

VODAFONE



Sir Peter Leitch Club

AT MT SMART STADIUM, HOME OF THE MIGHTY VODAFONE WARRIORS

23rd May 2018

Newsletter #218



Vodafone Warriors v Eels



Photos courtesy of www.photosport.nz

Photos from the Eels Game





RTS back for top four blockbuster

VODAFONE WARRIORS v SOUTH SYDNEY RABBITOHS

7.30pm, Saturday, May 26, 2018
Mount Smart Stadium, Auckland

Referees: Grant Atkins and Phil Henderson

by *Richard Becht*

CAPTAIN ROGER Tuivasa-Sheck is named to come back into the Vodafone Warriors' line-up for their top four NRL encounter with the South Sydney Rabbitohs at Mount Smart Stadium on Saturday (7.30pm kick-off, match day sponsor: SKYCITY).

His return results in Peta Hiku being switched back to the centres after playing a try-scoring role filling in for Tuivasa-Sheck at fullback in last Friday night's 24-14 win over Parramatta.

Tuivasa-Sheck stayed in Auckland last week on baby watch to support his fiancée Ashley who is due to give birth to their first child any day soon. He was back training with the squad today but still in waiting mode on the baby front.

Kiwi centre Gerard Beale, who made his club debut as Vodafone Warrior #230 against the Eels, has been moved back to the bench, again listed in jersey #18.

Other than Tuivasa-Sheck coming back into the line-up there are no other changes in personnel among the 17 players used against the Eels although there are two positional swaps. Simon Mannering is named to start in the second row with Isaiah Papali'i selected on the bench (Papali'i started in #11 last week) while James Gavet has been listed to start at prop after originally being named on the bench against Parramatta before being used in the run-on side.

Also included among the four interchange players likely to be used are props Bunty Afoa and Chris Satae plus utility Jazz Tevaga.

In only his second NRL appearance this year, Satae's 15 minutes last week coincided with the Vodafone Warriors' intensive period on defence when he was required to make no fewer than 24 tackles but barely saw the ball.

He then backed up for the club's Intrust Super Premiership side the next day when he was used off

the bench for 58 minutes (171 metres from 17 runs plus 26 tackles) in a 29-16 win over St George Illawarra.

The Vodafone Warriors' bench forwards made more than 100 tackles between them in the Parramatta win. Apart from Satae, Mannering finished with 36 tackles, Afoa 30 and Tevaga 19.

The Vodafone Warriors, who have remained in the top three all season so far, head into the South Sydney contest with an 8-3 win-loss run after 11 rounds, a season-opening effort bettered only once in the club's 24 seasons in the competition (in 2002).

While they're third this week, the Rabbitohs have surged into fourth spot on the back of three consecutive wins. Along with the Vodafone Warriors, they're the only other side to beat competition leader St George Illawarra so far.

In the opening round this season the Vodafone Warriors not only beat Souths 32-20 to win in Perth for the first time but also snapped a run of six losses to the Rabbitohs since 2013.

In 32 previous encounters, the Vodafone Warriors have a 19-13 advantage over Souths.

Vodafone Warriors

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 1 Roger Tuivasa-Sheck | 12 Tohu Harris |
| 2 David Fusitu'a | 13 Adam Blair |
| 3 Peta Hiku | Interchange: |
| 4 Solomon Kata | 14 Jazz Tevaga |
| 5 Ken Maumalo | 15 Chris Satae |
| 6 Blake Green | 16 Bunty Afoa |
| 7 Mason Lino | 17 Isaiah Papali'i |
| 8 James Gavet | 18 Gerard Beale |
| 9 Issac Luke | 20 Karl Lawton |
| 10 Agnatius Paasi | 21 Albert Vete |
| 11 Simon Mannering | 22 Anthony Gelling |

Shut Up And Stop Your Whingeing

By David Kemeys

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



IT IS a tough gig being a Warriors fan but I am beginning to think some of us just can't see the wood for the trees.

Yes it has been the old roller coaster in recent weeks, a win here, a loss there. We are eight and three for goodness sake. You think Panthers' fans are sitting at home whingeing about a lack of form?

It might not have been pretty on Friday night but I don't give a toss. The old ticker was getting a bit of a workout as the match went on but we got there and bagged another two points.

Bloody hell, last year we would have been over the moon to win a game at home, let alone on the road, so sitting where we are is just fine by me.

All you hear though is, we are not playing well, the wheels are coming off, we look terrible in offence, we aren't as solid in defence...

For a side that is supposedly playing poorly, is crap on offence and worse on defence we are going bloody well aren't we?

Maybe it is years of misery that has turned many of us into moaning old gits, but winning by one point gives the same result as winning by 10 – two competition points on the ladder.

I have endured, as have you all, the seasons where we trudged to Mt Smart knowing full well we would get a good old-fashioned arse-kicking, so if you can't just enjoy the way we are going now, having a competitive team that looks like it is trying and wants to win, then at least have the courtesy to shut up.

Meanwhile, as I am writing this, the young fella, who is doing a first rate impression of being a bludger, having moved home to sponge off the old man, has just returned from Sidknee, where he reports the crowd – or more particularly the lack of it – at the Eels match on Friday night was a depressing thing to encounter.

It must have been even more miserable for those Eels fans who found themselves in the vicinity of him and his mates, because they certainly let them know, shall we say, that they had team of dubious quality and uncertain parentage.

Personally I think that's a bit unfair because the Eels looked good value at some stages of the game, and it is not like we have not lived through the odd unrewarding spell ourselves.

As to our own performance, as I say, not vintage, so let's just bank the points and move on to the Bunnies this week.

That will be a good test.

We hammered the Roosters at their place and they returned the favour at ours, so just because we beat the Bunnies in Perth in round one, that's no guarantee we will do it again, especially given the Souths mob are actually travelling pretty well at the moment.

So get a ticket and be prepared to give the boys a shout so we don't repeat the miserable experience of Mt Smart being silent because we were all grumpy last time that the Roosters had not realised they were just meant to turn up and take another hammering.

That Ruck Nonsense Strikes Again

One thing you can say about Aussies is that they love a good cheat. Generally speaking your average Aussie sportsman would do a sick dog on chain.

They grow up from the cradle with a cricket ball and a bit of sandpaper, it's just the way it done there.

Sportsmanship is for complete sissys – and New Zealanders, which they largely regard as the same thing.

You will recall I was none too happy when the Roosters Latrine Mitchell quite deliberately threw the ball into a Warriors' player who was not interfering at the ruck, and then kicked the penalty.

So unsurprisingly I was as a red as a tomato when that little mongrel Eel skipped away from the ruck and looked to pass only to then decide to go back to it and throw the ball into Issac Luke.

When are we going to get a ref with the courage to say: Don't be dickhead, I'm not giving you a penalty for that.

I suspect it will be same day we get one who has actually read the rulebook on the play the ball, because as far as I know, and I do, because the league caller extraordinaire Alan Mac told me, actually says no defending player can advance until the "ball clears the ruck".

Now common sense might tell you that means when the ball gets passed, which is surely the intent, and which would open up the game dramatically, but which seems to be interpreted as when it clears the tackled players foot.

That is of course unless you are playing the Warrriors, when you entitled to do whatever you like, or if you actually are a Warriors player, when you are offside whenever the ref feels like it.

Simon Has A Decision To Make

For me the biggest league story going around at the moment is Super Simon Mannering having to make a decision about whether he goes around again next season.

He has done 14 seasons, arriving when he was three I think it was, and pretty much never having missed a game since, except when he broke both legs, an arm had to be sown back on when he cut himself slicing his steak with a chainsaw, and other superhuman stuff.

It would be really tough to see him in another club's colours, which he has not ruled out, but you just would not begrudge the man who has been the backbone of the club for such a long time the opportunity, if that is what he decided he wanted to do – just not Melbourne.

He has said he will make a call on his future by the end of the month, in the bye round – which follows the Bunnies.

Retirement must be an option, because as tough as he is, surely you get to a point where putting your body on the line so often gets a bit old.

Hopefully he will rack up 300 games for us this year, which would be a fitting milestone for him.

We have seen him coming off the bench this year after an injury kept him out early on, but I do not believe for one moment that would worry a man who has pretty much carried this club in recent years.

I thought this one quote from Captain Mannering (yes I know he isn't the captain any more, but he will always be Captain Mannering to us) summed it up.

"My body will tell me what decision I'll make."

Tohu Talks Tough

My take a bow award for the week goes to the former Storm player Tohu Harris, who I always thought was complete cack in a Storm jersey, but who is clearly a genius in a Warriors one.

He was not a happy camper after our 24-14 win over the Eels, and did not hold back, telling everyone who needed to hear it that we will have to improve if we want to compete with the best sides.

Harris was as grumpy as, well, me generally, that we let the Eels back into the match.

“We worked hard, especially at the end of the first half, to keep them out with one less player, and we spoke about coming out with that same energy, but I thought they did a better job of that,” he told NRL.com.

“They came out more aggressive, and that is a huge improvement we need to make. We can't let teams back into the game like that.”

The professionalism he and other signings have brought to the club has been as valuable as his on-field performances, which is saying something.

Harris is not a man used to losing, and clearly does not expect to fall into the habit at Mt Smart, and if that means everyone else has to lift their performance to his level, that is fine by him – and, I have to say, probably every fan in the ground.

Hurdle Cleared

That is eight wins now, more than in all of last year, and coach Stephen Kearney has got his side over the hurdle of travelling to play the Eels with Shaun Johnson and Roger Tuivasa-Sheck both out.

But that juggling with his backline might give a new headache because Gerard Beale looked pretty bloody convincing in his return after a badly injury he suffered back at the World Cup.

RTS is expected to be back for the Bunnies, so one of Peta Hiku, Solomone Kata or Beale is going to get left out.

You'd have to think it would be tough on Beale, who was very good on Friday, but just as tough on the other two, who have done little wrong either.

Beale was happy with a game that included some big defence and strong carries. He ran for 74 metres, made six tackle breaks and completed 14 tackles – not a bad night's work.

“I felt great out there and it was awesome to play my first game for the club,” he said.

Told You So

Don't you hate those smart-arses who tell you “told you so”.

But I did.

Last season we buggered about with David Fusitu'a in the centres and I constantly railed against it, saying he was one of the best finishers in the game and should return to his wing slot.

No one calling for him to go back into the centres now is there?

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



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Pat Siple on the burst. Photos by Mario Facchini, mafphotography

Vodafone Warriors Climb Ladder With Sixth Win

By Matt Buxton (NSWRL)

THE CLASS of Sam Cook and the strength of Ligi Sao gave the Warriors an important 29-16 victory over the St George Illawarra Dragons at Henson Park on Magic Weekend.

The Dragons began with the majority of the ball and field position, but the Warriors' goal-line defence continually turned them away. This resistance was rewarded with points at the other end of the field, when a smart pass from dummy half by Karl Lawton had Ligi Sao charge onto a ball and through a gap to open the scoring.

The magical halves for the Dragons combined on Magic Weekend; Darren Nichols put in a grubber for Jai Field who was charging through the line, and he easily won the race to the ball to take the lead for the first time after the try was converted.

Sam Cook then dominated the back end of the first half, instrumenting the Warriors to a 14-6 half-time lead with two quick-fire tries. The first was pure brilliance by Sao, who took the ball to the line and threw a remarkable flick pass into the hands of Cook who strolled over, before Manaia Cherrington made a break from dummy half and passed to a supporting Cook, who scored under the posts untouched.

The Warriors began the second half as quickly as they finished the first, with Pat Siple crashing over for a try before Lewis Soosemea showed his speed with a dash down the left sideline and passing inside to a Chanel Harris-Tavita, who increased their lead to 24-6.

With the margin getting away from them the Dragons simply had to be next to score, and Jai Field had a hand in that coming true when he ran across-field and passed to fill-in fullback Steven Masters, who

had plenty of work to do before planting the ball down.

Down by 12, the Dragons desperately tried to score quick points to get themselves back in the contest, but once again the Warriors defence held strong, before the game was put out of reach when Harris-Tavita slotted a field goal to put the deficit beyond two converted tries.

There was a small glimmer of hope in the dying minutes when Jordan Pereira scored in the corner, but Soosemea picked up a loose ball and scored a runaway try against the run of play to make the final score 29-16.

NSWRL Intrust Super Premiership NSW – 11th Round

Saturday, 19th May 2018

Henson Park

St George-Illawarra v New Zealand Warriors

Kick-Off: 1.00pm (AEST)

This match was televised live by Channel Nine

New Zealand Warriors 29:

Sam Cook 2, Patrick Siple, Chanel Harris-Tavita, Ligi Sao, Lewis Soosemea tries;

Chanel Harris-Tavita 2 conversions and 1 field goal defeated

St George-Illawarra 16:

Steve Marsters, Jai Field, Jordan Pereira tries;

Darren Nicholls 2 goals.

Half-Time: New Zealand Warriors led 14-6.

Referees: Darian Furner and Josh McGowan

Touch Judges: Ben Teague and Cameron Mitchell.

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Chanel Harris-Tavita lines up a conversion.



Chanze Nicoll-Kiokstad - catch me if you can.



Chanel Harris-Tavita motions - give me the ball and I'll run it up.



New Zealand Warriors ISP NSW team at Henson Park, 19th May 2018 (MAF).



Rugby league legend Ruben Wiki looks like he could still play running on to the field.



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By Barry Ross

The Right Fit

Photo www.photosport.nz

NEWLY APPOINTED Kiwi coach, Michael Maguire, is the right fit for the job. He has been on the coaching scene for around 18 years after beginning as an assistant with the Canberra Raiders and then moving on to the Melbourne Storm in 2004 under Craig Bellamy. His first head coaching role was with the Wigan Warriors in the English Super League and he was very successful, winning the 2010 Super League Grand Final and the 2011 Challenge Cup Final 28-18 against Leeds, at Wembley on 27 August 2011 before 78,482 fans. He joined South Sydney for the 2012 season and in six seasons, coached the Rabbitohs to 85 wins in 153 games. In his first four seasons with the club, Souths made the play-offs and in 2014, won the Premiership after beating the Bulldogs 30-6 in the Grand Final. They followed this up with a decisive 39-0 victory against St. Helens in the World Club Challenge at Leeds on 22 February 2015. There is no doubt that Maguire has the runs on the board and his successes no doubt influenced the selection panel who gave him the New Zealand job. Michael has signed a four year contract but of course, there will be yearly reviews and other observations.

Now 44, he is elated to be the New Zealand coach.

“ Since our game began, New Zealand players have been among the best. Powerful forwards and clever, ball handling backs have been a feature of the Kiwi sides and the same is true now, “ he said. “ As an organisation and a team, we have to build a culture where we always expect to win. ”

His first year will be a real challenge, as the Kiwis play six Tests in the next six months or so. First there is the clash with England on 23 June in Denver and then at the end of the NRL season, New Zealand play Australia in Auckland on 13 October. Soon after this ANZAC Test, the Kiwis leave for England and France where they will play a three Test series against Great Britain and one with France. The British Tests are on 27 October (Hull), 3 November (Anfield, the home of the Liverpool soccer team) and 11 November (Leeds). They finish the tour in France with a Test against the locals on 17 November.

Always a thorough and well research coach, Michael began preparing for his new role the day after his appointment.

“ There is no definite date for the announcement of our side for the Denver Test, but we are already working on this, “ he emphasised. “ Whether we can include men who played with Tonga and Samoa in last year’s Worlds Cup, is still an ongoing process. “

He added that he is part of the decision making in all aspects of New Zealand Rugby League. He believes it is important for him to be well versed with the local New Zealand competitions, as down the track players from this level will be named in development squads which will then feed in towards the national team. He, along with his coaching and management team, want the New Zealand public to be proud of their Rugby League team. With so many New Zealanders sprinkled throughout the 16 NRL teams, Michael will be a regular spectator wherever the games are played.

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He was at ANZ Stadium last Friday night when the Warriors beat Parramatta 24-14. I am a big Issac Luke fan and like many others, I was impressed with his great display against the Eels. I asked Michael had Issac already done enough to be selected for Denver.

“ The side is far from selected as yet and so no player has been pencilled in for any position, “ he said. “ But I will say that Issac has had a great season this year and so have many other Warriors’ players and that is why they have won eight of their 11 games and are sitting at the pointy end of the ladder. “

Issac is a proud New Zealander and has played 42 Tests for the Kiwis, as well as 241 NRL first grade games, with Souths and the Warriors. He turns 31 next week on 29 May and has been in outstanding form in 2018. Gerard Beale, in his debut game for the Warriors firsts team, was another impressive player again Parramatta. Now 27, Beale has played 163 first grade games (44 tries) with the Broncos, the Dragons, the Sharks and the Warriors.

I attended a sportsman’s lunch for the Men of League and Panthers on the Prowl, last Friday, at Penrith Leagues club. It was great day with Channel Nine’s Tim Gilbert doing an excellent job as MC. A highlight of the lunch was the interview by Tim Gilbert, of Tigers coach, Ivan Cleary and his 19 year old son, Nathan Cleary, the Penrith halfback. Just the night before, Penrith with Nathan one of the stars, beat Ivan’s Tigers by 16-2. It was obvious that the Clearys are a tight, caring and loving family and everyone in attendance was impressed with their sincerity.

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By John Coffey

Obituary: Tom Hadfield, Try-Scorer

Hadfield on the charge against France at Carlaw Park in 1960

OVER THE decades the Kiwis have been blessed with such spectacular try-scoring wings as Phillip Orchard, Sean Hoppe and Manu Vatuvei. Orchard scored 15 tries in 21 Tests, Hoppe 17 tries in 35 Tests and Vatuvei a record 22 tries in 28 Tests. Of our top ten Test try-scorers, Manu's strike rate of 0.78 ranks second only to the great Tom Hadfield (Kiwis #375), who crossed for 15 tries in 17 Tests, a remarkable strike rate of 0.88.

Sadly, Tom Hadfield died at Birkenhead, Auckland, last Wednesday, aged 83, but his deeds will forever hold a proud place in rugby league folklore. Tom's Kiwis career extended from 1956 until 1961. In all, he played 40 Test and tour matches for New Zealand and scored a total of 30 tries. He was included in the NZRL Team of the Century in 2007 and inducted into the NZRL Legends of League in 2010.

I saw Tom play only once, for North Island against South at Wingham Park, Greymouth, in 1960, when I was in my early teens. There were stars aplenty on show that day but I have a lasting memory of an impressive long-striding right wing on the edge of North's all-Kiwis backline. In later life I was fortunate to meet Tom at Kiwis reunions and share the general opinion that he was a really nice guy.

Eight years ago I was privileged to research and write the citation for his Legends of League induction and can do no better than reproduce it here:

"It is unusual for a wing to be the dominant figure in a rugby league Test series, especially when the two matches are low scoring affairs played in wet and muddy conditions. But none of those who were there doubted that Tom Hadfield was the man who did most to ensure the Kiwis triumphed in the 1960 home series against France.

"New Zealand won by 9-2 and 9-3, scores more appropriate for a game of squash. But the results testified to the state of Carlaw Park and an expectation that the forwards would decide the issue. There were indeed mighty forward battles but the balance of power was tipped by the flyer out on the New Zealand right wing.

"Hadfield's two tries and another to fellow wing Neville Denton provided all of the points in the first Test. In the second, the Kiwis led only 4-3 until Hadfield clinched victory with a 64th minute epic. Bloodied from a head-high hit, he surged 70 metres, breaking a tackle, evading another and shrugging off a third. Cyril Eastlake's conversion completed the scoring.

"Veteran writer and enthusiast Eric Bennetts was moved to present Hadfield with a silver tray in recognition of his feat. Bennetts also penned a letter, telling Hadfield he had watched Test matches in both rugby codes since 1913 and rated the Northcote man's performance in the second Test as 'the best ever'.

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“It was not only the Frenchmen who learned to appreciate Hadfield’s finishing skills. During a 17-Test career between 1956 and 1961 he crossed for a then record 15 tries; in one amazing sequence involving the 1957 and 1960 World Cup tournaments he scored 12 tries over nine consecutive Tests. But for injuries suffered during tours to Australia in 1959 and Britain and France two years later he would have further embellished an already outstanding record.

“Hadfield came up through the grades with Northcote and also played for Northern Districts when Auckland adopted a district club scheme. It was with the latter that he survived a scare in 1958 when he swallowed his tongue and almost died as the match against Otahuhu went on around him. Hadfield spent three days in hospital, yet later that season scored tries in both home Tests against Great Britain.

“His Kiwis initiation had been on the 1956 tour to Australia, where he scored tries in four of his first five games and made his Test debut. Hadfield crossed the Tasman again for the 1957 World Cup, touching down against France and in a famous victory over Great Britain. A combined British and French side later played a Test against the Kiwis at Carlaw Park. Despite the visitors winning 34-31, Hadfield celebrated the occasion with a try-scoring treble.

“At the 1960 World Cup in England Hadfield again contributed two tries, this time against Great Britain and Australia, in his three appearances. They were both memorable. He beat three British defenders down the right flank to score at Bradford and completed a spectacular 50-metres backline assault against the Kangaroos at Leeds. He represented Rest of the World against the British World Cup winners and scored a try in a 33-27 loss.

“After going try-less in a low-scoring and tied two-Test series against Australia in 1961, Hadfield toured Britain and France with a side weakened by withdrawals. With Hadfield among the try-scorers, the under-rated Kiwis shocked by decisively winning the first Test at Leeds. Britain regrouped to save the series. Hadfield missed the second Test through injury before returning to touch down twice in the third at Swinton. The Kiwis went on to win in France, but injury restricted Hadfield to the first Test match and a game against Provence, where he scored the last of his 30 tries in his 40 matches for his country.”

In 2007 Tom was chosen, along with Phillip Orchard, as a wing in New Zealand’s Team of the Century, selected to mark the centenary of the original All Golds. Three years later Tom was not only inducted into the NZRL Legends of League but also became the first rugby league member of the North Harbour Sports Hall of Fame. That he was so widely recognised almost 50 years after his retirement testified to the lasting impact of his great career.



Happy Birthday to Issac Luke for Next Tuesday





Se'e Solomona in action for the Warriors during the Winfield Cup match against the Bulldogs, 1995. Photo www.photosport.nz



By Miles Davis

The Originals - Warrior No. 14: Se'e Solomona

WARRIOR NO. 14 Se'e Solomona came from a well-known rugby league family and came to prominence playing with the Richmond Bulldogs and the Glenora Bears in Auckland. He had however started his life playing Rugby Union and was a member of the National Schoolboys Top Four winning side in 1982, scoring a try against Wataki Boys in an 11-4 win (the first year of the competition).

He spent a season with the Canterbury Bulldogs in 1989 as part of the New Zealand Rugby League's Rookie Scheme before heading north for a spell with Sheffield Eagles before signing with Widnes for the 1991/92 season. "Tiny", as Solomona was affectionately known, made 14 appearances that season scoring 2 tries. At the end of the season he signed for Oldham.

Whilst at Oldham he would return occasionally to New Zealand to play representative league for Auckland (he made 21 appearances for his province) including the 1993 National Championship Final against Canterbury. It was a game to forget for Tiny as the Red and Blacks galloped home 36-12. Man of the Match was Brendan Tuuta, who had also been called back from the UK where he was playing for Featherstone Rovers. Solomona and Tuuta had a fiery encounter earlier that year in the UK when Oldham played Featherstone Rovers. Both sides were to be promoted from the 2nd Division but there was obviously plenty of feeling when they met in a league clash at Oldham's Watersheddings ground. There was a mass brawl in the 17th minute which involved most of the players on the park. Tuuta was dismissed for a punch that broke Nigel Heslop's jaw and Solomona also received his marching orders for his part in the melee (Oldham won 24-22 but Featherstone went up as Champions with Oldham 2nd). Tuuta was suspended for 6 matches and Solomona for 4.

1993 was an eventful year for Solomona as he was also called up for the Kiwis, going on to make 4 appearances for them (he also represented Western Samoa at the 1995 Rugby League World Cup).

At the end of the 1994 season Solomona was to return to New Zealand and join the newly-formed Auckland Warriors and as he was at the time still contracted to Oldham, the club was entitled to a transfer fee. Oldham had wanted the maximum fee for International transfers, which at the time which was 70,000 pounds. However the rule had been deemed not to apply to New Zealanders returning home and an International Board meeting held in Auckland decreed that the transfer fee be just 7,500 pounds.

Solomona was on the interchange bench for the Vodafone Warriors on that famous night in 1995 when they first dipped their toe into the NRL with a narrow loss to the Brisbane Broncos. He made his starting debut in the round 2 clash with the Illawarra Steelers and was to be a starter in 6 of the next 7 games. After that he made just one more appearance from the interchange bench.

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At the end of that inaugural Vodafone Warriors season he moved on to North Queensland Cowboys who were then coached by Kiwi legend Graham Lowe. It was a tough season for the Cowboys who won just 6 of their 21 games. Solomona made his debut in the round 6 loss (50-6) to North Sydney Bears and played four consecutive games, all of which were losses. Despite the short Cowboys career he must have seen something he liked in North Queensland as he still resides in Townsville.

His NRL career may have been limited to just 13 games, but Se'e "Tiny" Solomona has his special part in Vodafone Warriors history and will long be remembered by the Warriors faithful.

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By John Coffey

Jamayne Isaako Is A Real Match-Winner

Broncos Jamayne Isaako. Vodafone Warriors v Brisbane Broncos.. Photo www.photosport.nz

OF ALL the New Zealanders playing in the NRL the one who has proved to be the biggest match-winner in 2018 would have been one of the least celebrated at season's start. Christchurch born and bred Brisbane wing Jamayne Isaako scored an extraordinary try to clinch victory for the Broncos in a 28-22 thriller over the Sydney Roosters last weekend.

With the scores locked at 22-22 in the 78th minute, Isaako first convinced the onrushing Roosters that he was about to attempt a field goal; he then "threw" an extravagant dummy towards Corey Oates on the left wing. Instead, he dashed into the fractured Roosters line, stepped around several bewildered opponents and out-sprinted the desperate cover defence.

Isaako coolly converted to finish the match with 16 points from two tries and four goals. He has accumulated 97 points after 11 rounds. His earlier match-winning deeds included four goals and a field goal for all of Brisbane's points in a tense 9-7 golden-point defeat of Wests Tigers and two tries and five goals in the 27-18 victory over the Warriors in Auckland.

Jordan Rapana and Dallin Watene-Zelezniak are the incumbent Kiwis Test wings, with veteran Jason Nightingale their understudy last year. All are in good enough form to keep their rankings – presuming David Fusitu'a stays with Tonga. But such has been his impact it is hard to image Isaako not being in coach Michael Maguire's plans for the 2021 World Cup.

Of Samoan heritage, Isaako – who turns 22 early next month – lists Aranui Eagles as his junior club. But he attracted most attention in his home city as a schoolboy rugby union star, for Shirley Boys High School in 2012 and St Bede's College in 2013. He played at second five-eighth in those days and his booming goal-kicking won many a match for both schools.

Isaako told nrl.com earlier this year that he grew up wanting to be an All Black, although Brisbane and Kangaroos legend Darren Lockyer was his main boyhood idol. He always had a hankering to pull on the Broncos jersey, but it was the Cronulla Sharks who first called him across the Tasman. Isaako made the move to Sydney late in 2013, when he was 17.

He was again a schoolboy sensation in the centres, and Man of the Match when Endeavour Sports High School beat Patrician Brothers in the 2014 GIO Cup final. Isaako was a Junior Kiwi in 2015 and 2016, and transferred to the Broncos between those seasons. He was fast growing into his present 180cm and 95kg physique and instigated the move north himself.

Manager Jim Banaghan tells the story: "I took Jamayne to lunch one day when he was going home to Christchurch and on the way to the airport he told me he wasn't happy at Cronulla and wanted to play for Brisbane. I rang Benny (Wayne Bennett) and said I had a special kid and a genuine first-grader who wants to play for the Broncos, and he said 'leave it with me for a week'.

Continued on next page...

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“Benny must have had some schoolboy vision of Jamayne and checked him out with his contacts, and he rang me back to say ‘Yeah, we’ll take him.’ That’s how simple it was.” Isaako arrived in Brisbane in early 2016. Last season he was named Intrust Super Cup Fullback of the Year playing for the Broncos’ feeder club South Logan Magpies.

Even Broncos fans knew little about Isaako when the 2018 season started. His only first grade appearance last year was against the Knights in Newcastle during the Origin period. Isaako filled in for Darius Boyd at fullback and ran for 156 metres. Bennett promptly extended his contract until the end of 2018 and pencilled him in for a permanent role in the top team.

Joe Buchanan, who coached Isaako at the Magpies, spoke glowingly of his demeanour on and off the field. He even described him as (an admittedly shorter) version of Israel Folau and was confident he would be rewarded for the hard work he had put in over the previous 18 months. “He has got the X-factor, (with) electric footwork,” Buchanan told nrl.com in March.

“I think he is one of those players who the more time he spends in better company the better he’ll get,” said Buchanan, who also praised Isaako for his willingness to assist training staff and encourage youngsters who looked up to him. The coach’s only complaint was Isaako’s taste in expensive clothing and footwear because his 10-year-old son wanted to copy him!

Boyd himself chipped in with these comments: “He can goal-kick – and he kicks it a mile. He is a smart kid and a competitor. In the pre-season he was one of the blokes leading the fitness work, and one of the strongest backs in the gym.” It seems inevitable Isaako will eventually succeed Boyd as Brisbane’s fullback, in the meantime serving his apprenticeship at wing.

Meanwhile, Canterbury’s most experienced current NRL player, Lewis Brown, is stalled in sight of a rare milestone. Brown has played 197 matches in his career for the Warriors (84), Penrith (66) and Manly (47) but has made just one appearance for the Sea Eagles in 2018. The only double centurions from Canterbury are Jeremy Smith (214) and David Kidwell (209). Brown began the season equal third with Bill Noonan on 196.

#Warrior 206 Issac Luke More than just a game for more than just a player - Joyce Putohe



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

The Mad Butchers Weekly NRL Tipping Comp.

By John Holloway

NRL Round 12

Date/ Venue		Game	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>
Thurs 24 May Suncorp	Broncos v Eels	Broncos	Broncos	Broncos	Broncos	Broncos	Broncos	Broncos	Broncos
Fri 25 May GIO	Raiders v Sea eagles	Raiders	Raiders	Raiders	Raiders	Raiders	Sea Eagles	Raiders	Raiders
Fri 25 May 1300 Smiles	Cowboys v Storm	Storm	Cowboys	Storm	Cowboys	Storm	Storm	Storm	Cowboys
Sat 26 May Central Cost	Roosters v Titans	Roosters	Roosters	Roosters	Roosters	Roosters	Roosters	Roosters	Roosters
Sat 26 May Mt Smart	Warriors v Rabbitohs	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors
Sat 26 May Panther Std	Panthers v Dragons	Panthers	Panthers	Panthers	Panthers	Panthers	Panthers	Dragons	Panthers
Sun 27 May McDonald Jms	Knights v Sharks	Knights	Sharks	Sharks	Sharks	Sharks	Sharks	Sharks	Sharks
Sun 27 May ANZ	Tigers v Bulldogs	Tigers	Tigers	Tigers	Bulldogs	Tigers	Bulldogs	Bulldogs	Bulldogs

Picks last week	5/8	5/8	5/8	5/8	5/8	5/8	6/8	5/8
Total picks	49	52	50	45	48	54	47	

Ugly Or Pretty Who Cares, We'll Take The 2 Points...

WITH A rearranged line-up and star names unavailable you would be forgiven for fearing the worst but once again the B Team did the business. I don't mean any negative inference to the selected side but in fact the opposite. I said recently that we no longer lose hope when the likes of a Johnson, Luke and now RTS are absent as the team is exactly that now a team that plays together and can plaster over the wounds of what used to be disastrous loss making defections. Beale stepped up and made a good fist of his Warrior debut, lively Lino gave his best again, handy Hiku was flukey but showed his positional versatility and the Flying Fusitua got yet another stunner try. All are great signposts for the remaining games of 2018. No room for Mr Complacency but sitting in the top four for 11 rounds in a row is a promising signpost for the team, the coaches and we the faithful. Kia Kaha! It steps up again this week as we welcome the rampant 4 in a row Rabbits to Mt Smart. They are arguably the form team especially attack-wise at this point. Newbie coach somebody Siebold has the South Sydneysiders jumping out of their skins and stopping the Burgess bash brothers, Chricton, Reynolds, Wily Walker and speedster Alex Johnson will be no mean feat. On other fields The Dragons retained top spot 25/18 but not without a fight from down on their luck Sticky Rickys Raiders. The prowling Panthers clawed the Tigers 18/2 and continue in second place albeit the same 16 point rung as our Homies. The Broncos are rarely under-dogs at Suncorp but overcame this with a gritty slightly surprising defeat of the rugged Roosters 28/22, Bennett nearly smiled. The Titans and Knights stuck on a nail-biter with the Gold Coasters getting up 33/26, the biggest thrill however was the goal line to goal line try dash of the Knights Wunderkind Kaylen Ponga, vision, evasion, top end speed what a player.

Continued on next page...

The Cowboys looked home and hosed but lively rake Glanville got hit with a heartbreaker last minute penalty, offside in front to drop the lollies 19/20 to the hugely relieved lucky Rabbitohs. Glanville nearly cried. The Shireboys were too good for the embattled Bulldogs 22/16. The veteran Morris dancer brothers both scored for the doggies but to no avail as the Sharks with the powerful Jesse Ramien continuing his improvement banking their 5th win in a row at 22/16. BRING back the BIFF and they did in a wild affair in stately Melbourne. The strutting Sea Eagles wideboy Dylan Walker got more than he bargained for taunting Purple gang centre Curtis Scott. Mayhem erupted with a rousing return to the flying fists of Origin in the old days. Scott was very accurate with several hearty haymakers and a sorry looking Walker went backwards at a great rate. Scott off, Walker Sin Bin and 10 also for Koroisau's right cross contribution to the fray. For all that Dylans sorry looking swollen closed eye was made a little more comfortable with the unexpected 24/4 touch-up that the Manly mob handed the Smith-less Storm. More controversy clouds closed in with the early sin-bin re-entry saga causing a raft of finger-pointing to find someone to blame. Watch that space. Woohoo what a weekend, the great game continues to throw up upsets, outrage, disappointments and delight.

TIPPING was very evenhanded this week with Nifty Nevs 6 win tips enhancing his lead. All the rest scored matching 5 from 8s to keep the status quo. The Storm blowout and the Knights close loss were the stumbling blocks to a more fruitful return. A couple of conundrums looming in round 12 with the top of the table Panthers v Dragons clash a tasty test.

See ya Saturday nite at the park, big burgers, big hits and big excitement, lets do this and Go the Mightyyy Warrioorrrs.

Photos from my trip to Masterton



At the Bringitto Colombo Stars Aligned Gala raising funds for Netball Wairarapa's new facility with our great mate's Denise & Dexter.



Great to catch up with Catriona Williams... the amazing Catriona Williams, former NZ Equestrian - who is a fellow member of the Carbine Club.



Great to catch up with my great mate Jenny-May Clarkson looking absolutely fantastic.



Had a great night with these 2 #rugbylegends Sir Bryan Lochore & Michael Jones twp great All Blacks.



I just popped into Vodafone in Masterton the service was fantastic I am and the two ladies were massive Vodafone Warriors supporters so it was a bonus.



Just meet Pauline Craig who loves the Vodafone Warriors.

This Warriors Life Top 10 - One Game Wonders

By Will Evans

A TOTAL OF 15 players make up the Warriors' 'One-game wonders' – a group that have made just a solitary first grade premierships appearance for the club. This week we take a look at the most notable.

THIS WARRIORS LIFE TOP 10 - WARRIORS 'ONE-GAME WONDERS'

10. Siutonga Likiliki – v Parramatta, 2009

Marist Saints junior Likiliki was just 19 when he was called up to start at centre against a red-hot Parramatta late in the 2009 season. But the youngster's watershed moment was overshadowed by a Jarryd Hayne-led 40-4 demolition job.

Despite being named in the NYC Team of the Year, further top-grade opportunities were not forthcoming for Likiliki and he signed with Newcastle after scoring a try in the Warriors' maiden Under-20s grand final win in 2010.

Likiliki played two NRL games for the Knights in 2011 but the Tongan international was unable to progress past NSW Cup and Queensland Cup levels thereafter, with a move to the Gold Coast Titans failing to revive his professional career.

9. Shaun Lane – v St George Illawarra, 2016

Releasing dynamic tyro Raymond Faitala-Mariner to Canterbury early in 2016 seemed a baffling move from the Warriors, but at least in return the club was getting one of the game's most promising forwards in towering Bulldogs youngster Lane.

The 21-year-old made his top-grade debut for the club as the shorthanded Warriors upset St George Illawarra days after demoting several players for an off-field incident, but he lost his spot as the misbehaving cavalry returned.

Lane joined Manly at the end of the season, playing 20 games in the maroon and white so far. Along with Upu Poching (versus North Queensland in 2010), Lane is one of only two Warriors one-game wonders to have tasted victory.

8. Frank Watene – v Manly, 1998

Signed by the Auckland Warriors in 1994 and a Junior Kiwis rep in '96, Watene seemed destined for the top flight but never really kicked on while on home soil.

Watene played in Warriors' 1997 Super League reserve grade grand final loss to the Bulldogs but had to wait until the final round of '98 to make his first grade debut, coming off the bench in a 38-12 thrashing at the hands of Manly – Frank Endacott's last game as coach of the club.

The following season Watene joined Super League club Wakefield Trinity before spending a decade with English lower-division outfits Dewsbury and Halifax.

7. David Murray – v Manly, 1996

Courageous fullback 'Doc' Murray was a star on the Auckland Rugby League scene with Ellerslie before picking a contract with the fledgling Auckland Warriors.

The court order preventing Super League from going ahead in 1996 scuppered John Monie's fullback plans with Matthew Ridge not allowed to join the club, and the coach turned to Murray in Round 5 after underwhelming displays from Marc Ellis and Gene Ngamu in the key position.

Continued on next page...

But Murray was promptly dropped after the Warriors' 22-10 loss to Manly, Greg Alexander eventually settling into the No.1 jumper. The 23-year-old was nevertheless a key member of the reserve grade side that qualified for a historic grand final, setting up Nigel Vagana for a late try in a 14-12 defeat to Cronulla.

Murray then starred in dual wins over Great Britain for New Zealand XIII and NZ Maori, and scored five tries in two games for the latter against the touring Papua New Guinea side. He played for Super League clubs Wigan and Warrington in 1997.

6. Meti Noovao – v Perth, 1997

A classy utility who played in almost every position for the Warriors' reserve grade side, Noovao came off the bench in 1996 decider against Cronulla and featured at five-eighth in the '97 loss to Canterbury – earning his sole premiership appearance in between.

Noovao was used as an interchange as the Warriors suffered a disappointing 24-12 loss to Perth Reds at the WACA in 1997, though he probably has fonder memories of playing in big wins over St Helens (bench) and Warrington in that year's World Club Challenge tournament, which are not considered official first-grade appearances.

The brother of former Silvern Ferns captain Ana Noovao, he joined the Adelaide Rams in 1998 and stands as one of just two one-game wonders at the now-defunct club. Noovao linked with Burleigh Bears the following season and was part of Cook Islands' 2000 World Cups squad, scoring a try at lock in an 84-10 loss to the Kiwis.

5. Daniel O'Regan – v South Sydney, 2009

Robust five-eighth/lock Daniel O'Regan made one NRL appearance off the bench during the Warriors' troubled 2009 campaign. The nephew of former New Zealand Test player Ron O'Regan, the Kaipara College product represented the Junior Kiwis in 2005. He arrived at the Warriors via Mt Albert and Manurewa, and became the club's inaugural Toyota Cup Under-20s captain in 2008.

The 21-year-old O'Regan featured for NSW Cup affiliate Auckland Vulcans throughout 2009 and played his sole first grade game for the Warriors off the bench in an early-season loss to Souths, becoming the club's 150th player to appear in the top flight. O'Regan joined Melbourne Storm in 2010 but did not feature at NRL level for the premiership powerhouse, instead playing in the NSW Cup competition.

4. Paul Atkins – v Sydney Roosters, 2004

Fullback/winger Paul Atkins made the step up from the Bartercard Cup competition to play one match for the New Zealand Warriors in 2004. The 21-year-old Otahuhu-Ellerslie Leopards star came off the bench in the struggling Warriors' penultimate regular season match, a 30-24 loss to heavyweights Sydney Roosters.

His debut was notable for being subjected to two bell-ringers by the Roosters' British enforcer Adrian Morley, but coach Tony Kemp praised the 80kg Atkins' courage post-match. Atkins subsequently represented Auckland and New Zealand A in losses to the touring Jim Beam Cup Representative Team and played fullback in New Zealand Universities' 17-8 victory over their Australian counterparts in the final of the 2005 Student World Cup in Brisbane.

Featuring for the Tamaki Leopards in the Bartercard Cup, Atkins represented New Zealand Maori in the 2006 Pacific Cup. He joined the Howick Hornets club in 2007 and played for Auckland Vulcans during their 2008 NSW Cup campaign.

Atkins' lone NRL outing was so memorable that it recently became the subject of a short documentary by Sky Sports, used as filler between programs. Meanwhile, another Warriors one-game wonder played his only first-grade match in the same game – Canterbury (NZ) product and former junior Kiwi Kane Ferris.

3. Danny Sullivan – v Penrith, 2004

Western Sydney junior Sullivan was earmarked for rugby league's heights but injury curtailed his career. The back-rower was a star of the crack 1999 Australian Schoolboys combination that included Braith Anasta, Jamie Lyon, Corey Parker, Brent Tate and future Warriors great Micheal Luck.

The 19-year-old Sullivan played five games for runaway premiers Parramatta in 2001 – including their qualifying final demolition of the Warriors – but an ACL injury followed by a Golden staph infection wrecked the next two years.

The Warriors took a punt on Sullivan, who had come under coach Daniel Anderson's tutelage in the Eels' juniors, but his knee problems resurfaced after his front-row appearance in a 42-22 loss to Penrith early in 2004. He returned to Australia and made the agonising decision to retire.

2. Mark Robinson – v Bulldogs, 2003

Easily the most famous one-game wonder at the time of his sole NRL appearance for the Warriors, 'Sharky' Robinson was a three-Test All Blacks halfback when he switched codes on a short-term contract.

The Whangarei product starred in Super Rugby for the Chiefs and Blues before taking a deal with the Warriors in 2003 to mark time before joining Northampton Saints in the following English rugby union season.

Getting a rugby league grounding with North Harbour Tigers in the Bartercard Cup, Robinson – playing at hooker – scored four tries in a game against Wellington. He received an NRL call-up and started at hooker for the injured PJ Marsh in the Warriors' 18-12 loss to the Bulldogs – ironically at Wellington's Westpac Stadium, where he played plenty of union. Marsh returned a week later and Robinson's brief time in top league company was over.

Robinson played six seasons in England with Northampton and Wasps before knee injuries forced him to retire in 2010.

1. Sio Siua Taukeiaho – v St George Illawarra, 2013

Of the Warriors' one-game wonder contingent, Taukeiaho is unquestionably the one that got away. The Otara Scorpions junior featured in the Warriors' 2011 NYC grand final triumph and represented the Junior Kiwis.

An NRL debut eventually came in the final round of 2013, entering the fray off the pine in a dismal 19-10 defeat to St George Illawarra. But further opportunities were not forthcoming and Taukeiaho joined the Roosters in 2015, where he has played 72 first grade games in three and half seasons.

Big and mobile with a huge engine, Taukeiaho is also a 75 percent goalkicker. After making Test debuts for Tonga and New Zealand in 2015, he was one of the stars of the 2017 World Cup for the former – including in a historic defeat of the Kiwis in Hamilton.

*The other Warriors 'one-game wonders' are Herewini Rangi (1999), Anthony Seuseu (2001), Kane Ferris (2004), Upu Poching (2010) and Erin Clark (2017).

**Joseph Vuna and Gerard Beale have also made just one NRL appearance for the Warriors after earning club debuts this season, but both remain in line to add to their top-grade tallies at the club.

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Southland District Round League

By SOUTHERN RUGBY LEAGUE

Photos by: Dave Loudon

SOUTHERN RUGBY LEAGUE by DAVE LOUDON PHOTOGRAPHY

Games Played At Invercargill On Saturday May 19 2018

THE FIRST game of the day was between Dunedin Bears RLC and Cowboys RLC . The referee was Mike Lemalie.

Cowboys got off to a great start scoring a try in the opening minutes of the game and converted the try . They went on to add 4 more trys to the score sheet leading up to half time . Dunedin Bears opened their score card in the second half. Cowboys maintained their strong game right through the second half to round out the game with a score of 46 against the Bears on 14 . To the credit of the Bears they put up a good battle considering they only fielded 12 players and had no reserves.

The second game of the day saw He Tauaa RLC play Kia Toa Tigers RLC. The referee was Bruce Aupouri. Kia Toa showed good form five minutes in to the game with their first try on the scoreboard. They carried on adding points to the scorecard right through until the end of the first half . He Tauaa showed some good defensive moves and tackles throughout the first half – but Kia Toa dominated the game . At the half time whistle Kia Toa held the lead with 28 points

on the board and He Tauaa yet to score .

In the second half He Tauaa opened their scorecard running in 3 tries and converting all of them. Kia Toa carried on with good consistency to win the game with 44 points on the board against He Tauaa on 18 . He Tauaa made a valiant effort on the day but were struck with an injury toll which did not help them . It was a clean and fast flowing game of rugby league.

Games at Dunedin last Saturday :

Winton /City played Otago University RLC . University took the win with 50 against Winton/ City on 22.

Cooks RLC were scheduled to play South Pacific Raiders RLC at Dunedin , but die to the non-availability of a referee the game was cancelled .

The combined Otago / Southland premier grade club competition has now concluded for this season .The 4 teams from each of the provinces will now round out the season with another round of local games leading up to the club semi finals and a grand final. The winners of each club grand final from both Southland and Otago will meet for a grand provincial final .





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FOR INFO: WWW.WALCOEVENTS.NZ



The NRL Returns To Christchurch! Manly V Warriors In Christchurch Saturday June 9

With less than 3 weeks until Manly host the Vodafone Warriors in Christchurch there are less than 5,000 tickets remaining. Fortunately the majority of these tickets are under cover so if you want to make the trip to Christchurch there are plenty of good seats available. With the Sea Eagles having won their last 2 against the Broncos and Storm, this is shaping up to be another epic blockbuster between these two teams.

The best value are these Warriors Supporter section tickets. They can only be purchased via the link below. \$39 and under cover on about the 20m line.

<http://premier.ticketek.co.nz/shows/show.aspx?pp=QMEMB&sh=MANLYWAR18>

If you don't want to sit in the Warriors supporters zone, you can check out other ticket options here: ticketek.co.nz/manlywarriors

Join Me At The Manly V Warriors Gala Dinner, Thursday 7 June

If you are going to be in Christchurch on Thursday night before the match (Thursday 7 June) join me at the Gala Dinner. Members of both teams will be in attendance along with Frank Endacott and guest speaker, Graham Lowe. It would be great to see as many of you as possible and catch up in an intimate setting at Sixty6 on Peterborough. Grab your tickets or tables here: <http://walcoevents.nz/book-now-w-dinner/>



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MANLY v WARRIORS



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MANLY V WARRIORS – SOUTH ISLAND KIWIS FUNCTION

Attention all Ex and Current Kiwis

On behalf of Walco Events and Gary Clarke, we would like to invite any ex or current Kiwis to join us at the South Island Kiwis Association function on June 8th at the Gary Clarke Museum, before the Manly Sea Eagles meet the Vodafone Warriors on Saturday June 9th at the Rugby League Park.

Please take a look at the event details below.

Event Details

Venue: Gary Clarke Museum, 11 Kennaway Rd, Woolston, Christchurch 8023

Date: Friday 8th June 2018

Time: 5.00pm – 7.00pm

RSVP: Megan Gadd - megan@walcoevents.nz by Friday 31st May.

We do hope to see you there.

Kind regards,

Justin Wallace
Managing Director
Walco Events Limited



Under 7s Gala Day Wrap

By ARL

THE UNDER 7s gala day was hosted by Papakura Rugby League club on Sunday, May 20. Great weather made for a fun day for everyone involved, with 18 teams registering to play.

Congratulations to the following teams who were awarded the Best and Fairest at prizegiving.

West/Central: Pt Chevalier

South/East: Howick

South: Manurewa Marlins

The next gala day will be the Under 6s held at Pakuranga next Sunday, May 27.





Riccarton Knights Pink Shirt Day

By Renee Barclay

WE'VE HAD a whirlwind of celebrating Pink Shirt Day @ The Knights club!! This is our second year supporting the Anti-bullying movement and we certainly stepped up our show of support to the cause and increased awareness of Pink Shirt Day among our wider Rugby League community. Our club prides itself on being a family based club and what that looks like to us, is connection from our junior to senior sections our young players are provided with opportunities to bond with our senior players we try our best to have environment where everyone knows who's who, we talk and share our club values, and give support, respect and encouragement to each other that is our Knights Whanau. The values and message of Pink Shirt Day resonated highly with our club and we identified that this is a very important message that extends across all ages, cultures and backgrounds within our Knights Whanau and our wider community. We are keen to create a club that acknowledges that our players well-being is not only physical that their mental health is also an important factor to their performance, we aim to drive the message home that as a sports club we are here to support our players on and off the field!

Through the Pink Shirt Day campaign we were able to re-enforce positive messages to our Knights Whanau for one all Knights now know firmly that our club has a zero tolerance of bullying behaviour,

our players are encouraged to Speak Up and Stand Together and to not just have this attitude at league but to take it back to school, work and show that you're a team player and that the lessons you learn from league are valuable to other areas in life.

We stormed the gates with this years campaign all our Senior, 16's and 14's teams hitting the fields in pink socks and all our junior teams with pink strapping tape around their wrists. We had a Candy floss stall at the Canterbury league junior games for a koha, we also sold Pink supporter socks, we've got a really cool raffle and we held our own club disco "Pink Knight Out" all proceeds are going to the anti-bullying charity. Our club was proud to see the Warriors show their support to Pink Shirt Day having these guys on board really strengthens the anti-bullying message especially for our younger, impressionable players.

We have already began our plans for next year's Pink Shirt Day and The Riccarton Knights are committed to showing our support to do our part in stomping out bullying in our community.

Here is a link to an article that Canterbury Rugby League done about our crusade.

<https://canterburyrugbyleague.co.nz/2018/05/knights-go-pink-to-spread-anti-bullying-message/>

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Strong Auckland Squad Named For Tonga Match

By ARL

THE AUCKLAND Rugby League has today named a 25-strong premier squad in preparation for the June 2 Upright Access Mann Cup clash with the Tonga New Zealand Residents.

Among the players named by coach Grant Pocklington is 2016 National Youth Competition winner Johnny Tuivasa-Sheck, younger brother of Vodafone Warriors captain Roger, who this year has balanced playing time between the Warriors' reserves and SAS Fox Memorial Premiership side the Richmond Bulldogs.

Five members of Glenora's Grand Final-winning team from last year have made the cut, while 2017 runners-up Pt Chevalier - who are undefeated to date this season - have five players in line to take the field at Mount Smart Stadium.

Pocklington said it was a major benefit that the majority of his squad boasted time spent in NRL systems.

"About 80 per cent of the boys in this squad have come through the Intrust Super Premiership (NRL reserve grade) level, so they come with those fitness levels, the understanding around training," Pocklington said.

"We've picked a mix of experienced guys and some younger ones who get a chance to show what they have got at this level.

"Johnny Tuivasa-Sheck was really pleased to come in as a leader. He comes from an environment at the Sydney Roosters where he's had to know when it's time to laugh and when it's time to step it up, while the likes of Jamel Hunt and Zac Tippins know exactly what to do at this level.

"That local Auckland experience will be important."

Mt Albert Lions duo Reece Joyce and Roydon Gillett - who both made the final 28 of The NRL Rookie TV show in 2016 - join reigning Auckland Rugby League Player of the Year Taylor Daniels and one-time Sydney Roosters product Abraham Papalii in the group.

In total, nine Auckland clubs are represented in the squad, with powerhouse forward Moses Oge the sole representative from the second division competition.

Auckland squad: Tevin Arona (Pt Chevalier), Kurt Bernard (Glenora), Reece Charlie (Howick), Taylor Daniels (Northcote), Geronimo Doyle (Otahuhu), Jethro Friend (Howick), Roydon Gillett (Mt Albert), Jamel Hunt (Papakura), Phoenix Hunt (Papakura), Aziah Ikitule-Filipo (Howick), Reece Joyce (Mt Albert), Michael Ki (Pt Chevalier), Moses Oge (Bay Roskill), Abraham Papalii (Pt Chevalier), Daniel Reuelu-Buchanan (Glenora), Polima Siaki (Glenora), Chris Sio (Pt Chevalier), Matiu Stone-Dunn (Richmond), Zac Tippins (Glenora), Jordan Tuarae (Glenora), Matti Tuitama (Pt Chevalier), Johnny Tuivasa-Sheck (Richmond), Siave Tupou (Richmond), Johnny Vuetibau (Howick), Cole Waaka (Northcote).

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International Presence In Vulcans Women's Squad

By ARL

THE AUCKLAND Rugby League have named the Auckland Vulcans Women's squad for the upcoming National Women's Tournament at Cornwall Park, which kicks off on June 2.

Among the 22 players named are former Kiwi Ferns Annabelle Hohepa, Va'Anessa Molia-Fraser and Tanika Jazz Noble Bell.

Most recently, Molia-Fraser played in the 2016 and 2017 Anzac Tests for New Zealand, while Noble Bell appeared at the 2016 NRL Auckland Nines and last year won the Farrelly Photos Women's competition with Manurewa.

Utility back Ma'atuleio Fotu-Moala, younger sister of Kiwi Fern Teuila Fotu-Moala, is also included, fresh off representing Tonga at the Commonwealth Rugby League Nines earlier this year.

Auckland Vulcans Women's coach, Frank Fuimaono, said he's excited about the team selected.

"I think we have a good balance in our squad, there are a few up and coming players, along with some with a bit more experience," he said.

"We have a very tough pack, but I would say our strength is in the backline.

"I am expecting us to put our best foot forward and to turn up and compete for the whole tournament."

Auckland Vulcans Women squad (in alphabetical order): Katarina Allen (Mt Albert), Ariana Filiva'a (Mt Albert), Ma'atuleio Fotu-Moala (Otahuhu), Leanne Gardiner (Manurewa), Mazelina Haurua (Ponsonby), Annabelle Hohepa (Richmond), Tiare Lange (Mt Albert), Teasha Lee Leka (Mt Albert), Jhana Magele (Otahuhu), Awhina Marsh (Richmond), Savannah Matua (Manurewa), Va'Anessa Molia-Fraser (Richmond), Tanika Jazz Noble Bell (Manurewa), Lorina Papali'i (Richmond), Mania Selwyn (Mt Albert), Nancy Sikei (Mt Albert), Natalee Tagavaitau (Ponsonby), Aleisha Taylor (Ponsonby), Shahana Te Tomo (Richmond), Aaliyah Timothy (Waitemata), Ruth Vae (Richmond), Leani Williams (Manurewa).



Want a tour of Mt Smart this Saturday?

If you're coming to Mt Smart this Saturday for the game. Want a tour of Mt Smart? Meet Tony Feasey at the **BACK** of the **WEST STAND** along the concourse. Wait by the elevator. The tour starts at **6.30pm**.



Test Featherstone

By NZUTSRL

AFTER NOT being able to get to attend the Student Rugby League World Cup in Australia last year, the New Zealand Universities and Tertiary Students Rugby League has made a big turnaround and currently has a men's team in England to provide opportunities for students to travel play and experience the trip of a lifetime.

The culmination of a new board, hard work and a reaffirmation of the NZUTSRL being an amateur part of rugby league has reinforced that everyone pays their way and is involved in all aspects of fundraising including a national raffle.

In addition a boat cruise fundraiser around Wellington Harbour and a first and very successful dinner fundraiser involving members of the Warriors and a special speaker in Wayne Bennett.

The young NZUTSRL squad involves 15 new caps from a squad of 19 had a valuable workout to begin with on the tour with an enforced practice session against the St Helens Colts, who are a major feeder to their professional side. It was a great learning for the New Zealand many of which come from provincial clubs and who for many were still feeling the effect of jetlag for the first time.

Two days later Leeds Beckett University provided another tough match. Last year it provided twelve players inside the England Student World Cup squad. The sides were evenly matched in the first two quarters but with two tests next on the tour playing itinerary, it was left to the coaching staff to play everyone in the last two quarters, resulting in a loss of cohesion and go forward.

During this game several players picked up injuries, to further put significant pressure on the first Test team at Featherstone three days later. However the wounded and those who were also fit showed character in front of a well organised England Universities team that had significant depth and resources to draw from.

Before the haka was sounded, the Test began on a sombre note when a minute's silence was held to mark the passing of the 2014-16 NZUTSRL Chairman, Rodney Moore, who had died in his Dunedin home only 12 hours earlier from a long illness. He was aged just 62.

The team had its best quarter in the Test in the last quarter after now really getting to know each other and for some playing in new positions they have never played at before. The slope of the ground also took a toll on the young side after it was forced to play uphill in the first half, resulting in the end to an 18-0 halftime deficit and eventually a 42-4 loss.

A feature of the Test was the Test debuts of brothers Mitchell and Rory Ropati along with their cousin George Ropati. Both of their fathers were former NZUTSRL players in John and Tea Ropati respectfully, with Tea currently on the tour as team assistant coach.

Continued on next page...

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At present the coaching staff is working on more combinations going forward as it starts to prepare for the second and final Test this Saturday in Newcastle at 5am New Zealand time. The first Test was streamed live and again this will be the case. Details can be found on the New Zealand universities and Tertiary Students Rugby League facebook page.

Another key from the NZUTSRL perspective will be to continue to grow its player base and use this tour as a development tour for the next Student World Cup in 2021, which incidentally is also being held in the United Kingdom.



THE TWO Taranaki clubs came together on Friday night under lights at the Waitara grounds. The Tai Ngaia Shield was again on the line.

This game is dedicated as the “Jack Knuckey Memorial Game”.

Last year the Tigers got away with a one point win. This time the Tigers got it right and played great footy to go to half time 24-6.

Waitara came out for the second half more determined and they ripped onto it and ended up with a 30 - 26 loss. Jack would have been very happy indeed. His whanau who were present certainly were.

Jack played league in Taranaki for 30 years. Anyone who played with him at the time knew him as a HARD, robust and dedicated player and or coach in rugby league for either of the two clubs represented here.

Jack’s grandson Morehu, played for ‘The Bears’ and many of Jack’s team mates had their grandchildren watching these two staunch clubs of Taranaki league.

In the late 1960s Jack played in Auckland for Otahuhu. His memory is still alive and well here in Taranaki and no doubt his colleague, Patrick Cathy from Otahuhu and others who played with him during this time remember him for the same values he contributed to league here.



Northern Stars Ready To Play In Front Of Home Crowd.



WITH A new coach, new players and a new home playing venue, there's a lot of excitement surrounding the first home game of the South Auckland-based ANZ Premiership team.

Created specifically to become New Zealand's sixth team for the launch of the ANZ Premiership in 2017, the Stars are keen to lose their 'new comers' tag and to make their mark on the 2018 season.

“We've got pretty exacting measures in terms of performance, standards at trainings and things like that, so as long as the girls are working hard we'll be able to achieve those things. So, it's no more about the new team, just the Stars and that we're here to play.”

After a couple of close losses in the opening rounds of the competition, the Stars are looking forward to playing their first home game at their new playing venue for the 2018 season, Pulman Arena in Takanini.

Representing one of the country's largest communities is a privilege Wills says and hopes to see those in the south and east of Auckland find some special links with the club.

“I think people want to belong to something bigger than themselves and sometimes it's hard to know what that is in a city so big – we can get a little bit lost at times,” the Whangarei-born coach said.

“We are going to be the team that stands for south Auckland,” she said. “We want to give people out in south Auckland something to aspire to. We too know that nothing comes easy.”

The Stars have bolstered their team roster with the addition of a quartet of internationals, including respected England captain Ama Agbeze at the defence end, experienced Silver Ferns midcourter Grace Kara, who will captain the Stars this year, and shooters Paula Griffin and Ellen Halpenny, who are making a return to elite level competition.

The Northern Stars play their first home game of the 2018 season this Sunday 27 May against the WBOP Magic at Pulman Arena. The team are keen to christen their new venue with a win and they're looking forward to playing in front of their passionate 'purple army' of supporters.

All tickets also include the Beko Netball League curtain raiser match of Northern Comets v Netball WBOP which starts at 2pm, and with loads of entertainment taking place it's sure to be a fun, action packed afternoon for the whole family.

To get your tickets head to www.northernstars.co.nz now!

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Reader Mail



HI - would just like to thank the butch for a fantastic prize. Won this in the Mad Butcher lounge the night of the Warriors double header. First time there - Great nite put on for everyone. Much appreciated and bloody good fun. Cheers - go the mighty Vodafone Warriors. From David Lee/Jake Bray prize winners.



THANK YOU mad butcher for the signed 2016 Vodafone Warriors nines Jersey that you gave me when you came down to Invercargill - JACK (on the right)



[Click here for more info: http://nzrl.co.nz/tournaments/women/](http://nzrl.co.nz/tournaments/women/)

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