

VODAFONE



# Sir Peter Leitch Club

AT MT SMART STADIUM, HOME OF THE MIGHTY VODAFONE WARRIORS

4<sup>th</sup> April 2018

## Newsletter #211

### We're Celebrating!

To celebrate the Vodafone Warriors breaking another record and winning 4 straight games we have increased our giveaway to 20 Vodafone Warriors 2017 Nines jerseys all signed by Stacey Jones, Simon Mannering, Ruben Wiki, Mason Lino, David Fusitu'a and Ken Maumalo.



Some of our awesome fans at the game! On the left is Vodafone Warriors CEO Cameron George. It was great to see him mix and mingle with our loyal fans. On the right, with the tie, is Daryl Halligan former North Sydney, Bulldogs and Kiwis player.



By Miles Davis

# Warriors 4 and 0

Issac Luke celebrates.  
Photo [www.photosport.nz](http://www.photosport.nz)

**N**O IT'S not an early April Fool joke. The Vodafone Warriors have actually won their first 4 games of the season and are one of just 2 sides who are so far undefeated.

There were many fans pinching themselves after the first 3 games had resulted in wins and they were probably not helped by the multitude of regular Warrior-bashers saying it was just a flash in the pan and that normal service would be resumed away at the Roosters. That the late withdrawal of Shaun Johnson would prove to be too much of a handicap. How wrong those doubters were.

A few doubts may have crept in as the Roosters crossed the line in the 2nd minute to open up a 6 point lead but they were soon dispelled as that success proved to be a false dawn for the hosts. What followed was as dominant and professional a performance from the Vodafone Warriors seen in many years. Rather than causing them to drop their heads, the early setback merely provided a spark that turned the Vodafone Warriors into a raging inferno that would end up roasting the hapless chooks.

And those who expressed doubts at Mason Lino's ability to deputise for Johnson were left with egg on their face as not only did he do a magnificent job helping guide his side around the park he also chipped in with a try and kicked 7 from 7 straight through the uprights.

So what are the main differences between this season's team and the one that lost 9 on the trot at the tail-end of last year? One of the first things that seem apparent is the team's fitness. They have hit the ground running and appear to finish each game in a stronger vein than their opposition. A graphical example of this is Isaac Luke who not only looks as lean and mean as he ever has but is also playing like the Luke of old – combative, abrasive, constantly challenging the line and keeping opposition defences on their toes.

Then there is the total commitment to the cause and each other both in defence and attack. No-one is shirking their duty or goes missing when the going gets tough. Look at the pumped up reaction of skipper Roger Tuivasa-Sheck when he has made one of his several try-saving tackles and the reciprocation of his team-mates. These reactions are repeated every time there is a crucial play by any member of the side. There is truly a brotherhood amongst this team that seems to have been missing in recent times, a passion for the jersey that has been reflected in their play and, consequently, their results.

Another factor, which may well have been enhanced by those mentioned above, is the form of several key individuals who may not have quite fired last season. Isaac Luke has already been mentioned and the injured Shaun Johnson has also started the season in impressive manner (let's hope his injury is only a minor one). Roger Tuivasa-Sheck has grown into the captaincy and his open field running is back to its best behind a pack going forward and David Fusitua has been a beast with his aerial try-scoring routines fast becoming one of the highlights of the NRL. But perhaps as vital as anything else has been the addition of two on-field leaders.

*Continued on next page...*



Tohu Harris is already proving to be a huge acquisition. He is everywhere and his powerful running gives the side a lot of go-forward which has allowed the backs to express themselves. He has made the absence of Simon Mannering bearable (that doesn't mean you shouldn't hurry back Simon). But arguably most key of all is Blake Green.

At the age of 31 Green is a seasoned campaigner who has been around the block. The Warriors are his 6th NRL clubs after spells with the Eels, Sharks, Bulldogs, Storm and Sea Eagles and he also spent time in the UK with Hull Kingston Rovers and Wigan. He achieved a fair amount of success on his travels winning the Challenge Cup and Super League Grand Final with Wigan in 2013 (winning the Harry Sunderland Trophy for Man of the Match in the Super League Grand Final after playing 77 minutes with a fractured eye-socket) and also winning the NRL minor Premiership with the Storm in 2016 and also gaining a Grand Final runners-up medal in the same season.

He has brought all that experience to bear so far this season and his presence seems to have had a calming influence on the side as well as bringing out the best in his halves partners, Shaun Johnson in the first 3 games and Mason Lino at the weekend. The move has also proved beneficial for Green as his form already has his name being mentioned for inclusion in the New South Wales State of Origin squad.

Of course this Vodafone Warriors side will have tougher questions to answer as the season progresses but the signs are very positive that this year's version is the real deal and that they will be have a say at the sharp end of the season. So keep the faith and enjoy the ride.



**Ken Maumalo and David Fusitu'a**



**Stephan Kearny embracing one of the players.**



**Mason Lino all smiles in the changing rooms.**



**Congratulations to Anthony Gelling who made his club and NRL debut on the night**





# Vodafone Warriors Triumph Over The Roosters



Photos courtesy of [www.photosport.nz](http://www.photosport.nz)





By Myles Davis

# Mason Lino

Mason Lino on attack  
Photo [www.photosport.nz](http://www.photosport.nz)

**T**HE ROAD to NRL success has been a tough and relatively long one for Mason Lino but his performance in the Vodafone Warriors success at the weekend was a sign that he may have finally arrived.

I remember first watching Lino as a dynamic half for the Warriors Under 20's and thought it would only be a matter of time before he made it to first grade. Things did not quite pan out as I had expected.

Anyone waiting in line behind the talent that is Shaun Johnson was always going to have to wait for his chance. 3 seasons with the Under-20's including a final in 2013 and a Grand Final win in 2014, in which he co-captained the side, had provided success but not a first grade opportunity so he signed with AS Carcassonne for the 2015 season. He had however dislocated his shoulder during that 2014 final (and despite this stayed on the park, kicking 5 from 6) and the injury led to Carcassonne cancelling his contract.

Although it was a bitter blow for the young man at the time he now feels it was a blessing in disguise. The Vodafone Warriors had promptly given him another contract and he'd knuckled down once again and managed to earn his first taste of the big time. Says Lino "I think that was a bit of a silver lining because the following year I got an NRL debut. I missed out on a life experience and having an OE, but I am thankful I stayed behind."

The next couple of years offered little more than reserve grade football and an ankle injury further hampered his chances. I put it to him that his injuries had perhaps been a major factor in his not making more first grade performances but the ever humble Lino saw it differently. "It wasn't really the injuries it was more that I needed to develop as a player".

In 2017 he made another 6 appearances but failed to make an impact in a struggling side. What would 2018 bring? Lino had put on some weight and strength to help his body stay free of injuries and had a great pre-season, captaining the Warriors in their pre-season win over the Melbourne Storm. When Shaun Johnson had to pull out through injury on Friday he was ready to fill the breach. He told me he was more excited than nervous and that he, Johnson and Blake Green have done a lot of work together in training so he felt comfortable about doing the job.

And do the job he did. Lino looked every inch an NRL half, scoring a try and kicking 7 from 7 along the way. He looked like he belonged although once again played down his part saying "Blake Green made it easy for me".

He puts the change in the Vodafone Warriors fortunes this season down to hard work in the pre-season and the impact of the new signings. When I asked him how he would feel having to step down when Shaun Johnson returned he said it didn't feel like stepping down. He felt they were part of a unit, that it was Shaun's position and he was happy to step up when required.

*Continued on next page...*

*Continued from previous page...*

As for his future? He is contracted to the Vodafone Warriors until 2019 and does not rule out moving elsewhere should the right offer present itself but that at the moment he is very happy at Mt Smart and very much looking forward to being part of a successful season.

From a personal point of view I was delighted with his effort against the Roosters and have no doubt he will be a vital cog in this season's efforts. I am also however aware that his performance will have alerted other outfits and that with brilliant Shaun Johnson in front of him there is a high likelihood that the humble and likeable Mason Lino will eventually have to move elsewhere to fully fulfil his potential.

---

## **Four From Four – Give Me More**

**By David Kemeys**

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



**O**KAY I admit it.

I watched as we towelled the Roosters 30-6 and was waiting for us to fall apart and cock it up.

Fair play, it's just what we have always done.

But no more.

The performance against the title-tipped Roosters was outstanding.

At home for Easter was my grandson, who lives in Sydney, where he is a Roosters fan.

Even he would not bet on his side, telling Grandma he's really a Warriors fan and only supports the Roosters because that is his local side across the ditch.

Well there were plenty of fans at the stadium on Saturday and they roared the boys home. It was fantastic hearing the chants go up. If only we could replicate that at Mt Smart, where you can hear a pin drop most of the time.

Maybe, just maybe, this brilliant start to the year is no fluke.

The Roosters have been heavily tipped as the team most likely to go all the way, but we gave them an old-fashioned arse-kicking, and without Shaun Johnson, James Gavet, Sam Lisone or Simon Mannering.

I was especially delighted for young Mason Lino, who has copped plenty of abuse when he has had to fill in for Johnson in the past, because he was sensational.

His game was really good, rewarded with a fine try, and his kicking sport-on,

Assistant coach Andrew McFadden reckons there is a special feeling in the team now.

"I'm extremely happy for the group," he said.

Good on you Andrew, but I'm especially happy for the fans, who have put up with some dire performances in the past.

There was time we would have just accepted that without Johnson we'd get done.

No more.

*Continued on next page...*

*Continued from previous page...*

The 17 all stepped up, and they got just reward for it, dominating the Roosters in every facet of the game.

But if there is one thing I am absolutely over the moon about, it is coach Stephen Kearney – who many said would be on his way out of the club by now if we did not start well.

We are all cock-a-hoop and eyeing the top eight like the promised land, but Kearney is urging everyone not to get carried away – which is exactly the message the playing group need to hear.

Yes, it's good, bloody good. But it's four matches in a long season.

“There's still plenty of improvement in us and I know we can be better.”

That is undoubtedly true, which must be sending a shiver or two up the spines of other clubs, but there is no getting away from the fact that this was our best win by far, and against a side that is highly-rated.

There is zero doubt Adam Blair, Tohu Harris, Peta Hiku, Leivaha Pulu and especially Balke Green, have added to our arsenal. Roger Tuivasa-Sheck and Issac Luke are also better than they have been before, and it's no wonder the players are growing in self-belief.

But Kearney prefers the underdog mentality, and so do I.

I have said repeatedly that I do not mind losing – every side is going to. What I do mind is lack of effort, chucking the towel and no commitment.

So it is beyond a pleasure to be being served those things up now.

Long may it continue.

### **Welcome To Our World**

You could have been forgiven for looking at our late replacement, and wondering: Who the hell is that.

I can tell you, it's former Wigan Warrior Anthony Gelling.

He has hardly rated a mention in our season, but he made his Warriors debut at Allianz in our 30-6 victory over the Roosters.

Welcome to our world Anthony.

### **Ownership Change Said To Be A Done Deal – Or Not!**

So apparently Richard Fale's mob will be our new owners by the time we play the Cowboys this weekend.

This sale has taken so long to happen that most of us have stopped caring, but Stuff reported at the weekend that Eric Watson has agreed the structure of the deal.

Fale is the Hawaii-based businessman who has acted as front man for a consortium we are told includes current and former NFL players.

This back and forth has been going on since last August, and despite the ludicrous tyre-kickers who got it all underway, you'd want to get a deal done because four from four and the club doesn't look like the case it did when the bidders came knocking.

I could background the tooing-and-froing, but it's all as boring as batshit.

But I tell you this, I will not believe it until current owner Eric Watson banks the cash and shouts himself some new Bendon undies to celebrate the deal.

The reason I say that is that a couple of hours after Stuff reported the deal was all but done, the Herald was reporting Jim Doyle, our chairman, as saying it wasn't.

Yawn.

Stuff did report though that Doyle is likely to stay involved to help the new owners, and that CEO Cameron George will keep his spot too.

Also said to be staying is Aaron Lawton, who is the fan engagement manager. That one I cannot agree with. He is a complete little shit – actually I just put that in because I used to work with him and I know he reads this – he's a bloody good guy actually.

### **Stolen Gear Back Where It Belongs**

Good news for us, not so much for a 25-year-old woman from North Shore.

We have got our stolen gear back, courtesy of “information from the public”.

*Continued on next page...*

*Continued from previous page...*

Thousands of dollars of gear went missing, including our full away kit – which is why we played in the Heritage jersey against the Roosters, GPS units and a drone.

Before you start saying that is what happens when you leave a van parked in the street on the North Shore, it was parked in a special area that was thought to be safe, and which was covered by cameras.

And like I said last week, blame Ed Sheeran, because the ginger ninja's concert at Mt Smart meant we could not put our gear back where it should have been.

The Old Bill found the gear at a house on Friday, and a 25-year-old woman was charged with receiving stolen property.

### **Critic Eats His Words**

Most of us will have never heard of Phil Rothfield, but he is a big deal in Aussie league media circles, working for the Daily Telegraph.

He also predicted the Warriors were dead-set to win the wooden spoon, and that Stephen Kearney would get the boot.

How's that humble pie tasting Phil?

Fair play to him, he was not exactly alone, but he has changed his tune.

"Kearney has done a fantastic job to turn this side is a serious football team, and wins over the Rabbitohs, Titans, Raiders and Roosters are the proof of that," he wrote.

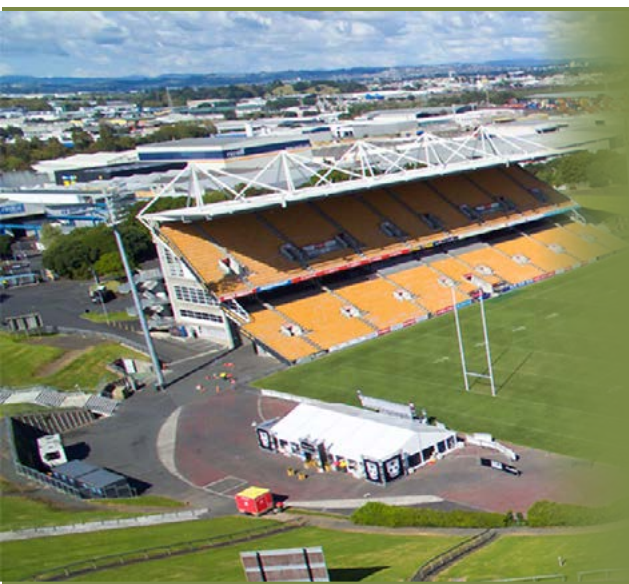
"Sure, they've had a soft draw but the win over the Roosters on Saturday afternoon would not have been more impressive, especially as they did it without superstar halfback Shaun Johnson. It's early days but the Warriors look like they are heading to the finals."

Hang on a sec Phil. Aren't you the same bloke who said our tough draw would set Kearney up to fail?

### **Bring On The Cowboys**

We have the Cowboys on Saturday - game two of a double-header that sees the Tigers play Melbourne first - followed by the Broncos and then the Dragons, another surprise package this year.

Things are getting tougher, but at least we have reason to hope



## **Coming to Mt Smart this Saturday?**

If you're coming to Mt Smart this Saturday for the double header we will be doing a tour of the stadium at half time in the curtain raiser TIGERS V STORM GAME. Go to the BACK of the WEST STAND along the concourse and go to the southern end and wait by the elevator. Everybody is welcome!



## Message from Vodafone Warriors CEO Cameron George

**T**O ALL of our fans, I say thank you! Thank you for supporting this great club, my experience at Allianz Stadium last Saturday again demonstrated to me that our fans are our greatest asset. The players and staff are committed to delivering the pride our jumper deserves.

On the field it's been a wonderful start to the year. Our players throughout the whole group are working together as one to achieve our desired outcomes each and every week. This is the toughest sporting competition in the world but we are taking it on with "no excuses" and with "an anything is possible" attitude.

The time is now for our club to be humble and respect our current position, all players, staff and fans should be gracious because there is a long way to go.... As an organisation we need to be ruthless in our preparation on and off the field to get the best results, we are not taking anything for granted.

This weekend's doubler header marks an enormous occasion for the club and I ask you to spread the word and bring friends to Mount Smart and make our home ground loud and proud.

I look forward to catching up at a game very soon.

Cheers

Cameron George



## Vodafone Warriors Fans in Sydney



Richard Morgan, Shani Willemsen, Josh Gage, Ma'Afu in the stands.



Sarah Cook winner of signed jersey.



Shani, Josh, Richard & Tracey.

**NO ADVERTS ARE PAID FOR IN THIS NEWSLETTER**

## THIS SATURDAY

**Gates open – 3.30pm**

**NRL Game 1 Tigers vs Storm – 5.00pm**

**NRL Game 2 Warriors vs Cowboys – 7.30pm**

**Mannering To Make Return In Skycity Auckland Double Header**  
*by Richard Becht*

**S**IMON MANNERING is set to return from injury to make his first appearance of the NRL season when the Vodafone Warriors take on the North Queensland Cowboys in the historic SKYCITY Auckland Double Header at Mount Smart Stadium on Saturday (7.30pm kick-off).

Riding a record season-opening run of four consecutive wins, the Vodafone Warriors also welcome back halfback Shaun Johnson from injury and front rower Sam Lisone from his one-match suspension.

Not considered was prop James Gavet, side-lined with a hamstring injury which forced him out of last Saturday's fourth-round encounter with the Sydney Roosters.

The Vodafone Warriors, still one of only two unbeaten sides this season, have top billing in the SKYCITY Double Header facing last year's beaten grand finalist North Queensland while the in-form Wests Tigers (the 'home' side) meet premiers the Melbourne Storm (5.00pm kick-off). The Tigers shocked the Storm 10-8 when the teams met in Melbourne in round two.

Mannering (31), who has played a club record 280 games, has been cleared to make his return from a shoulder injury he picked up in the trial against Gold Coast in February.

A groin complaint kept Johnson out of the superb 30-6 win over the Roosters, allowing Mason Lino to experience his first NRL victory in his 10th first-grade appearance. Lino, who was involved in three losses in 2015 and six last year, also celebrated his first NRL try and kicked seven goals from seven attempts for 18 points.

While Johnson is named at halfback, Mannering in on the extended bench in jersey No 16 along with Lisone, Jazz Tevaga, last Saturday's NRL debutant

Anthony Gelling, Ligi Sao, Lino, Chris Satae and Charnze Nicoll-Klokstad.

In what will be his fifth appearance for the Vodafone Warriors this week, second rower Leivaha Pulu will reach his 50-game milestone, having played 45 times for Gold Coast before coming home to Auckland this season.

After opening the season with a 20-14 win over Cronulla, the Cowboys have lost their last three games to Brisbane (20-24), Melbourne (14-30) and Penrith (14-33).

In 37 meetings since 1995, the Cowboys have a narrow 19-18 edge in wins and have won the last four clashes stretching back to 2015 (three of them in Townsville). The Vodafone Warriors' last success against North Queensland was a 20-16 away win in 2014.

### VODAFONE WARRIORS V NORTH QUEENSLAND COWBOYS

Mount Smart Stadium, Auckland

7.30pm, Saturday, April 7, 2018

#### Vodafone Warriors

1 Roger Tuivasa-Sheck  
2 David Fusitu'a  
3 Peta Hiku  
4 Solomone Kata  
5 Ken Maumalo  
6 Blake Green  
7 Shaun Johnson  
8 Bunty Afoa  
9 Issac Luke  
10 Agnatius Paasi  
11 Leivaha Pulu  
12 Tohu Harris  
13 Adam Blair

Interchange:  
14 Jazz Tevaga  
15 Sam Lisone  
16 Simon Mannering  
17 Anthony Gelling  
18 Ligi Sao  
20 Mason Lino  
21 Chris Satae  
22 Charnze Nicoll-Klokstad



# Vodafone Warriors Giveaway



**20x 2017 Nines  
Jerseys Signed by  
Stacey Jones, Simon  
Mannering, Ruben  
Wiki, Mason Lino,  
David Fusitu'a and  
Ken Maumalo**



**2x Signed 2018  
Jerseys**

**To celebrate the Vodafone Warriors creating a club record and winning four games from four we are giving you the chance to win!**

Enter the draw to win one of two signed 2018 Vodafone Warriors Jerseys and **twenty** 2017 Vodafone Warriors Auckland Nines Jerseys signed by **Stacey Jones, Simon Mannering, Ruben Wiki, Mason Lino, David Fusitu'a and Ken Maumalo.**  
*Prizes posted internationally!*

Vodafone Warriors  
Giveaway  
P.O Box 54295  
The Marina 2144,  
Manukau, Auckland  
New Zealand



Name:  
Address:  
Phone Number:  
Email:  
Jersey Size:

**To enter: YOU MUST subscribe to  
Sir Peter Leitch Club Newsletter.**

Then post a stamped addressed envelope with your name, address, phone number and email to the address on the left.

*Winner will be drawn on*

**17 April 2018**



By John Coffey

## What A Weekend!

New Zealand's Joseph Parker versus England's Anthony Joshua.  
Photo [www.photosport.nz](http://www.photosport.nz)

**W**HAT A weekend for New Zealand sport, or at least the ones I follow closely. There was Joseph Parker's world heavyweight championship bout in Cardiff, and the born-again Warriors in Sydney scoring one of the most memorable victories in their history. Plus a cricket Test at Hagley Oval, though I am now all cricketed out from endlessly hearing the Sky Sport commentators gushing their superlatives and back slapping each other.

I watched Parker's brave but forlorn challenge to Anthony Joshua at a packed Papanui Club (no longer titled Working Men's Club since the earthquakes destroyed the old building and millions of dollars were spent on a flash new one). This is Kevin Barry territory. His mum lives around the corner at one end of my street and his brother, Bryan, who was in Parker's corner on Sunday, lives around the corner at the other end of my street.

You could fairly argue that Parker unified all New Zealand and Samoa. The tough-looking, bearded bloke next to me was very much in the Parker camp despite his broad British accent: "Come on Joe," was about all he said for six rounds, then he came up with "Wish someone would knock out the bloody referee" as the flustered Italian official did his best to stop the combatants from really getting to grips with each other. I agreed with him both times.

Joshua steadily built a lead sufficient to ensure he would win on points if the bout went the distance. His superior reach was the telling factor. After a slow start which might have had some watchers comparing this challenge to that of David Tua against Lennox Lewis, Parker did everything he could to engage Joshua but had to settle for consolation prizes. He was the first to go the distance with the big Brit and has still never been knocked off his feet.

Remember the 1980 movie *Raging Bull*? Jake La Motta (aka Robert De Niro) was battered and bleeding when the referee stopped the fight and awarded it to Sugar Ray Robinson (played by Ray Barnes). A barely conscious La Motta clung to Robinson and mumbled, "Hey Ray, I never went down, man! You never got me down, Ray! You hear me, you never got me down." It was their sixth and last fight, one so brutal they even made the movie in black and white.

By comparison the Cardiff bout was conducted by two gentleman pugilists. Joshua will go on to meet American Deontay Wilder in a showdown to unify all five heavyweight belts. Parker, at 26, has a choice. He almost scaled the highest peak in his chosen sport. For that he should have banked more money than most men would earn in a dozen lifetimes. It is up to him if he retires and finds a new challenge. More likely he will box on, and on. They always do.

Meanwhile, what about that remarkable 30-6 scoreline by an under-strength Warriors line-up against premiership favoured Sydney Roosters? If Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern wants to get back in the nation's good books she should surely offer New Zealand citizenship to our favourite Australian, Blake Green. For mine, I would be quite happy for a trans-Tasman swap with, say, Jared Waerea-Hargreaves, but I doubt the Aussies are that stupid.

*Continued on next page...*



Green has been outstanding in all four games but tended to be underestimated because our eyes follow Shaun Johnson. Without Johnson against the Roosters, Green's quality was there for all to see. Never more so than his three-punch combination of try-saving tackle, 40/20 kick, and grubber into the Roosters in-goal to take the Warriors out of a spot of bother and back onto the front foot. Alongside him, Mason Lino at last had a chance to unveil his talents.

The Roosters boasted a fair chunk of Australia's on-field brains trust in Kangaroos halfback Cooper Cronk and NSW Origin captain Boyd Cordner but even they were rendered clueless. Prior to kick-off the Roosters' Luke Keary was a popular pick for NSW's number six jersey. Well before fulltime the state selectors would have been checking their player guides to confirm Green was indeed born within their boundaries. Do something about it Jacinda!

With forwards Simon Mannering, James Gavet, Sam Lisone and Isaiah Papali'i also missing, the depth and wisdom of the club's off-season recruitment was revealed by the deeds of the unheralded newcomers Leva-ha Pulu and Agnatius Paasi alongside proven performers Adam Blair, Tohu Harris, Peta Hiku and Green. Former fringe players Lino, Bunty Afoa, Ligi Sao and Jazz Tevaga have also made rapid advances within the new-look Warriors.

In less than one month the Warriors have seemingly solved the travel problem. They had already clocked up more kilometres than the Roosters will travel all season while beating South Sydney at Perth and have since been to Canberra and Sydney. They should be able to handle the short flight to Christchurch for their June 9 clash with the Manly Sea Eagles who might now be regretting transferring their home game from Brookvale Oval.

Later we had Andrew Fifita's announcement he was opting for Tonga ahead of NSW. Who cares you ask? I did when he said he chose the Mate Ma'a after a chat with Jason Taumalolo and Tongan coach Kristian Woolf in Townsville. It looks like the NZRL need not book seats for Taumalolo, Manu Ma'u, Siua Sio Taukeiaho, David Fusitu'a and a bunch of other Kiwi Tongans on the flight to Denver in June. They're going to exotic Campbelltown instead.



More awesome fans at the game!





**B**IG GAMES are won by a powerful forward pack and that was certainly the case at Sydney's Allianz Stadium on Saturday night. The Warriors six were just too strong and too good for the highly rated Roosters forwards. Have no doubt that this was an important match for the Warriors. Despite their great start to the season, there were plenty on my side of the Tasman, who believed the New Zealanders would be brought back to earth by Trent Robinson and his team. No doubt there were also many in New Zealand who thought along these lines but the way the Warriors went about registering their win last Saturday showed that the 2018 team are the real deal. One stat from the NRL list stood out to me. That was the metres gained after contact. The Warriors made 500 metres while the Roosters had 281. These figures indicated that the Warriors were nearly 80 percent better than the Sydney team in this department. While a lot of credit must go the forwards way, the win was the result of a complete 17 man squad effort. Blake Green, Roger Tuivasa-Sheck, Solomone Kata, David Fusitu'a, Peta Hiku and Ken Maumalo were outstanding, while Mason Lino deserves a special pat on the back. The Warriors first try plus seven goals from seven attempts illustrates his value on the scoreboard, but his worth ran much deeper than that. To be brought into the side following Shaun Johnson's late withdrawal put him under a lot of pressure but he was cool and calm despite the Roosters attempts to unsettle him. It's a pity that only 14, 493 fans turned up to see the Warriors' polished display. The Warriors won't play in Sydney again until Friday 18 May against the Eels at ANZ Stadium Homebush. Given good weather at Mt. Smart this Saturday, the locals will flock to see their team in action against the Cowboys, who have just the one win from their four games. After the Dragons fourth successive win, against the Knights in Wollongong on Sunday, they share the competition lead with the Warriors. The clash between these two teams should be entertaining and it is only two weeks away, at Mt. Smart on 20 April.

After two losses in their first two matches, the Sharks have bounced back with two successive wins over the Eels and the Storm. They were worthy 14-4 winners at their home ground Shark Park (Southern Cross Groiup Stadium) on Good Friday night. With only one try in the 80 minutes, scored by Cronulla winger, Edrick Lee, this match was tough and tight. There were many incidents, including Cameron Smith's first ever sin-binning, a total penalty count of 33 and the melee after the final whistle involving many players from both sides. I was surprised that the match revue committee did not have a closer look at what went on after the match had ended. When Smith walked to the sin-bin in the 52nd minute, the vast majority of the 13,196 crowd turned on him, booing him and yelling many unsavoury things about the Storm and Australian captain. Playing his 362nd first grade game, Smith was sent to the bin for back chatting and one of the Fox TV commentators said that it was the first time he had been sin-binned in 27,846 minutes of football. Sharks halfback Chad Townsend landed all of his five shots at goal and retained his 100 percent record this year, with 17 from 17 in his four games. Luke Lewis played his first game this year and gave his usual solid performance. He was unlucky to be sent to the bin after replays showed he hardly touched Billy Slater when the Storm full-back took a quick tap after a penalty. Maybe Slater is a good actor and this could have influenced the referee. Now 34, Lewis was playing his 100th first grade game for the Sharks and his 308th overall. Jesse Ramien, a 20 year old, playing just his third first grade game, was a rock in the centres for the Sharks. Cronulla are at home this Friday night against the Roosters and this should be another tight game.

It seems like everyone in Australia and many other parts of the world, have had their say about the cricket cheating scandal. It has been well documented that most Test playing nations have been involved in ball tampering of some form for many years now. English captain, Mike Atherton, was fined for an incident at Lords in 1994, Faf du Plessis has form at Hobart in 2016 and also in Dubai in 2013, where he was fined 50 percent of his match fee for allegedly rubbing the ball on his trouser zipper. Pakistani Shahid Afridi bit the ball at Perth in 2010, while his team-mate, Shoaib Akhtar stepped on the ball with his spikes in England the same year. New Zealanders, Chris Pringle and the late Martin Crowe, admitted after their retirement that they had sometimes used a bottle top on the ball in Pakistan in 1990.

*Continued on next page...*



Now like most Aussies, I am gutted with what our players did. They made it worse by taking something on to the field to do what they did. It was a stupid decision to think they could get away with it in full view of the many TV cameras used at all major sporting events these days. I am not a big David Warner fan, but I believe Steve Smith and Cameron Bancroft are good young men who made a big mistake. I strongly believe a years ban is too much. They definitely should be punished but I feel three months is enough. This time period would prevent them pocketing the millions from the rich Indian Twenty/20 competition, while they have already lost a lot of money from cancelled endorsements. One of the biggest stories in American sport during the past 10 years was about legendary Patriots quarterback, Tom Brady, who was a major player in the deflated ball saga in January 2015. Deflated balls are easier to catch and so the Patriots had an advantage by using them. In American football, the teams provide their own footballs when in possession so the opponents did not use the same balls. Brady's penalty was suspension for four games. In South Africa, the Australians were under a lot of pressure both on and off the field, as was shown by the vile comments directed at Warner about his wife. This is the same country when on 10 August 2002, at Durban, Pieter Van Zyl, jumped the fence from the crowd and attacked Irish referee, Dave McHugh in an All Blacks-South Africa Rugby Test. One good thing to come from what happened in South Africa is that the culture of Australian cricket will change. Most supporters of the game in my age group and I suspect in many other age ranges, are sick of the constant over the top sledging.

---

## More Vodafone Warriors Fans in Sydney



Members enjoying a drink before the game.



Oliver & Michael Joffie.



Vodafone Warriors supporters at pre-game meet up.



Vodafone Warriors supporters.



Warrior Nation in fullswing before the game.



More awesome fans in the stands.



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

## *The Mad Butchers Weekly NRL Tipping Comp.*

By John Holloway

### NRL Round 5

		Tarsh Ieremaia	Joe Vagana	John Coffey	Fast Eddie	Monty Betham	Neville Kesha	High-Tackle Holloway
		<i>Flava Star. Moving to the beat.</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							
Thur 5 GIO	Raiders v Bulldogs	Raiders	Raiders	Bulldogs	Raiders	Raiders	Raiders	Bulldogs
Fri 6 Sth Cross	Sharks v Roosters	Sharks	Sharks	Sharks	Sharks	Sharks	Sharks	Roosters
Fri 6 Jubilee	Dragons v Rabbitohs	Dragons	Rabbitohs	Dragons	Rabbitohs	Dragons	Dragons	Dragons
Sat 7 Mt Smart	Tigers v Storm	Storm	Tigers	Storm	Storm	Tigers	Storm	Storm
Sat 7 Mt Smart	Warriors v Cowboys	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors
Sat 7 McDonald James	Knights v Broncos	Broncos	Broncos	Broncos	Broncos	Broncos	Broncos	Broncos
Sun 8 Marley Brown	Titans v Sea Eagles	Titans	Sea Eagles	Sea Eagles	Sea Eagles	Sea Eagles	Titans	Sea Eagles
Sun 8 April	Eels v Panthers	Panthers	Panthers	Panthers	Panthers	Eels	Panthers	Panthers

Picks last week	5/8	6/8	5/8	3/8	5/8	4/8	4/8
Total picks	17	18	18	17	20	19	16

### There Is A God...

**T**HE MIGHTY Warriors make it 4 wins on the trot. There is a God 1 away win in 2017, 3 from 3 in 2018. There is a God and he is smiling.

Winning away without Mannering, Johnson, Gavet. There is a God and he is wearing a Warriors jersey....

OK I will cease and desist I can hear the Christians rising up in arms, I do not wish to take the Lords name in vain and clearly I recognize that the man on high has much more pressing and serious World issues to sort like North Korea and Trump, Global Warming, ISIS and the Blues. So be it. Well the Faithful are ecstatic, The Homies remain unbeaten at the top end of the ladder and did so with a front foot smacking of the Title-favoured Roosters 30/6, read it and weep. This was in stark contrast to the late dash heroics of the previous outing. Our boys have improved simply by upping the fitness levels and playing as a team rather than one out, playing for each other. Its already been well documented but the successfully rebuilt structure is under-pinned by the experience and efforts of the new arrivals Blair, Harris, Pulu, Paasi, Hiku and the main man Blake Green. And I will say it again the Corvo Factor. Their guidance and example is enlarged by born again Isaac Luke, High-Fly Fusitua and the rock n roll of RTS. allowing the younger group to grow in confidence and provide that keener edge. The likes of Bunty Afoa, Ligi Sao and Tevaga are now contributing at a much higher level.

*Continued on next page...*



*Continued from previous page...*

Magic Johnsons replacement Mason Lino enjoyed the solid platform and made the most of the rare chance to add his wares to the team. His goal-kicks were a bonus at a perfect 7 from 7. Other camps are not so rosy... its not often that the Cowboys, Broncos, Storm and Roosters all lose in the same round...is there a changing of the guard or will the old guns start firing more at the business end. The Dragons are looking ominous, the Panthers are starting to growl, Ivans Tigers are not going away, The Sharks are still trying to swim out of the shallows and the Eels and Raiders are drowning in their mediocrity. What will April bring.

The Tipping does not get any easier. Big Joe Vagana played a more straighter bat this week and it paid off with the high score 6 from 8. Only missing on the surprise home defeats of the Cowboys and Broncos. Tarsh was good again her 5 including the lone pick of the Titans upset. The old stager JC got a 5 but Montys matching 5 spot was enough to get him out front at 20 points. The Dutchman, the Ref and High-tackle unimpressive and left to lick wounds this round.

One of the biggest occasions in Mt Smart history this week with the "Double-Header" You could not pick 4 more exciting crews to grace the Penrose Paladium. Favourite Son Coach Clearys Tigers, Beliggerant Bel-lamys Storm, The wild bull Taumalolo and the Far North cattle rustlers plus of course our very own Mighty Vodafone Warriooooorrrs. Kia Kaha Brothers... You can't miss this, be there or be square.

P.S. Old Saying...The good big man will beat the good small man. Whatever... Joseph Parker did himself and his countries proud with a credible tilt. No real mana lost.



SKYCITY  
AUCKLAND

# Double Header



**Tigers v Storm**  
**Warriors v Cowboys**



**THIS**  
**THE MAIN EVENT WILL BE FOLLOWED BY THE MAIN EVENT**  
**SATURDAY APRIL 7, MT.SMART STADIUM**



By Shane Hurndell  
Hawke's Bay Today  
Sports Reporter

## Avaiki's The Ideal Choice

Luisa Avaiki, Wellbeing and Womens Development Manager presents a special award at the NZRL awards in February 2018.

Photo [www.photpsort.nz](http://www.photpsort.nz)

**L**UISA AVAIKI is to New Zealand rugby league what Dr Farah Palmer is to New Zealand rugby. Both captained their respective Kiwi Ferns and Black Ferns teams to three World Cup tournament wins. Both are now just as valuable to their respective codes off the field as they were on it and for a fair chunk of each year the pair share the same age.

In 2016 Palmer became the first woman to be elected on to the NZRFU board of directors and that same year had the women's NPC named after her. Avaiki's appointment as the head coach of the Vodafone Warriors NRL women's premiership team last week is just as significant as Palmer's 2016 achievements.

Avaiki was the ideal choice for the Warriors job. I have no doubt she will handle the role with distinction and within the next three years she will be head coach of the Kiwi Ferns. It will also only be a matter of time before Avaiki will be a New Zealand Rugby League board member.

Being based in Hawke's Bay I haven't had a lot to do with Avaiki over the years. However watching video footage of the Kiwi Ferns World Cup tournaments in 2000, 2003 and 2008 Avaiki's composure and quality leadership in the heat of battle was always evident.

Hawke's Bay players who played alongside Avaiki in those tournaments or other internationals, Hana Wainohu, Sharn Waru, Maia Tua-Davidson and Chanel Huddleston, always praised Avaiki's influence upon the team and them as individuals whenever they returned from their Kiwi Ferns commitments.

I got to meet Avaiki for the first time in Brisbane last December on the eve of the Kiwi Ferns World Cup final against the Jillaroos. We had a good chat about how the Kiwi Ferns had gone in the tournament and what needed to be done if they were going to be competitive and have a chance of beating the Jillaroos in the final.

I was impressed with her knowledge of the code, appreciation of the different strengths and weaknesses of both finalists and the possible scenarios she envisaged for the following day. Most of the scenarios Avaiki outlined were witnessed during the Aussies 23-16 victory in a pulsating World Cup decider.

Avaiki is believed to be the first woman to have a coaching position with an NRL club. If that is the case there couldn't be a more appropriate person to have this honour on either side of the Tasman.

It's no secret it is getting tougher for rugby league to compete with rugby union when it comes to retaining the country's top female players. Rugby union has the possibility of Olympic Games sevens selection and decent pay for elite players as big carrots.

*Continued on next page...*



*Continued from previous page...*

However with the NRL women's comp coming in to play this could help keep many of the country best female players in the 13-person code. If one was a Kiwi parent helping his or her daughter decide between the two codes one would be able to tell their potential Kiwi Fern playing for a rugby league team coached by Aviaki is the female equivalent of playing for a male team coached by Aussie great Mal Meninga.

Aviaki hasn't been the NZRL well-being and women's development manager since 2016 for nothing. The league intelligence she collected while being the Melbourne Storm games development officer between 2012 and '16 was phenomenal.

No other Kiwi Ferns player has a playing CV to match Aviaki's. A Kiwi Fern from 1995 to 2009 she captained the side for the final nine years of her international career.

The Richmond club stalwart was selected in the World XIII in 2008, she was named captain of the World XIII and tournament MVP in 2003 and World Cup forward of the tournament in 2000.

It must not be forgotten that she has also represented Samoa in touch, rugby league and rugby union. If anyone knows about the sacrifices required by a female to represent her country at the highest level it is Aviaki.

A person with her standing in the game becomes a magnet for quality. Providing Warriors CEO Cameron George and his support staff give Aviaki all the support she needs the Warriors have the potential to win the women's NRL Premiership title within two years.

Yes the Warriors four-game unbeaten start to this season's NRL has been awesome to watch. A Warriors women's team with Aviaki at the helm has the potential to be just as exciting.

Bring on the women's NRL Premiership.

---

This week we have on Justin Morgan who of course will be talking Warriors, Super League and the huge double header. Plus Daryl catches up with the Rabbitohs Zane Musgrove in From Here To There.

**Join Courtney Tairi & Monty Betham this Thursday Night 8.30pm on Sky Sport 2**



---

## Fan Day This Friday!

**S**OME OF the biggest names in rugby league are coming to town for the SKYCITY Auckland Double Header at Mt Smart Stadium on Saturday 7 April. Reigning Premiers, Melbourne Storm led by Cameron Smith and Billy Slater, Jonathan Thurston's North Queensland Cowboys and the Wests Tigers featuring Benji Marshall will join Roger Tuivasa-Sheck and your Vodafone Warriors.

To celebrate, SKYCITY are holding a fan day this Friday 6 April.

Meet the players, enjoy some great live music, entertainment, grab an autograph at one of the autograph stations and compete in some fun interactive games.

Don't miss your chance to meet some of the game's greatest players at the SKYCITY Auckland Double Header Fan Day.

SKYCITY  
AUCKLAND

# Double Header

**THIS  
FRIDAY**

**Everybody  
Welcome**

**FAN DAY**

**THIS  
FRIDAY**

**Everybody  
Welcome**



V



V



**THIS FRIDAY 6 APRIL, 4PM-7PM**  
**SKYCITY PLAZA FREE ENTRY**

Meet the players • Live music and entertainment  
• Autograph stations • Interactive games





## Vodafone Warriors First Club To Sign NRL Women's Premiership Head Coach

*by Richard Becht*

**A**FTER BEING confirmed as one of four clubs in the new NRL women's premiership yesterday, the Vodafone Warriors have today become the first to appoint their head coach by confirming much-decorated former Kiwi Ferns captain Luisa Avaiki in the role.

In an illustrious international playing career from 1995-2009, Avaiki captained the Kiwi Ferns to victory in each of the first three women's World Cup tournaments in 2000, 2003 and 2008.

A Richmond Rovers club stalwart, she has gone on to fashion an impressive record in all areas of the game since ending her playing career.

As well as coaching women's, men's and boys' teams at club and representative level, she worked for the Melbourne Storm as their games development officer and has been the New Zealand Rugby League's well-being and women's development manager since 2016.

"We're absolutely thrilled to have Luisa as the inaugural head coach of our NRL women's premiership side," said Vodafone Warriors general manager football Brian Smith.

"It was a huge day being named as one of the four foundation clubs yesterday and it's even more exciting to be able to announce Luisa's appointment today. We were keen to move on this quickly as we seek to build our team.

"The new competition is taking the club and the women's game into a completely new era which we're so proud to a part of."

Avaiki, who has also represented Samoa in rugby league, rugby union and touch, said she was humbled when given the opportunity to become the club's first NRL women's coach – and, it's believed, the first woman to have a coaching position with an NRL club.

"Women's rugby league has a long history in New Zealand but the introduction of this competition has taken our game to a whole new level," she said.

"It's a huge honour having the chance to take up this role."

Vodafone Warriors CEO Cameron George, head coach Stephen Kearney, Smith and Avaiki met with prospective players at Mount Smart Stadium tonight.

"For us, our women's team will be just like our other three sides in the NRL, the Intrust Super Premiership and the Jersey Flegg Cup," said George.

"They'll strive to attain the same values we have for the club's other teams.

"We are all about winning, about having a crack every time we play and making our members and fans proud."



1995 WARRIORS VS BRONCOS

# COLOSSAL

# CLASH



## WAYNE BENNETT & JOHN MONIE

**Friday 13th April**

**Ellerslie Convention Centre**

**Cost:** \$95 per person or  
10 person table for \$950

**Contact:** David Marsh for seats  
& tables [david@ita.net.nz](mailto:david@ita.net.nz)  
or 027 355 5280

## WHERE WERE YOU IN 1995?

Watching Braveheart at the movies, listening to Whitney Houston on the walkman, waiting for Michael Jordan to make a comeback or just getting ready for the most anticipated arrival of the Warriors...

**The arrival took the form of a colossal clash with the Brisbane Broncos! and it's on again...**

To celebrate this majestic occasion we have brought together the two Super Coaches Wayne Bennett and John Monie

**6.00pm** Arrival for pre-game beverages

**6.45pm** The "Originals"

- Bronco old boys legends
- Warriors old boys legends

Take us back to that magical night  
10th March 1995

**7.15pm** Seated for dinner

**7.45pm** Auction

**8.00pm** Welcome Super coaches  
Wayne Bennett & John Monie





## Mills Awarded ARL Life Membership

*By ARL*

**T**HE AUCKLAND Rugby League has today awarded Brian Mills Life Membership to the organisation, in recognition of his nearly three decades of service to the local game.

Mills, who joined the ARL in 1989 as an executive director and has been the organisation's accountant ever since, received the honour at the Auckland Rugby League's 108th AGM on Saturday.

In addition to his other achievements, Mills is credited for implementing the ARL club accounting system and was a key figure in the formation of the then-named Auckland Warriors.

ARL general manager Greg Whaiapu said Mills boasted an impressive rugby league CV.

"Brian's strong fiscal understanding and management has contributed significantly to the game here in Auckland, and in fact on a national scale through his previous work with the New Zealand Rugby League and the Warriors," Whaiapu said.

"To this day he continues to serve the game, and it's great to see Brian receiving this honour."

Distinguished Service Awards were given to Cherie Waters (Pakuranga Jaguars), JD Rawiri (Manukau Magpies), Bob O'Brien (New Lynn Stags), Kevin Smith (Hibiscus Coast Raiders) and Pauline Dumper (Otahuhu Leopards), recognising 15 years or more in the game.

The Simons Scroll was given to Hibiscus Coast Raiders chair Karen Gibbons, while ARL Referees Best and Fairest was awarded to the Northcote Tigers.

ARL director Greg Steed was also re-elected to the board for a further term.

---

**Christchurch Eastern Suburbs are having a reunion for players and supporters involved in the club in the 1970s. The event is happening on the 4th of May at the WWMC. Those interested in the reunion can contact Colin on 0210392818.**

---

**On behalf of the newsletter team and myself, I want to wish all your Commonwealth Games athletes all the best for the upcoming games. Go hard!**

# Premiership Livestream Schedule Confirmed

## By Auckland Rugby League

**C**OVERAGE OF BOTH THE AUCKLAND FIRST AND SECOND DIVISIONS, AND THE RETURN OF BROADCAST DOUBLE HEADERS, ARE FEATURES OF THE 2018 AUCKLAND RUGBY LEAGUE PREMIERSHIP LIVESTREAM SCHEDULE ANNOUNCED TODAY.

From Round 4 of the SAS Fox Memorial Premiership onwards, club's will host back-to-back livestream matches, with a selected curtain-raiser kicking off at 12.20pm and the main game at 2.30pm. Five Crown Lift Trucks Sharman Cup games will serve as curtain-raisers in the first half of the season, before Fox Memorial double headers kick in on June 9.

All games will be streamed live and free on [aucklandleague.co.nz](http://aucklandleague.co.nz), as the ARL embarks on a year of unprecedented local coverage, which will also include streamed games from the Farrelly Photos Women's Premiership, SAS College Rugby League competition and end-of-year junior club grand finals.

### 2018 ARL Premiership livestream schedule:

April 7: Glenora v Pt Chevalier at Harold Moody Reserve - 2.30pm kick-off	Prince Edward Park - 2.30pm kick-off	12.20pm kick-off
April 14: Mangere East v Marist at Walter Massey Park - 2.30pm kick-off	May 26: (Curtain-raiser) Te Atatu v Manukau at Prince Edward Park - 12.20pm	July 14: Northcote v Pt Chevalier at Birkenhead War Memorial - 2.30pm kick-off
April 21: Howick v Mangere East at Paparoa Park - 2.30pm kick-off	June 9: Marist v Richmond at Murray Halberg Park - 2.30pm kick-off	July 14: (Curtain-raiser) Marist v Papakura at Birkenhead War Memorial - 12.20pm kick-off
April 28: Northcote v Papakura at Birkenhead War Memorial - 2.30pm kick-off	June 9: (Curtain-raiser) Northcote v Otahuhu at Murray Halberg Park - 12.20pm kick-off	July 21: Papakura v Howick at Prince Edward Park - 2.30pm kick-off
April 28: (Curtain-raiser) Ponsonby v Manurewa at Birkenhead War Memorial - 12.20pm kick-off	June 16: Pt Chevalier v Glenora at Walker Park - 2.30pm kick-off	July 21: (Curtain-raiser) Richmond v Glenora at Prince Edward Park - 12.20pm kick-off
May 5: Mt Albert v Richmond at Fowlds Park - 2.30pm kick-off	June 16: (Curtain-raiser) Mt Albert v Papakura at Walker Park - 12.20pm kick-off	July 28: Mangere East v Mt Albert at Walter Massey Park - 2.30pm kick-off
May 5: (Curtain-raiser) Otara v Bay Roskill at Fowlds Park - 12.20pm kick-off	June 23: Richmond v Pt Chevalier at Grey Lynn Park - 2.30pm kick-off	July 28: (Curtain-raiser) Papakura v Richmond at Walter Massey Park - 12.20pm kick-off
May 12: Otahuhu v Mt Albert at Bert Henham Park - 2.30pm kick-off	June 23: (Curtain-raiser) Northcote v Mt Albert at Grey Lynn Park - 12.20pm kick-off	August 4: Glenora v Mangere East Hawks at Harold Moody Reserve - 2.30pm kick-off
May 12: (Curtain-raiser) Papatoetoe v Ellerslie at Bert Henham Park - 12.20pm kick-off	June 30: Otahuhu v Richmond at Bert Henham Park - 2.30pm kick-off	August 4: (Curtain-raiser) Mt Albert v Pt Chevalier at Harold Moody Reserve - 12.20pm kick-off
May 19: Pt Chevalier v Marist at Walker Park - 2.30pm kick-off	June 30: (Curtain-raiser) Glenora v Northcote at Bert Henham Park - 12.20pm kick-off	August 11: Mt Albert v Glenora at Fowlds Park - 2.30pm kick-off
May 19: (Curtain-raiser) Pakuranga v Franklin at Walker Park - 12.20pm	July 7: Howick v Mt Albert at Paparoa Park - 2.30pm kick-off	August 11: (Curtain-raiser) Howick v Pt Chevalier at Fowlds Park - 12.20pm kick-off
May 26: Otahuhu v Papakura at	July 7: (Curtain-raiser) Mangere East v Richmond at Paparoa Park -	



# Harris-Tavita The Hero In Allianz Thriller

By Joe Williams - ISP Team Manager

**A** LAST-MINUTE CHANEL Harris-Tavita field goal has proved to be the difference between the Warriors and the Wyong Roos in an absolute thriller at Allianz Stadium winning 23-22.

Lewis Soosemea put on a try-scoring clinic as he scored his second hat-trick this month and was heavily assisted by his fleet-footed centre Cole Waaka.

Currently sitting 7th on the table after 2 wins and 2 loses the Vodafone Warriors ISP side will again travel to Australia this weekend to take on top of the table Wests Magpies at Campbelltown Stadium on Saturday 7th April (12.45pm kick-off local time). This game will be played on Sky Sports Chanel 52 at 2.30pm New Zealand time.

## VODAFONE WARRIORS INTRUST SUPER PREMIER- SHIP V WESTS MAGPIES

Campbelltown Stadium, Sydney

12.45pm, Saturday, April 7

### Vodafone Warriors Isp Team

- 1 Hayze Perham
- 2 Charnze Nicoll-Klokstad
- 3 Blake Ayshford
- 4 Cole Waaka
- 5 Lewis Soosemea
- 6 Chanel Harris-Tavita
- 7 Sam Cook
- 8 Albert Vete
- 9 Karl Lawton

- 10 Chris Satae
- 11 Matiu Love-Henry
- 12 Joseph Vuna
- 13 James Bell (C)
- Interchange:
- 14 Manaia Cherrington
- 15 Sione Afemui
- 16 Patrick Siple
- 17 King Vuniyayawa
- 18 Reece Charlie
- 20 Johnny Tuivasa-Sheck

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



Facebook



Instagram



Twitter

### STACEY JONES LOUNGE MENU

Buffet will be available from 4:30pm - 5:30pm and again at 6:30pm - 7:30pm

#### ROAST

\$25 per person (including GST)

Carved Lamb Shoulder Roll  
Accompanied with jus (served cold)

Steamed Vegetables  
Peas, beans and carrots

Summer Salad  
Cos lettuce, cucumber, cherry tomatoes and red onion, drizzled with balsamic reduction (v)

Fresh Bap

#### BEHIND THE CABINET

Westie Pies	\$5
Hot Chips	\$5
Fish & Chips	\$5
Chicken & Chips	\$9.5
Rolled Roast With gravy & mesclun	\$13

### Welcome to the Stacey Jones Lounge

#### DOUBLE HEADER

WESTS TIGERS v MELBOURNE STORM  
VODAFONE WARRIORS v NORTH QUEENSLAND COWBOYS

Round 5 - Saturday 7th April 2018

#### EVENT SCHEDULE:

Gates Open:	3.30 pm
West Tigers v Melbourne Storm:	5.00 pm
Curtain Raiser Half Time: We will be doing a tour of the Stadium	5.40 pm
Curtain Raiser Full Time:	6.35 pm
Vodafone Warriors v North Queensland Cowboys:	7.35 pm
Half-Time:	8:05 pm
Full-Time:	9:00 pm
Bars Close:	10:00 pm

Please note that service will end thirty minutes after the conclusion of the main game.  
This is subject to change if deemed necessary.

**Coming to the  
Stacey Jones Lounge  
this weekend? Well  
here's the menu.**





# New Zealand Netball Team Get Down To Business Ahead Of Opening Match



**T**HE NEW Zealand Netball team's opening two matches of the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games have quickly become the primary focus following the team's arrival in Australia on Friday.

Now settled into the athletes' village, the New Zealand Netballers will open their campaign against Uganda on Thursday (April 5) followed closely by Wales the next day.

“We're aware that the teams we play in the first couple of days have got nothing to lose and that they're teams on the improve,” New Zealand coach Janine Southby said.

“So, that's our big focus for the next few days, just making sure it's one day at a time, one game at a time. That is a real cliché in sport but we just can't afford to get ahead of ourselves and we can't afford to take these teams lightly.

“It's about making sure that every play we have and every second we're out there, we're doing our jobs and doing the best that we possibly can.”

There's an acknowledgement in the camp of the need to raise the performance levels after a disappointing start to the year but the coach is backing her team to turn things around.

“We're not happy with the results we've had but we're pleased with the progress we've been making on some key work-ons off the court and they're starting to come on the court,” Southby said.

“We know we haven't been good enough but we still absolutely believe and back ourselves. From the most experience down to the least experienced, everyone knows that they've got a job to do and they've got to

do it a whole lot better.

“We're approaching this event as we were always going to approach it and that's with that total belief that we've got a job to do here, we're coming to do it and we're ready to do it. We appreciate that there's a lot of frustration on the outside but from our point of view we're doing everything we can on the inside and there's absolute ownership.

“There is an absolute determination to right the wrongs and to learn from our toughest series over the last couple of months.”

With the improving standards at the top of world netball, the 2018 Commonwealth Games shape as the most competitive since the sport was added to the programme in 1998.

Of the New Zealand team, only Maria Folau, Katrina Grant, Grace Kara and Shannon Francois have previously played in a Commonwealth Games.

## 2018 Commonwealth Games New Zealand Pool Play Schedule:

Date - Match - NZT

Thursday 5 April - NZ v Uganda - 20:30

Friday 6 April - NZ v Wales - 15:00

Sunday 8 April - NZ v Malawi - 20:30

Monday 9 April - NZ v Scotland - 22:30

Wednesday 11 April - NZ v England - 11:00

All games played live on TVNZ Games Extra or Duke and available via TVNZ Online

For the full New Zealand Netball schedule at the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games including the Medal Games, head over to [SilverFerns.co.nz](http://SilverFerns.co.nz)





#CommittedToTheGame

# BE THE DIFFERENCE

SHOP NOW



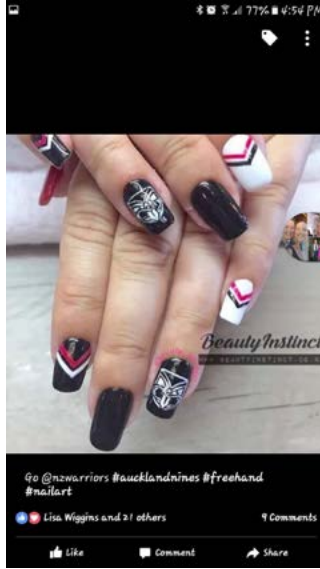
# NRL MATCH OFFICIALS - ROUND 5



<b>GAME: RAIDERS V BULLDOGS</b>		<b>DATE: THURSDAY 5TH APRIL 2018</b>	
<b>VENUE: GIO STADIUM</b>		<b>KICK OFF: 7.50PM (NINE)</b>	
HEAD REFEREE:	Grant Atkins	REVIEW OFFICIAL:	Luke Patten
ASSIST REFEREE:	Alan Shortall	SENIOR REVIEW OFFICIAL:	Ashley Klein
TOUCH JUDGES:	Jeff Younis		
	Jon Stone		
STANDBY TJ:	Tim Roby	JERSEY COLOUR:	RED
<b>GAME: SHARKS V ROOSTERS</b>		<b>DATE: FRIDAY 6TH APRIL 2018</b>	
<b>VENUE: SOUTHERN CROSS GROUP STADIUM</b>		<b>KICK OFF: 6.00PM (FOX)</b>	
HEAD REFEREE:	Ben Cummins	REVIEW OFFICIAL:	Ben Galea
ASSIST REFEREE:	Matt Noyen	SENIOR REVIEW OFFICIAL:	Jared Maxwell
TOUCH JUDGES:	Kasey Badger		
	Michael Wise		
STANDBY:	Henry Perenara	JERSEY COLOUR:	YELLOW
<b>GAME: DRAGONS V RABBITOHS</b>		<b>DATE: FRIDAY 6TH APRIL 2018</b>	
<b>VENUE: JUBILEE OVAL</b>		<b>KICK OFF: 7.50PM (NINE)</b>	
HEAD REFEREE:	Gavin Badger	REVIEW OFFICIAL:	Luke Patten
ASSIST REFEREE:	Peter Gough	SENIOR REVIEW OFFICIAL:	Steve Chiddy
TOUCH JUDGES:	Rohan Best		
	Belinda Sleeman		
STANDBY TJ:	Liam Nicholls	JERSEY COLOUR:	YELLOW
<b>GAME: TIGERS V STORM</b>		<b>DATE: SATURDAY 7TH APRIL 2018</b>	
<b>VENUE: MT SMART STADIUM</b>		<b>KICK OFF: 5.00PM NZ (FOX)</b>	
HEAD REFEREE:	Adam Gee	REVIEW OFFICIAL:	Ben Galea
ASSIST REFEREE:	Ziggy Przeklasa-Adamski	SENIOR REVIEW OFFICIAL:	Jared Maxwell
TOUCH JUDGES:	Nick Beashel		
	Chris McMillan		
STANDBY:	Grant Atkins	JERSEY COLOUR:	RED
<b>GAME: WARRIORS V COWBOYS</b>		<b>DATE: SATURDAY 7TH APRIL 2018</b>	
<b>VENUE: MT SMART STADIUM</b>		<b>KICK OFF: 7.30PM NZ (FOX)</b>	
HEAD REFEREE:	Matt Cecchin	REVIEW OFFICIAL:	Steve Chiddy
ASSIST REFEREE:	Phil Henderson	SENIOR REVIEW OFFICIAL:	Luke Patten
TOUCH JUDGES:	Brett Suttor		
	Adam Cassidy		
STANDBY:	Grant Atkins	JERSEY COLOUR:	RED
<b>GAME: KNIGHTS V BRONCOS</b>		<b>DATE: SATURDAY 7TH APRIL 2018</b>	
<b>VENUE: MCDONALD JONES STADIUM</b>		<b>KICK OFF: 7.30PM (FOX)</b>	
HEAD REFEREE:	Chris Sutton	REVIEW OFFICIAL:	Ben Galea
ASSIST REFEREE:	Chris Butler	SENIOR REVIEW OFFICIAL:	Jared Maxwell
TOUCH JUDGES:	Rickey McFarlane		
	Nick Morel		
STANDBY:	Darian Furer	JERSEY COLOUR:	YELLOW
<b>GAME: TITANS V SEA EAGLES</b>		<b>DATE: SUNDAY 8TH APRIL 2018</b>	
<b>VENUE: MARLEY BROWN OVAL</b>		<b>KICK OFF: 2.00PM (FOX)</b>	
HEAD REFEREE:	Ashley Klein	REVIEW OFFICIAL:	Bryan Norrie
ASSIST REFEREE:	Tim Roby	SENIOR REVIEW OFFICIAL:	Steve Chiddy
TOUCH JUDGES:	Clayton Sharpe		
	Jarrold Cole		
STANDBY TJ:	Nick Pelgrave	JERSEY COLOUR:	YELLOW
<b>GAME: EELS V PANTHERS</b>		<b>DATE: SUNDAY 8TH APRIL 2018</b>	
<b>VENUE: ANZ STADIUM</b>		<b>KICK OFF: 4.10PM (NINE)</b>	
HEAD REFEREE:	Henry Perenara	REVIEW OFFICIAL:	Luke Patten
ASSIST REFEREE:	Jon Stone	SENIOR REVIEW OFFICIAL:	Jared Maxwell
TOUCH JUDGES:	Michael Wise		
	Jeff Younis		
STANDBY:	Ben Cummins	JERSEY COLOUR:	RED



# Reader Mail



Hi

**H**ERE ARE the photos i sent, my nails were done when the auckland nines were on, and all done free hand copied from the warriors singlet i was wearing the day i had them done. And the tattoo on my arm is apart of my family everything represents some one in my family but we all support the warriors win or lose so represents everyone.

Carrie Sullivan



Good morning Peter,

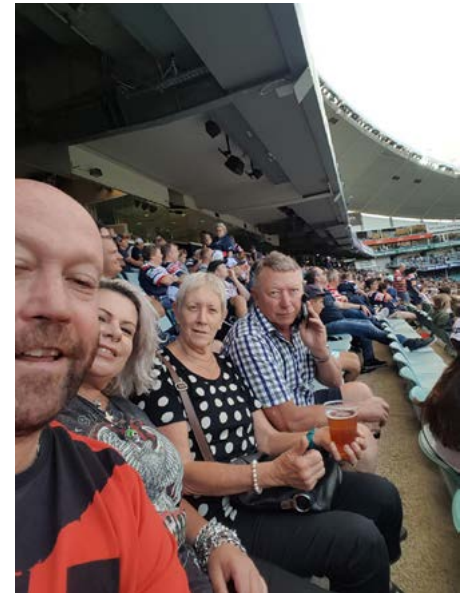
**I**CAME ALONG to the Round 2 game with Steve and Craig, from the West Coast that won the tickets to your VIP area.

At the end of the event, you gave me a 2017 membership pack on the promise that I would send you a photo of my son, Oliver with the gift.

Thank you very much for a wonderfully entertaining day out.

Go the Mighty Vodafone Warriors.

Kind Regards, Peter Ensor



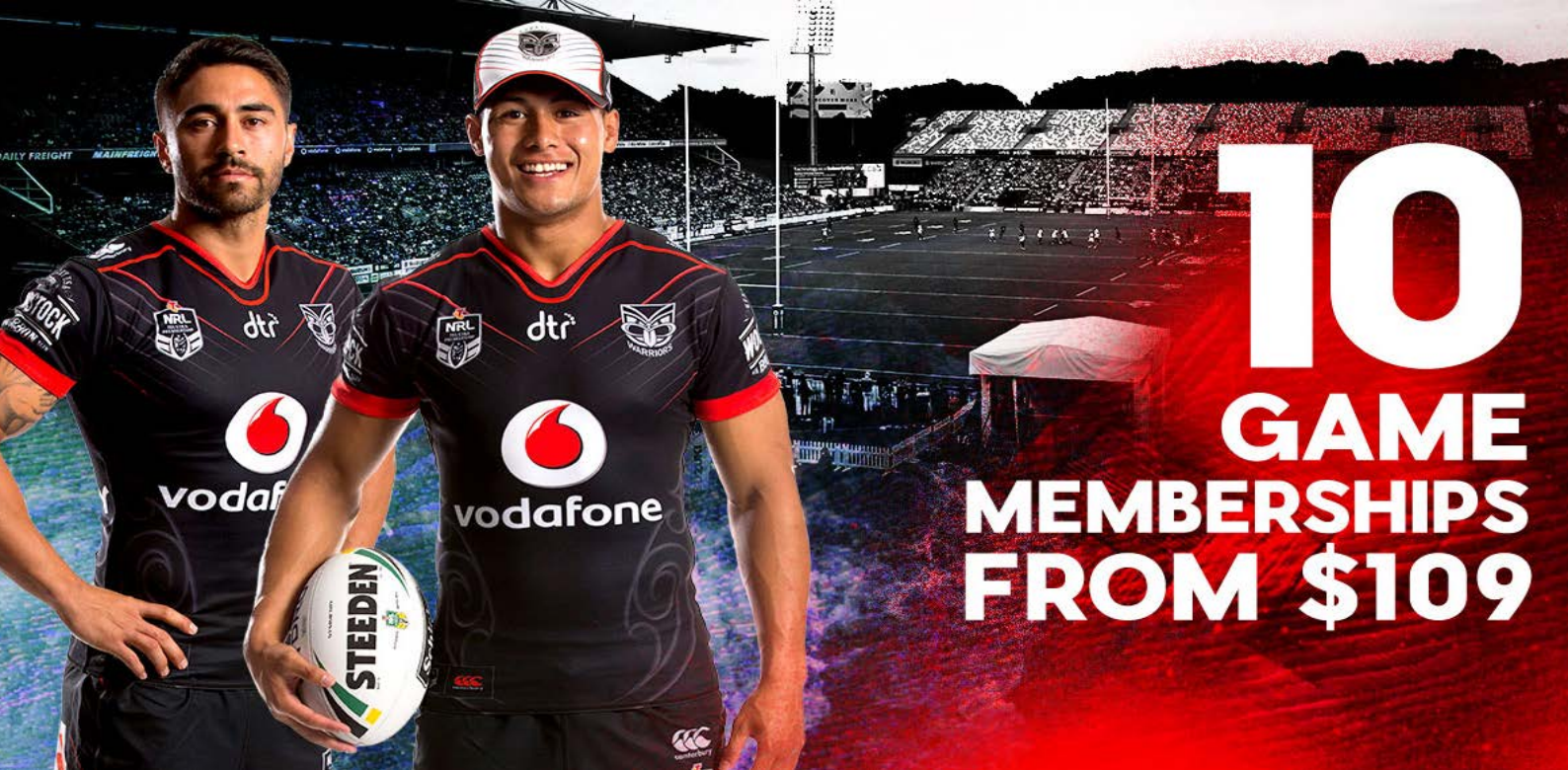
Margaret and Bob Graydon from Waiheke Island flew over to Sydney for the Roosters game and had a fantastic time.

Hi Sir Peter, Editor Newsletter

**I**COULD NOT believe when watching our awesome Warriors the way that Henry Perenara spoke to Roger Tuivasa-Sheck. Roger was trying to catch his breath, asked the referee a question, then was told to stand up when talking to him (Perenara). Referees want respect yet they speak to players like that, unbelievable, especially when Roger was being polite. I was so incensed that I have written to the NRL as well!!

Go the mighty Warriors, great newsletter each week, thanks.

Anne-Marie



**For Your Information.** We draw our competition winners by numbering every envelope. We then enter in the number entries at [www.random.org](http://www.random.org) and click generate to get a truly random number. We then dive back into our pile of envelopes to find the envelope with the corresponding number. Remember though, if you're not in you can't win!

**L**AST WEEK as you would all know we had a van broken into. I want to clear up the misbelief that the van was just parked on the street. It was actually parked under CCTV cameras and the whole robbery was caught on camera. The club was asked by the police not to release the footage or mention it as it would help their inquiry. One person has been charged with receiving and the investigation is ongoing. - Sir Peter Leitch

## Free Event Train for Double Header Match



This Saturday 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.





## THIS WEEK IN OUR ROUND 5 ISSUE

NRL, INTRUST SUPER PREMIERSHIP, INTRUST SUPER CUP +  
UNDER-20s TEAM LISTS, PREVIEWS AND STATS + SCORES AND  
RESULTS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY!



**ROUND 5, 2018**

**On sale at newsagents, supermarkets and at the  
ground from Thursday, April 5**

### DIGITAL VERSION

Available via [magsonline.com.au](http://magsonline.com.au), the Apple News-stand and Google Play

### JOIN THE CONVERSATION

@bigleaguemag  
[bigleague@newslifemedia.com.au](mailto:bigleague@newslifemedia.com.au)

The Dragons and the Warriors have started the season fast, both undefeated after the first four rounds. While the Warriors were not expected to make much of the season, their big win over premiership favourites the Roosters without Shaun Johnson has changed the perception and fans are excited.

Newcastle are almost completely unrecognisable compared to the team that took the field in 2017. One new face is Slade Griffin, who has unseated New Zealand hooker Danny Levi from his starting No.9 jersey through the sheer effort and professionalism he showed through the pre-season.

Back in 2010 Titans winger Anthony Don was serving beers at Newcastle Knights home games while waiting for his NRL chance. Now he's on track to break the record for most tries for the Gold Coast and is a prime example of why you should never give up on a dream.

Big League columnist Ben Hunt says his Dragons halves partner Gareth Widdop is the complete package, but the forward pack doesn't get the credit it deserves.

PLUS... This Week in History, the Eels look for answers in their discipline, why it hurts the Raiders to be called 'soft' and a Wade Graham poster.

#### Editorial:

[pamela.whaley@news.com.au](mailto:pamela.whaley@news.com.au)

#### Advertising:

[bowie.phillips@news.com.au](mailto:bowie.phillips@news.com.au)



**R**OOSTER FANS doing it tough watching the Mighty Vodafone Warriors doing a demolition job on their team.

One very happy Warriors fan though.

Remember Chch fans get down to the Fox&Ferret@the Palms each week to watch the Warriors on the big screen.

Drink specials and giveaways.

Reminder(chch fans) to join the warriors membership club away membership still available.

Regards Steve Anngow

**NO ADVERTS ARE PAID FOR IN THIS NEWSLETTER**

If you wish to **subscribe** to the newsletter go to:  
[www.sirpeterleitch.co.nz](http://www.sirpeterleitch.co.nz)

## Our Sponsors

**A VERY BIG THANK YOU TO ALL OUR SUPPORTING BRANDS!**

Without the help of these brands the Sir Peter Leitch Club and Newsletter wouldn't be as fantastic as it is. If you do get the opportunity please support them whenever you can.



## 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.

**Sir Peter Leitch** - Editor  
**David Kemeys** - Editor at Large  
**Hayden Woodhead** - Graphic Designer

**John Coffey** - Southern Correspondent  
**Barry Ross** - Australian Correspondent  
**John Holloway** - Correspondent  
**Miles Davis** - Correspondent  
**Shane Hurndell** - Correspondent