs Eels
Titans vs Raiders

SUNDAY



The Have And The Have Nots

By Barry Ross



A COUPLE OF weeks ago a Sydney newspaper ran a story about third party payments in the NRL. The story was by a well known journalist Paul Kent and he revealed the amounts spent by some of the clubs in these third party agreements. Kent said that in 2017, third part agreements totalled \$3.76 million and this money was paid to 93 players. He added that 77 of these players were Origin level or other top level internationals and that the average per club was \$235,000. But several clubs did not spend as much as the average, while several others spent more than the average. In the first game of this season, St. George/Illawarra take on the Brisbane Broncos on Thursday night (8 March) at WIN Jubilee Oval at Kogarah in Sydney. In Kent's story about third party agreements, he stated that the Broncos were second highest of the clubs, receiving more than \$500,000 while the Dragons received the least of all clubs from third party agreements with just \$26,000. That is a bad look and verifies the claim by Dragons fans over the last few years that they were not competing on a level playing field. The Broncos also have other advantages. They are the only team in a city where Rugby League is very strong and this contributes to the club's good attendance figures, a major factor in putting the club on to a sound financial base. No doubt there are other games in the first round with similar differences between the teams in many other areas, as well as third part agreements. But this is nothing new. Ever since the Sydney competition began back in 1908, there have been differences but to be fair it must also be said that over the years, good and bad administration has contributed greatly to every club's performances.

But let's have a look at what we can expect in the first round. Like all fans I am excited that the competition will begin this weekend. Will the Dragons expensive signing, Ben Hunt deliver? He will be keen to begin well with his new club and he has an added incentive in that he is playing against his former team-mates. Dragons five eighth Gareth Widdop will have a key role to play, as captain, goalkicker and playmaker. Hunt will become the ninth halfback to combine with Widdop at the scrum base in his time at the Dragons. All eyes will be on Mitchell Pearce at Newcastle's McDonald Jones Stadium on Friday night. The Knights have finished at the bottom of the ladder for the last three seasons and they are counting on Pearce, more than any other player to mould them into a winning team. Manly will be formidable opposition for the Knights and their key man will be Daly Cherry-Evans. Newcastle could field around eight new players from last year and 19 year old Kalyn Ponga, from the Cowboys, is one of these. Soon after the Newcastle-Manly game has finished, the Sharks, 2016 Premiers, will take on 2015 champions, the Cowboys, up at Townsville. Johnathan Thurston will play his 300th first grade game so the Sharks will face an emotionally driven Cowboys side. Matt Scott is also set to resume after a long injury layoff which would further strengthen the home team. Matt Moylan will make his debut with Cronulla after 89 first grade games with Penrith. Three good games will make Saturday a good night to stay home. The first game between the Wests Tigers and the Roosters at Sydney's ANZ stadium will see Easts fullback James Tedesco pitted against his old team. Cooper Cronk wearing a Roosters jersey will seem out of place for many but it is a big plus for his new club. The Tigers will field many new players and one of these, Josh Reynolds at five eighth, should be a real positive for the team. Next is the double header at Perth's new 60,000 plus stadium. The Warriors take on South Sydney in the first game. It will be interesting to see if and how long new Rabbitohs coach, Anthony Seibold, uses Greg Inglis and who he starts at hooker, Damian Cook or Robbie Farah. The Warriors will have been boosted by the news that Roger Tuivasa-Sheck will be staying with the club. The scrum base combination of Shaun Johnson and Blake Green could be the key to a Warriors first up win. Adam Blair and Tohu Harris will want to make an impact from the start with their new club and they have the ability to cause Souths plenty of problems in the ruck area. The late game in Perth will see new Bulldog coach, Dean Pay, in his first game as a first grade coach, take on his very experienced opposition coach, Craig Bellamy, who has steered the Storm in 434 games in his 15 seasons as head coach. How will Melbourne play without Cooper Cronk might not be answered in just this first game but it will be a big talking point after the match.

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Round one finishes on Sunday with Jarryd Hayne and his Parramatta Eels travelling out to Panthers Stadium. With Hayne at right centre, Kiwi World Cup man, Brad Takairangi, will move from the centres in 2017 to second row this year. Penrith will be hoping their new signing, James Maloney at five eighth, gels with half-back, Nathan Cleary from the first game. The final match is up on the Gold Coast where the Raiders meet the Titans at Cbus Super Stadium. This clash has a similar coaching situation to that in the Bulldogs-Storm game. On the Gold Coast, the Titans Garth Brennan, in his first grade coaching debut, will face seasoned coach, Ricky Stuart, who has 349 first grade games coaching experience on his CV. Now, 51, Stuart has coached the Roosters, the Sharks, the Eels and the Canberra Raiders. Look out for the Titans new signing, Bryce Cartwright.

Kiwi League Show

THURSDAY'S NIGHTS 8.30pm on Sky Sport 2 Monty Betham and Courtney Tairi will co-present a new league show for 30 minutes with the emphasis being on Kiwi's playing the game in the Nrl and UK Super-league. We see Vodafone Warriors players like never before with a segment that gets us closer to them and we help you keep updated with your favorite Kiwi players across the ditch and on the other-side of the World. It's a great relaxed show where it's not all about the stats but about the Kiwis who play in their respective jumpers to earn a living in a privileged job. We have our own Kiwi version of the Dally M's and quite rightly named after a Kiwi legend! Tune in this Thursday the 8th to find out who that legend is and what else the show brings you.





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Sea Eagles Circling Christchurch

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)



MANLY WARRINGAH coach Trent Barrett made a flying visit to Christchurch, enjoyed a beer and a punt down the River Avon with Frank Endacott, gave his seal of approval to AMI Stadium and briefly chatted with Crusaders counterpart Scott Robertson as a prelude to the Sea Eagles bringing their round 14 (Saturday, June 9, 5pm) home game against the Warriors to the city. It is to be the first of three such fixtures in an agreement which extends until the 2020 season.

Match organiser Justin Wallace, undaunted by Penrith Panthers' failure to honour a similar agreement last year, has done outstandingly well to find such an illustrious replacement. Manly has a strong following in this country. Canterbury legend Mark Broadhurst shed sweat and blood at Brookvale in the early 1980s while the late Adrian Shelford was part of coach Graham Lowe's Kiwis contingent there in 1990. Utility Lewis Brown is on the current roster.

Barrett said he was pleasantly surprised by the ground facilities, considering the stadium was a temporary one constructed after the 2011 earthquakes. "The players and our travelling fans will get everything they need, and with the proximity of the pitch there is not a bad seat in the house. It is not hard to imagine that this stadium will be pumping when it is full on June 9," he said. Wallace is also predicting a capacity crowd, with more than 3000 seats already sold.

Penrith and the Warriors filled the stadium in 2016, and it was expected the Panthers would be only too happy to return. Coincidence or not, they withdrew from their commitment soon after the Kaikoura earthquake and only days before the release of the 2017 NRL draw. Now Manly has agreed to play in Christchurch in 2018 and 2019 with an option for 2020. The June 9-11 weekend is Queen's Birthday in NSW, which should attract travelling supporters.

"We are committed to building a long-term relationship with the Canterbury region, and judging by the heart-warming reception and first impressions, I think we will feel right at home in Christchurch," said Barrett. That relationship extends to the rugby league community. Barrett shared some of his experiences with local coaches. A pathway will eventually be created for talented southerners to further their NRL aspirations via Brookvale.

Manly finished a creditable sixth in the 2017 premiership and Barrett was confident the Sea Eagles would be comfortably established inside the top eight when they meet the Warriors in June. Their 2018 campaign starts against the rebuilding Newcastle Knights at Newcastle on Saturday. Ironically, Manly's most significant off-season loss was five-eighth Blake Green, who will be wearing the Warriors number six jersey when the clubs clash in Christchurch.

The Manly players themselves will be in unfamiliar jerseys as a result of Wallace forming a unique partnership with Ngai Tahu. The South Island iwi has commissioned a one-off jersey to be designed by Fayne Robinson, one of Ngai Tahu's leading Maori artists and master carvers. Wallace and Robinson were rugby league team-mates in Rotorua before Wallace transferred to Canterbury to become a member of Endacott's highly successful teams.

Manly chief executive Lyall Gorman welcomed the move. He confirmed the strip would have a unique mix of Ngai Tahu and Manly heritage and be worn exclusively for Manly's matches in Christchurch. Gorman said he was hoping the relationship would extend beyond three years and the shirt would become synonymous with that bond. Designer Robinson said it would represent "the natural divide between our two countries and the eagle crossing the water to make his way to the South Island."

Barrett's visit coincided with the announcement the Kiwis and England would play a Test in Denver, Colorado, on June 23, the stand-alone weekend of the second State of Origin match. Inevitably, Barrett was quizzed on his thoughts, and just as inevitably he joined Warriors chief executive Cameron George and Canberra Raiders coach Ricky Stuart in expressing some concern. Like George and Stuart, the Manly mentor waved the player welfare flag.

Continued on next page...

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Powerful prop Martin Taupau is likely to be Manly's only player chosen to make the 38-hour round trip to the United States, but Barrett also listed Jake and Tom Trbojivic, Daly Cherry-Evans, Apisai Koroisau and Dylan Walker as Manly men who could be involved in Origin. Barrett had already calculated that Taupau might be showing signs of fatigue if required to play in Christchurch, Wollongong, Denver and Penrith within 22 days in June.

The NZRL will clearly have a tough job selling the concept of a mid-season Test match in the northern hemisphere to the NRL clubs which pay their players. It should be a far easier "sell" for Wallace to get South Island rugby league fans along to Manly's home match against the Warriors in Christchurch two weeks earlier.

Read more about Manly Coaching Staff visiting Christchurch at:

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/sport/league/101840986/manly-coach-trent-barrett-joins-chorus-of-concerns-over-denver-test>



A promotional poster for a St Patrick's Day rugby match at Mt Smart. The background is a dark green field with several bright green shamrocks. In the foreground, two players are shown in action. On the left, a player in a light blue jersey with 'SUZUKI' and 'TEH' logos is running with a white rugby ball. On the right, a player in a dark navy jersey with 'Vodafone' and 'WOODSTOCK' logos is also running with a white rugby ball. The text 'St Patrick's Day at Mt Smart' is written in a large, white, stylized font across the middle. Below this, the logos for the 'Vodafone Warriors' and 'Gold Coast Titans' are shown, separated by a 'V' symbol. At the bottom, the text 'PRE PURCHASE NOW \$15' and '5PM SATURDAY MARCH 17' is displayed in large, bold, white letters. The Suzuki logo is in the top left corner, and the Ticketek logo is in the top right corner.

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5PM SATURDAY MARCH 17





By Miles Davis

The Originals - Warrior No. 7: Greg Alexander

Warriors player Greg Alexander, Winfield Cup, 1995.
Photo www.photosport.nz

THE FOOT of the Blue Mountains in New South Wales is a fair distance from Mt Smart but that is where Vodafone Warriors No. 7, Greg 'Brandy' Alexander was born and raised. He attended the Patrician Brothers' College in Fairfield where he first made his mark in rugby league (other league stars such as Paul Langmack, Peter Sterling and Nathan Hindmarsh also attended this school). In 1983 he was selected for Australian Schoolboys and the following year was signed by his local club, the Penrith Panthers.

He made his senior debut for the Panthers from the interchange bench in the round 2 game against the Manly Sea Eagles. In round 3 he was in the starting line-up and became a first team regular going on to make 22 appearances, scoring 10 tries. At the end of his inaugural season he was named Rookie of the Year.

1985 was to be a stellar season for Alexander. He made 26 appearances in a season that saw the Panthers qualify for the play-offs by finishing 5th in the regular season, scoring a then club record 192 points along the way. The Panthers were victorious in their first play-off game, beating the Sea Eagles 10-7 with Alexander kicking 3 goals. It was a different story however in their next game where they were demolished 38-6 by Parramatta. The season ended on a high with the young Penrith star being awarded the Dally M Player of the Year.

1986 saw him continue his point-scoring feats with another 183 and his form was good enough to see him picked in the Kangaroos squad for their tour to Great Britain and France. His team-mate Royce Simmons was also selected for the squad and they became Penrith's first ever Kangaroos. He made 10 appearances on tour although did not manage to pick up a test jersey.

1988 saw an upturn in Penrith's fortunes as they once again made the play-offs and 1989 saw them finish 2nd in the Minor Premiership. 2 defeats in the play-offs meant that their wait for a first Grand Final continued. 1989 also saw Alexander get selected for the New South Wales State of Origin squad and make his test debut for the Kangaroos against the Kiwis.

1990 saw the rise of the Chocolate Soldiers continue with Alexander scoring 170 points in the regular season as they Panthers qualified for the play-offs by finishing 3rd. In their first play-off game they defeated the Brisbane Broncos 26-16 (Alexander nabbing a try and kicking 5 goals). The major semi-final was next and saw them come up against minor premiers the Canberra Raiders. Alexander was in fine form scoring 2 tries and kicking 7 from 7 as the Panthers caused a minor upset in winning 30-12. That qualified the Panthers for their first Grand Final while Canberra had to take on the Broncos to see who would take the other spot in rugby league's big day. It was the Raiders who were successful, setting up a repeat of the major semi-final. Although Alexander once again scored a try in the final, his boot was misfiring, kicking just 1 from 4 in an 18-14 loss.

Continued on next page...

Coming so close seemed to energise the Panthers and they stormed to the minor Premiership, finishing 6 points clear of 2nd placed Manly. Alexander once again played a major part, scoring 139 points and captaining the side on 15 occasions. He was also joined in the squad by younger brother Ben. In the Major Semi-Final against North Sydney, Alexander contributed 12 of his side's points in a narrow 16-14 win. The Grand Final was to be a repeat of 1990 with the Canberra Raiders once again being the opposition. This time the Panthers got their hands on the main prize with Alexander kicking 3 goals and a field goal to complement a try from Brad Izzard and 2 tries from club legend Royce Simmons (who was playing his final game for the club).

His conversion of Simmons' 2nd try put the Panther's 7 points clear with only moments left.

"I still get goose bumps now thinking about it going over" says Alexander "It was just an enormous amount of relief. We were struggling at half-time. Canberra was a great side. They'd beaten us the year before and it looked like we were going to get stage fright again. I think the turning point in that game was ... we played nearly the perfect second half of footy. I can't remember Canberra even being in our half!"

1992 was to be life-changing for Alexander and his family. On the 21st June the Penrith squad were at a club function, celebrating their Grand Final win and with players being presented with their Premiership blazers. Greg had remained at the club while brother Ben and some others left for another venue. Tragically Ben was killed in a crash en route.

After the accident Alexander struggled to come to terms with his brother's death and his game suffered. After two years of struggling he decided he needed a move away from Sydney so after 207 games and over 1000 points for the Panthers he decided on a move to the Vodafone Warriors. "I lost the passion to play league, I don't know how I did it for a long time," Alexander said "It was like I was on autocue and just did what I'd done for so long, but did it without passion. That was the reason that I decided to head off to New Zealand."

He needed a lift and the move to Auckland delivered as Alexander later recalled "New Zealand provided it and the people in New Zealand, the Warriors, in those fledgling years were fantastic, they really were. We had between nine and 10 players who had never played ARL or first grade football before. There were no egos there and it was a great experience for me because these blokes wanted to learn what it was like to play in the NRL."

He scored his first try in the Round 3 game against the Magpies and went on to make 21 appearances, scoring 8 tries (goal-kicking duties were undertaken in the main by Gene Ngamu).

The 1996 saw him awarded the captaincy of the Warriors after the departure of Dean Bell. He went on to make 16 appearances but injury saw him replaced in the halves by Stacey Jones and he moved to full back for most of his remaining games. 1997 saw him return to Penrith where he was to finish his playing career, retiring in 1999.

After hanging up his boots, Alexander picked up the microphone and has forged himself a career in the media, most notably as a host/commentator for Foxtel. In 2000 he was awarded the Australian Sports Medal for his achievements in rugby league. In late 2017 the newly appointed NSW State of Origin coach, Brad Fittler, called upon Alexander to become an adviser for the 2018 encounters. The pair had been team-mates at Penrith and Fittler said after the appointment "He has been a mentor of mine for the whole of my career. He is the person who I trust most, not only about football, but about everything."

Greg Alexander was undoubtedly a son of Penrith but was also adopted by the rugby league public of both Auckland and New Zealand.

1990 Grand Final Penrith v Canberra https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F5mLpgh_jsg

1991 Grand Final Penrith v Canberra <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3AA03IDyURE>



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

The Mad Butchers Weekly NRL Tipping Comp.

By John Holloway

NRL Round 14

		Sue Phelan	Joe Vagana	John Coffey	Fast Eddie	Monty Betham	Neville Kesha	High-Tackle Holloway
		<i>Maloney's Barber Shop - The best haircut in town.</i>	<i>League Legend and Machine Lease King.</i>	<i>Newsletter Columnist and Veteran Leagueie</i>	<i>Devonport Dutchman - Takin it easy...</i>	<i>The Warrior Boxer - StepsForLife</i>	<i>Ex International Referee</i>	<i>Richmond Bulldog - Old School Richmond Leagueie</i>
Date/ Venue	Game							
8 March Jubilee oval	Dragons v Broncos	Broncos	Broncos	Dragons	Dragons	Broncos	Dragons	Broncos
9 March McDonald James	Knights v Sea Eagles	Sea Eagles	Knights	Sea Eagles	Sea Eagles	Knights	Sea Eagles	Sea Eagles
9 March 1300 Smiles	Cowboys v Sharks	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Sharks
10 March ANZ	Tigers V Roosters	Roosters	Tigers	Roosters	Roosters	Roosters	Roosters	Roosters
10 March Perth Stadium	Warriors v Rabbitohs	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors
10 March Perth stadium	Storm v Bulldogs	Storm	Storm	Storm	Storm	Storm	Storm	Storm
11 Mar Panther stadium	Panthers v Eels	Eels	Eels	Eels	Panthers	Eels	Panthers	Eels
11 March Cbus stadium	Titans v Raiders	Raiders	Raiders	Raiders	Raiders	Titans	Raiders	Raiders
Picks last week		-	-	-	-	-	-	-

HALLELUJAH!! THE climates changing and for the better, bringing the real footy back at last, for season 2018. Let the games begin and let me start by introducing a couple of Newbies on the 2018 Pumpin Punting Panel. Firstly welcome to the leading lady of FLAVA she has the beats that move you and is already an on-ground favourite at Mt Smart TARSH Ieremia. Tarsh has strong family connections in Rugby League and will not lack for knowledgeable support in her selections. Secondly an old friend from my early playing days at the mighty Richmond Bulldogs Neville Kesha. A bolshie little halfback in the grades who turned to refereeing later on with great success. He first whistled at club level, then Provincial, then progressed to be well recognised across the hard yards of the International Test arena. Small of stature Nifty Nev but when he turned that crooked smiling stare on hulking International Props they knew it was time to back off. Back on deck and not just makin-up the

numbers The Devonport Dutchman Fast Eddie, the venerable League writer John Coffey, superstar Samoan and Warrior Kiwi Ikon Big Joe Vagana, Kiwis enforcer Monty Betham star of the Ring, the Footyfield and the TV screen. Last but not least the old school leagueie High-Tackle Holloway himself bringin up the rear. First picks are on the board who can get away to a flyer in round one. Fast Hands Montz is the only Titans Tipper and Big Joe as usual like to throw in a long shot and is the only Tigers believer. Everybodys on the Storm and probably will be most weeks. Other than that a fairly steady as she goes approach by all. As we all know anything can happen on an NRL weekend, The big guns can pop and The easy beats can bop and it just aint over till the large person sings!!

So lets dig in for the long haul to the Big Dance, heres hoping the mighty Warriors can get it together and give the faithful plenty to cheer for. Kia Kaha Waaarrrriiooorrrss.



Titans Utility Signed And Two Players Upgraded

by Richard Becht

G**OLD COAST** utility Karl Lawton has today been signed by the Vodafone Warriors while hooker Sam Cook and highly-promising fullback Hayze Perham have had their contracts upgraded ahead of the 2018 NRL season starting next week.

Vodafone Warriors general manager football Brian Smith said Cook and Perham had been rewarded for their performances in the preseason and the club's NRL trials while the 22-year-old Lawton has been secured on a two-year deal.

Capable of playing in the outside backs, hooker and loose forward, Lawton has made 12 NRL appearances since his debut against the Vodafone Warriors in 2016, an occasion which ended in disappointment when he broke his leg.

He recovered to turn out 11 times for the Titans last season when he alternated between starting at hooker and being on the interchange bench.

"We're thrilled to be able to secure Karl so quickly following Ata Hingano's departure," said Smith.

"While Karl's versatility is valuable, most of all he'll give us experience and add to our depth."

Vodafone Warriors head coach Stephen Kearney welcomed Lawton's arrival, the club's 10th new signing for 2018 and the third to join the club from Gold Coast (alongside Lawton's ex-Titans team-mates Agnatius Paasi and Leivaha Pulu).

"We really like what Karl has to offer and he'll be a great addition to our squad," he said.

"He lined up against us twice last season and we've also seen him in trials so we have a good understanding of his qualities.

"It's also pleasing to see Sam and Hayze promoted. They've been wonderful during our preseason training programme and also impressed in both trials."

As well as Cook and Perham, Smith noted other rookie talent featured in the club's NRL system including Chanel Harris-Tavita, Joseph Vuna and Matiu Love-Henry.

"They're all examples of the rewards available to young players rising through the ranks at the Vodafone Warriors," he said.

Northcote junior Cook (24) made 10 NYC appearances for the Vodafone Junior Warriors in 2013 and has since gone on to play 37 times for the club's Intrust Super Premiership side. The Westlake Boys' High School product spent 2016 playing in Newcastle before coming back home last year. He played all but one of the team's 25 games and was named the club's 2017 Vodafone ISP Team Man of the Year.

Continued on next page...

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Perham joined the club after an exceptional schoolboy career in both rugby league and rugby union, the latter in the Rotorua Boys' High School First XV. He combined his rugby union commitments with rugby league, playing for the Pikiāo Warriors, for his school at the New Zealand Secondary Schools Nationals and for the New Zealand 18s.

Standoff Harris-Tavita (18), the club's 2017 Vodafone NYC Player of the Year, has rugby league pedigree on both sides of his family (his grandfather Ray Harris represented New Zealand Maori). A Pakuranga College, he played his junior rugby league for the Mount Wellington Warriors while he also had stints with the Richmond Rovers and Howick Hornets. Still eligible for the under-20s for another two years, he played for the Junior Kiwis last year (he has played 39 times for the Vodafone Junior Warriors in the last two years).

Vuna (19) also comes from a family with a strong rugby league heritage. A New Zealand Secondary Schools representative, the ex-Otahuhu College junior and Otahuhu Leopards junior has made 43 under-20 appearances for the Vodafone Junior Warriors over the last two seasons.

After 32 NYC appearances in 2014 and 2015, Love-Henry (22) moved to the Brisbane Broncos for the 2016 and 2017 seasons, where he played for Norths Devils in the Intrust Super Cup without breaking into the NRL. A Taupo Phoenix junior, he also turned out for the Point Chevalier Pirates in Auckland. Fluent in Te Reo, he was educated at Te Kura Kaupapa Maori o Whakarewa | Te Reo Ki Tuwharetoa in Taupo.

KARL LAWTON

Date of Birth: November 29, 1995
Birthplace: Murwillumbah, Qld
Junior Club: Burleigh Bears (Qld)
Position: Standoff
Height: 185cm
Weight: 93kg
Previous Clubs: Gold Coast Titans (2016-2017)
Rep Honours: Queensland under-20s (2015)
NRL Debut: Gold Coast v Vodafone Warriors, Mount Smart Stadium, July 2, 2016 (Round 17)
NRL Career: 12 appearances, 2016-2017
NRL Points: 8 (2 tries)

SAM COOK

Date of Birth: August 1, 1993
Birthplace: Auckland, NZ
Junior Club: Northcote Tigers
Position: Hooker
Height: 180cm
Weight: 92kg
Previous Clubs: South Newcastle
Rep Honours: NZ Maori Residents
NRL Debut: Yet to make NRL debut

HAYZE PERHAM

Date of birth: July 2, 1999
Birthplace: Taupo, NZ
Junior Club: Pikiāo Warriors
Position: Fullback
Height: 184cm
Weight: 88kg
Rep Honours: New Zealand 18s (2017)
NRL Debut: Yet to make NRL debut



Free Event Train for Double Header Match

On April 7 for the Double Header match there will be a free train service from Britomart to Mt Smart Stadium and back again for the SKYCITY Auckland Double Header. This service is available from three hours before kick off for the first game and you just need to show your ticket to access it.

MEMBERS' CLUBROOMS

Vodafone Warriors Membership Update

THE COUNTDOWN is on for our first home game of the 2018 season at Mt Smart Stadium and we can't wait to have you back in our house.

We are writing today to let you know about an important change that could affect you on the first two game days.

As an organisation, we are committed to providing our members with the best possible game day experience and have made arrangements to set up an alternative members' zone in the club's carpark just inside Gate C for our first two home games.

This area will be cordoned off in a way that requires all players to pass through it on their way into Vodafone Warriors HQ on game day and we are confident you will enjoy the experience.

Please note that for our round two clash against the Titans on Saturday, March 17, and the SKYCITY Auckland Double Header on Saturday, April 7, the Members' Clubrooms will be unavailable.

For the Titans game, we have been informed by Regional Facilities Auckland that Mt Smart Stadium must be clear by midnight that same night to allow the pack in for the Ed Sheeran concerts to begin.

That game day falls on St Patrick's Day and we are planning to build a pop up Irish pub behind the goalposts for all fans to use that can be dismantled in time.

The marquee will then be installed before the SKYCITY Auckland Double Header but given this is a one-off event with different commercial requirements to a regular game day, it is required as a corporate space.

We apologise for the disruption and appreciate your understanding.

Please also note that a revamped, new-look Members' Clubrooms will be back in action behind the northern goal posts in time for the second home game covered by your membership card on Saturday, April 14 when we take on the Brisbane Broncos.

Thanks again for your support and we look forward to seeing you in 2018.

Regards,

Memberships Team

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



Facebook



Instagram



Twitter



International Netball coming to the North Shore



WITH THE Silver Ferns are currently in the second of three training camps since the team was named in February, the hard work is underway to prepare the team for a busy few months.

First up is the Taini Jamison Trophy where the Silver Ferns will take on Jamaica, Malawi and Fiji over four days of top flight international Netball at North Shore Events Centre in Auckland.

Newcomers to the squad Michaela Sokolich-Beatson and Amelieranne Ekenasio have been making their mark and putting their hands up for selection. For Sokolich-Beatson there's also the added incentive with her potentially making her debut in her home region, having grown up and played most of her Netball in Whangaparoa.

Featuring international Netball superstars, the Taini Jamison Trophy series will provide teams with their final preparations before they head to the 2018 Commonwealth Games in April. All teams are aware that at this stage, gaining the mental edge is critical. With the Silver Ferns facing Malawi in Pool Play at the Games, this series is going to provide some valuable insights into the typically full-of-flair African side.

The Jamaican team will be spearheaded by twin shooting towers Romelda Aiken and Jhaniele Fowler-Reid. Viewing the Netball court from the lofty heights of 1.96m, the pair offer match-winning attributes in the shooting circle. Aiken also has the added flexibility within the team of switching to the defensive end of the court when required.

After coming in fourth at the recent 2017 Netball World Youth Cup, Fiji are a nation on the up in world Netball. The test for this team is whether they are going to be able to build on their recent performances and go in to the Commonwealth Games with some real momentum.

With two games each day it's going to be a feast of non-stop Netball action with food trucks, entertainment, giveaways and loads of fun for fans of all ages. Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday games will be a great night out after work with matches starting at 6pm, or head along Saturday afternoon for a fantastic day of family-friendly entertainment with the Finals action starting at 2pm.

And with every 10 ticket package purchased, fans will go in the draw to win a spot as a Silver Ferns Ball Deliverer. You'll be bought down the court side line and will take the ball on court during one of the Silver Ferns Matches. There are no age restrictions – we're just looking for loyal Silver Ferns supporters to become part of the team at this exciting 4 day international Netball event!

Taini Jamison Trophy

Silver Ferns v Jamaica v Malawi v Fiji

21-24 March, North Shore Events Centre, Auckland

Children from \$12, adults from \$5, Family pass from \$59 or take the team with 10 tickets for \$150

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HE WILL go down as one of the greatest rugby
league players of all time and it's only fitting
Johnathan Thurston will play his 300th NRL game
as he surpasses Matt Bowen's record for games
played at the Cowboys. We call on game legends
Mal Meninga and Darren Lockyer to give us insight
on what makes him tick.

Knights winger Nathan Ross declares the club's
days of collecting wooden spoons are over as
players deal with expectation for the first time in a
long time. "Expectation isn't something this current
squad has had to deal with. We need to make sure
everyone is mentally prepared for it because if you
fail there can be quite a bit of backlash," he says.

Our columnist Ben Hunt admits his first couple of
showings for his new club the Dragons were below
par, but he is confident of developing his combina-
tion with Gareth Widdop and elevating the club to
the finals.

James Tedesco comes up against his old club the
Wests Tigers, who are struggling to fill the dynamic
fullback's role. Incumbent Tuimoala Lolohea says
he is still working on his game with coach Ivan
Cleary before being handed the No.1 jersey.

PLUS... This Week in History, we run through the
best Parra v Penrith opening clashes and an Ashley
Taylor poster.

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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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